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Currins 545
August 2, 2016

Scaffolding Comprehension Assignment

Artist's Statement Peer Review Workshop
Junior/Senior AP Art students

In a typical AP Art Portfolio class, junior and senior level students will often spend the entire semester building a portfolio. A portfolio consists of 10-20 pieces of art that represents their skills, ideas and purpose as an artist. The portfolio is used for AP credit, to determine acceptance into a fine art college, or arts program at a university, and often is used to determine scholarship as well. Over the course of a semester, students will develop a portfolio and any supporting documentation, such as artist's statement and college-specific application requirements that are submitted in the fall. In order to support this process, students will research other contemporary artists in order to gain inspiration from current works, have weekly critiques to improve their portfolio submissions, research historically relevant art movements and write and workshop their accompanying artist's statements to match the requirements of each college of their choice.

This lesson, Peer Review Workshop, is based off of Chapter Three - How to Revise and Peer Review from Writing for the Visual Arts by Mashey Bernstein and George Yatchisin. Prior to this lesson, students will have been critiquing each other's artwork once a week, as well as completing journaling assignments in their sketchbook, in which they research and respond to contemporary artists, getting them familiar with writing their ideas down on paper. Before the peer review lesson outlined in this paper, students will have gone through a "How to Write About Your Artwork" session, based on the previous chapter in Writing for the Visual Arts, and will have their first draft of their own artist's statement to provide for peer review. In writing their own artist's statements, students will have worked with creating active vs. passive phrases, as well as researching and identifying an audience for their statement. In the context of this class, the statement will most likely be geared towards college application, in which case, students will research the college of their choice and the prompts that specific college gives in the application process.

Chapter Three - How to Revise and Peer Review from Writing for the Visual Arts by Mashey Bernstein and George Yatchisin, describes in detail the revision process for artists writing about their work. The chapter describes how revision is necessary for the process - 10% is the initial inspiration while 90% is the work that it takes to clarify and process - and why peer revision is important. "Because we are so close to our ideas, we cannot rely on our own assessment of our writing. We desperately need the

objective view of someone other than ourselves to react to our writing. A helpful, insightful reading of the text provides this initial sense of audience and its demands” (Bernstein + Yatchisin 47).

The chapter also describes the process of choosing peers, objective groups that are not afraid of giving feedback, and how to be a good feedback receiver, meaning do not be offended by suggestions, as critique makes your work better. The AP Art class provides an objective group of like-minded individuals that are all looking to improve their work, just like as we critique artwork, we can critique our writing. We will ask such questions from the chapter as, does the artist convey the intended big picture? Grammar and punctuation are important, but so is the clarity of the overall idea. How, as a reviewer, to point out good AND bad - sometimes the good can be accidentally edited out, and giving constructive feedback is just as important as telling a writer that what they are writing is working well. “You are not offending the author by saying the work needs development. You are actually helping. Just as authors must let go of their egos, critics must not be afraid of expressing honest opinions. A helpful, insightful reading of the text provides feedback that the author can use. You have an obligation as critic to provide the most helpful feedback you can,” (Bernstein + Yatchisin 51). For the lesson, I have chosen specific paragraphs from this chapter (see attached) to consolidate the amount of reading done during the lesson, yet still providing all the necessary information. The goal of this lesson is to emphasize the importance of peer review, in helping guide students on their way to creating an artist’s statement that they can include with their portfolio application for scholarship.

I will be using several comprehension strategies, such as write-to-learn activities, discussion in peer groups, media and visualization techniques. I will be putting emphasis on the In Your Own Words Visualization Technique from Lattimer, chapter four. This activity will help the students not only read the excerpts, but brainstorm in a group setting as to what is the best interpretation of the reading, in their own words. The act of reading, discussing, communicating and applying the information in their own language, helps retain almost up to 90% of the information, referring to Dale’s Cone of Experience Model (Daniels et. al, 26).

Peer Review Workshop: Lesson Outline

Activity	Teacher	Student
Pre-Reading Activity	<p>REVIEW: Passive vs. Active Phrases - provide students with examples of both to identify (i.e.; The art was made vs. I created this piece)</p> <p>VIDEO: Watch Shirin Neshat's TED Talk about her work - have students write a response with these prompts: "How did she explore her questions of her identity through art?" "What other artists/writers have inspired Neshat?" "How do politics play into her works of art?" "What are some life experiences that she includes in her art?" "How does her culture inform the works that she makes?"</p>	<p>REVIEW: Identify passive vs. active phrases - how do you change a passive phrase into an active one?</p> <p>VIDEO: Respond to Neshat's talk with provided prompts - ask these questions of the artist's statement you review - how does the artist's statement apply to the work? This write-to-learn activity is not graded, merely an exercise to get into the mindset of reviewing a statement.</p>
During Reading Activity	<p>Divide students into 5 groups (2-3 students per group) to separate parts of the room, where markers and butcher paper are hanging. Students will read their assigned excerpt, then, using the In Your Own Words activity, summarize the paragraphs into bullet points, for the other students to read. We will then go around the room as each group describes their excerpt and its importance to the process.</p> <p>What is Revision? (p 46) Using Peer Response + Role of the Critic (p 47-48) Written and Verbal Responses (p 49-52) Responding to Peer Reviews (p 52) Revising vs. Editing (p 53)</p> <p>Teacher will facilitate groups in their discussion.</p>	<p>In groups, students will read the assigned paragraph out loud in their group, then discuss the summarization of the paragraph. Through the discussion, the most important points of the paragraph, listed in bullet points, will be written on the butcher paper.</p> <p>After students write bullet points with their groups, we will take turns, going around the room as the group presents the information they found, while other students take notes.</p> <p>Students should keep in mind, what information is relevant - what helps them as they review their peers' papers? What information will the rest of the class need to know</p>

		and appreciate, in order to understand their assigned paragraph?
After Reading Activity	<p>Peer Review Workshop Break students into groups of 3-4, and have them workshop each other's artist statements. Students will have had semester-long familiarity with each other's art work, through weekly critiques, and artwork for each student will be available, for reference.</p> <p>Teacher will be coming around to facilitate groups in their discussion.</p> <p>Potential vocabulary: Ad hominem Macro vs. micro Idiosyncratic Appropriate Syntactical</p> <p>While these vocab terms may come up during the group discussion, the best approach, for time's sake, may be just simply addressing vocab questions on the periphery. These terms are hard, but they are not necessary when reading and understanding the overall "Big Picture" of the reading piece.</p>	<p>Students will take turns reading their artist's statement to the group, then exchanging copies of statements to edit.</p> <p>For this lesson, the main goal not only is to have a response for each artist's statement, but also the ability to help edit and review peer statements and translating this activity into peer review of art, writing, etc., that is similar to work done in college.</p> <p>Students should ask: Who is your Audience? Are their active statements? Is your "big picture" clear?</p>

In the pre-reading discussion, students will review active vs. passive, as well as quickly responding to Neshat's talk, this further activates Moment-to-Moment Verbal scaffolding where "the teacher's role here is to prompt students, ask probing questions, and elaborate student responses in the course of instruction. To effectively scaffold in this way, teachers must call to mind their knowledge of students' instructional histories and ability to apply reading processes" (Clark + Graves 572). The goal of my pre-reading activities is "To get them thinking about a potential topic, you need to give students a meaningful and thought-provoking context in which their writing is part of a discussion or an expression of concern." (Daniels, et. al., 127) As exemplified in one of our first readings, *Books like Clothes*, giving students not only the scaffolding to understand the text, but also purpose in their writing increases their comprehension (Kirkland, 200). For this assignment, the comprehension goal is how peer review is important in the writing process. Also, to realize the value of peer review, and how they may utilize peer review in the art world, after school. The benefits of peer review to improve your artist's statements have real results; the potential for college acceptance, scholarship, etc.

The activity I chose during reading is a collaborative activity that allows “collaboration and interaction [which] is critical in developing understanding of new concepts” (Lattimer 88). Not only putting the paragraph in their own words, but describing it to the rest of the class, as well as reading a summary of other parts of the excerpts their peers provide, can help understand the information, as well as retain the information when it comes time for their own peer review task. Peer review of fellow artist’s art and writing is an activity that students will be doing quite often in college, as well as in the creative workforce. It has applicable uses, however, students need to learn what those uses are, as well as why they are relevant.

The after reading activity involves a group workshop of the student’s artist statements. Dividing students into groups of 3-4, students will exchange statements, edit and respond. Once written comments are made for each statement, students will discuss the original statement, as well as the changes that were made, and if the changes work to further clarify the concept, or if there are any changes that need to be addressed further. Not only will students come out of the workshop with a clearer direction of where to go with their artist’s statements, but hopefully also understand that collaborative efforts are crucial and helpful to the writing process.

Bibliography

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