

# Incorporating Personal Narratives into FYS 101

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# My Curriculum Shift

Previous final assignments:

1. Reflection
2. Two letters

Outcomes:

1. Surface level responses
2. “What I wanted to hear” responses
3. Showed no real introspection/growth
4. Seemed rushed



# Where the Idea Came From

- NPR story about “Self-authoring” (2015)
  - <http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2015/07/10/419202925/the-writing-assignment-that-changes-lives>
- Emotional and Physical Health Benefits of Expressive Writing (2005)
  - <http://apt.rcpsych.org/content/11/5/338.full-text.pdf>
- Writing Your Way to Happiness (2015)
  - [http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/01/19/writing-your-way-to-happiness/?\\_r=0](http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/01/19/writing-your-way-to-happiness/?_r=0)



# Why Write in FYS 101?

- Topic engagement and/or reflection
- Allows quiet students an opportunity to “speak”
- Provides on-going dialog
- Comfortable place for students to ask for help



# Ideas for Prompts

- Appreciative Advising (Judy Bloom) IU ideas
  - <http://www.indiana.edu/~iubac/Appreciative%20Advising%20Questions%20Spring%202011.pdf>
- New York Times - The Learning Network
  - <http://graphics8.nytimes.com/images/blogs/learning/pdf/2014/500PromptsNarrativeAndPersonalWriting.pdf>
  - See #321



# Responses from Fall 2015

- “I wish that my teachers knew I get sick very easily...if they knew this, it would help in future scenarios to know I’m not just skipping class. I also get pretty bad anxiety so that contributes more to the sickness in general.”
- “I wish that all of my teachers knew that I learn mostly from hands-on activities and extensive explanations...I enjoy trial and error, and correcting myself when I make a mistake.”



# Responses, cont.

- “If I could tell my teacher one thing about me it would be that I don’t like to read and when I do read it I can’t remember most of it. I have to constantly read over stuff for it to stick and sometimes it works and often it doesn’t.”
- “I want my teachers to know that I’m a hard worker, but I need either small groups or 1 on 1 time for me to truly grasp a topic....One last thing, I have severe clinical depression. Sometimes it is very hard for me to get up and go. I want my teachers to have patience, not pity.”



# Other Thoughts

- Try to participate in the writing prompt with your students
- Be flexible with prompts and know they may evolve
- Set clear parameters, be mindful when selecting prompts, and discuss “responsible party” obligations
- Planned adaptation - idea from advisor at NCSU
  - “Mental Moment”
    - A = Advice
    - V = Venting
    - S = Share my side (seeking support)



# Guiding Quotes – C. G. Jung, Swiss Psychiatrist

[www.SelfAuthoring.com](http://www.SelfAuthoring.com)

- Present reflection

"When an inner situation is not made conscious, it appears outside, as fate."

- Future reflection

"Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakens."

- Past reflection

"People will do anything...in order to avoid facing their own soul. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious."



# Quotes, cont.

The Challenge of Introspection:

“That I feed the hungry, that I forgive an insult, that I love my enemy in the name of Christ -- all these are undoubtedly great virtues...but what if I should discover that the least among them all, the poorest of all the beggars, the most impudent of all the offenders, the very enemy himself -- that these are within me, and that I myself stand in need of the alms of my own kindness -- that I myself am the enemy who must be loved -- what then?”

C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*



# Your Opportunity to Reflect

Individually respond to the following prompt:

- What do you wish a professor would have known about you in college?
- What advice would you give younger you?



# Questions?

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