Imitation and Adaptability in the First-Year Composition Classroom: A Pedagogical Study

by

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Abstract:

The use of imitation exercises—writing activities employing model texts and the modeling of writing-process behaviors—in the First Year composition classroom can have many benefits for both student writers and teachers, and offers practical solutions to some of the problems facing student writers in today's colleges. First Year writing students are often unaware that they are part of a larger academic community. They often lack exposure to and understanding of academic standards. They don't understand that "good" writing is not a blanket-concept but is determined on a situational basis, and they are frustrated by the vaguely expressed expectations of their writing teachers. These problems are interconnected and so are all addressed in this study, but because they offer so many potential avenues for discussion, the focus of this project will be limited to the benefits of clear expectations that the use of modeling activities in the classroom can bring about for both students and teachers. An in-depth look at the materials, methods, and results of student participation in the activities of a single semester of English 1105, the first course in Virginia Tech's First Year Writing Program will be the dominant component of the project; it will be supplemented by a review of literature and a contextual discussion of what Stephen M. North calls the "Practitioner" mode of inquiry—the gathering of pedagogical information through the active classroom application of educational theories and practices.

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The first-year composition students I work with at Virginia Tech are faced with a dizzying array of digital information sources and potential career-demands for written work, in addition to the unique discourse communities they encounter in every classroom and social setting they walk into. They need opportunities to acquire adaptability in written communication: they need as many tools as can be put into their hands, as many grammatical skills in their repertoires as possible, and a working knowledge of a wide sample of conventional forms. Meeting these needs will not only enable them to be successful at working in different written formats, but also lend them confidence when being asked to adapt yet again to new forms, which will undoubtedly continue to happen in their lifetimes. In order for these goals to be realized, they need to be exposed to a large and diverse collection of model texts. By imitating these models they will acquire both familiarity with the standards that the models represent and experience with using imitation to adapt to new standards when new standards arise.

The First Year Writing Program Guide for Students at Virginia Tech, when discussing the prescribed and lauded "writing process," assures students that "different kinds of writing tasks or purposes require different kinds of written products," and that, "moreover, different kinds of written products require different kinds of writing processes for their successful completion, different ways of gathering information, sifting through it, sharing it, and presenting it" (9), but both the guide and the Department of English Faculty Handbook offer students and teachers only glancing mention of modeling as either a method of learning or teaching these different kinds of written products and the different kinds of writing processes that they require. Where the Guide and Handbook do include it, modeling is given neither prominence nor elucidation. It appears as one in a series of secondary practices that serve to enhance student writing, such as in the section (in both texts) outlining the First-Year Writing Program's revision policies: "while you learn about writing in various ways—through classroom presentations, written commentary on final drafts, and the study of models—you grow as writers primarily through the practice of

drafting and thoughtful revision" ("Guide"10). Modeling is promised to students (and obliged of instructors) in the section (in both texts) covering "grammar, mechanics, and style" in the following encouraging but non-specific manner: "to enable you to recognize and develop effective writing strategies, instructors will provide a variety of models by drawing upon reading assignments, articles, and your essays … [which] may be examined to review … constructing paragraphs … crafting sentences … and choosing words carefully" ("Guide"11). The corresponding passage in the Faculty Handbook changes the word "you" to "students" but gives no further clarification as to what types of models this "variety" might include, nor how instructors might guide their students in "examining" these materials.

The Guide for Students does include an encouraging 38 pages of sample student essays, but no suggestions, activities, or instructions for using the samples as models for form, style, or content appear. The introductory material prefacing the sample essays comprises only a single paragraph suggesting that included essays "do show … students addressing their assignments in interesting ways" but warning that "none of these [samples] is presented as an example of a 'perfect' essay" (38); the implied message to students (and to the faculty who work with them) is that the samples can be read for the purpose of suggesting ideas, but should not be studied as exempla nor deliberately imitated. In other areas where models could be of assistance to students, the Guide is inconsistent. Although a thorough set of negative examples follows the Guide's warning to students about the specific pitfalls of plagiarism, in several other instances where exempla would be expected, such as the guidelines for paper formatting, documentation, and grammatical competence, the Guide offers no demonstrations, only explanatory guidance. As to the complex array of behaviors involved in the "different kinds of writing processes" that the Guide serves to introduce to each class of students, the only reference to any modeling of a process or behavior included is the assurance, in the "Contributing to Group Dynamics" section discussing peer groups, that the student's instructor "can," phrased with a verb denoting the instructor's ability, and not his or her obligation, "model productive group techniques" (13).

The Faculty Handbook similarly outlines the procedures, goals, and requirements of the university's writing program, including a "Pedagogical Overview" and a section devoted to "Teaching Strategies," neither of which includes any mention of modeling or imitation as

a way of teaching writing to students; the allusions to the technique made in the sections on grammar and revision are not supported even with reiteration, let alone elaboration, methodology, or sample lesson-plans. Instructors are told, again encouragingly, that "student essays should be presented for class discussion frequently, and used to explore the same issues about language, texts, readers, and writers that are explored in professional essays," but although these essays are recommended for use "as instances of how readings can be variously framed and of how language itself reflects acts of negotiation and struggle" (23), no suggestion is made to utilize these essays as models of successful or unsuccessful writing efforts. The use of the word "instance" where "model" might have served only intensifies the sense of missed opportunity, for a text studied by a class of students is already being used, in a sense, as a model; students then need only be instructed to apply what they have seen to their own writing. If the "instances" were "models," the recommendation would point instructors toward a hands-on application of observed essay-elements; as "instances," they appear as passive examples to be presented to the class, for only the most proactive students to claim to their own advantage.

Where the Department of English Faculty Handbook promotes modeling as an effective element of the teaching of first-year composition—and in a few areas it does—the department itself falls short of implementing these procedures and suggestions. The Handbook helpfully provides an annotated listing of suggested readers for instructors to use in teaching English 1105, the first English course in the university curriculum. Annotations review each reader's format, stated purpose, and appropriateness to the curriculum, and each annotation concludes with a concise summary of each text's "Key Advantages" and "Limitations." Several readers are suggested because they include examples or activities that "model active readings" (47) or "model a semiotic reading of [each] chapter's topic" (48). One is specifically praised for the improvement of its current edition in this area: the text was originally "criticized for its lack of models of analytical writing. This was evidently a common complaint of users, and the editors appear to have gone out of their way to remedy the situation" (44). Such emphasis would seem to indicate that the inclusion of models in a text, and modeling in a text's suggested strategies for student writers is an important consideration for department members' selection of texts. In my experiences at Virginia Tech I have encountered no instructors currently using any of the readers reviewed above,

although this alone might not indicate a dwindling interest in modeling as a methodology since the 1999 reviews. More telling by far is that the reader currently most recommended by the department, and required in the classrooms of all its first-year Graduate Teaching Assistants, includes among its selected essays neither instruction in using these pieces as models for student writing nor any model readings of the pieces themselves.

The Handbook also provides for 1105 instructors two complete models of "sample" syllabi that can be used by faculty to guide the construction of their own. One of these offers in the introductory "Overview of the Sequence for Teachers" the explanation that the course's "longer Essays build upon the shorter Engagement Papers, using the anthology's essays as models in the way they employ critical strategies" (59); although this explanation is not, unfortunately, included in the portion of the syllabus to be shared with students, there does appear within the descriptions of student essay assignments the instruction that student writers use a particular author's "experience as a model for describing [their] own" (64). In the other sample syllabus, the following entry appears under the heading of the course calendar: "Week 6: Draft of Essay #2 due; Class revision/grammar; student model; Video: Lean on Me or other view of multicultural education" (66). The authors of this syllabus give no further indication of how student models should be used in their classes, and no mention of doing so in other than week 6 of the semester appear, but at least they do, by including their example in the handbook, model the inclusion of modeling in the composition classroom. The disconnect between the handbook and the practice of the department, unfortunately, is even more clearly delineated where these syllabi are concerned: no teachers with whom I work utilize these syllabi, Graduate Teaching Assistants are not referred to these syllabi even as models, let alone encouraged to follow their lead in such areas as the use of models, and the instructors who composed them are no longer teaching at Virginia Tech.

At the University level, Virginia Tech's Core Curriculum Guide includes in its goals for students in Area 1 (Writing and Discourse) "understand[ing] modes of verbal discourse that are central to college-level academic work, such as argument, interpretation, analysis, and metaphor," but makes no mention of how students should be brought to such an understanding. Students are required to "develop clear and effective prose through attention to style, grammar, and other elements of composition," but are not, in any of the classrooms

that I observed during my first year as an instructor, given examples other than of their own work to pay attention *to*, and no indication of what this prose should be developed *from* is to be found in the Core Curriculum. Students are asked to do work that is almost exclusively generative in nature, such as to "engage in defining, developing, and understanding ideas" with their writing, with no provision made for modeling the kinds of definition and development they are expected to show, and the reading they are exposed to, of "analytical and interpretive prose," is to be done "as a reciprocal means of expanding powers of understanding and imagination," but no mention is made of the additional value of such readings if used as a means of familiarizing students with the structures and styles of academic writing, by way of providing examples. The expectation seems to be that students will come to the classroom with a wealth of new ideas to develop, according to some undeclared standard, needing no foundation of any kind to build upon. "These beginning courses," the Guide continues, "should be considered the springboard for further writing and discourse throughout the undergraduate curriculum" (http://www.uaac.vt.edu/core2000/2001-02/area1.html). In my experience, springboards act to launch ideas or objects from some starting-point into a motion more accelerated than they would have been capable of otherwise; a springboard is not a starting-point in itself, but our curriculum, with no established system of providing models and examples for student writers, asks its springboard courses to be just that, and in doing so fails to provide writing students with the foundational experience of learning to write in academia by working with models of academic writing.

The notion that students should be exposed to models to work from is hardly revolutionary, of course. For at least two thousand years, educators and educational theorists have known that expertise in a form of expression is most clearly obtained by following in the footsteps of those who have proven expert in the form already; imitating successful works teaches the novice a familiarity with the structures and patterns of successful works, and imitating the process of crafting such works teaches the novice to participate in the process him- or herself.

Our modern classrooms, unfortunately, have too often strayed far from this guiding principle. The prevalence of romanticism in educational theory, with its insistence on

individual, un-influenced acts of creation has led to the establishment and perpetuation of a system of writing instruction in which tasks and expectations are often spelled out in terms so vague that students have no real sense of what's being asked of them. Rather than clearly delineate task-elements and expectations, we present assignments in general terms designed to allow for creativity and flexibility, so that the voice of the artist isn't stifled by our demands. This is a noble goal. What is often overlooked, however, is the additional lack of familiarity that our student writers have with the elements and tools of effective writing. With paints and canvasses but without an array of brushes, palette-knives, and lessons in the varied techniques of their application, the options available to a painter would be few. The same restrictions apply to the writers that we equip with words and paper but little or no technical instruction. And although there is much to be said for the the ideal of the art created by a painter who has never seen the work of another painter, the expectations of the domain of academic writing do not allow for such potential uniqueness; there are forms, tones, words, and structures demanded by the discipline that students will not acquire without specific requirements and guidelines. While attempting to produce student writing that meets the standards that the academic community supports, we neglect not only precisely stating the required elements of assignments, but also providing models of the desired product for student writers to analyze and imitate, leaving our novice writers without the exposure to successful works and examples of effective process that would allow them familiarity as a first step in gaining expertise. The students with whom I interact, having already been served by this educational system, in most cases, for at least twelve years, have become victims of the following four obstacles: *they do not know that they already belong to a community of speakers and writers, they do not realize that different types of writing are appropriate to different circumstances, they do not know what academic writing is, and, lacking concrete examples to work from, they are accustomed to using guesswork to interpret instructors' expectations.*

Obstacle One—Alienation from the discourse community

The students I teach are unaware of their position within the academic discourse community. They enter my composition classroom with little to no sense of belonging to the conceptual world of writing, and the most crucial thing that we as composition teachers can do for writers in our tutelage is to make them aware of the assumptions on which their positions and

participation within our classes are based. Questions concerning the writer's purpose as an individual, a classmate, a student, and a citizen are not being consistently or sufficiently raised by the content of the classes I teach and observe, nor discussed by their participants, nor explored in writing, and neither again are the tenets on which classes are based and the processes by which their goals will be implemented. My students think of themselves as novices in a mysterious field, not knowing that they are already writers and that the writing they create has its own validity independent of my critiques. In most cases, they don't even know that writing itself has value; English classes are requirements to which they have always been subjected, but the exacting standards of written communication to which English teachers have always asked them to adhere seem superfluous and archaic: they can communicate with one another sufficiently, thank you, and nobody talks the way we ask them to write. The degree to which the students I encounter normally *don't* question their attitudes and behaviors as members of classroom communities is more than an alarming social statistic; my students' willingness to rely on viewpoints proposed by others on television or in the hallways between classes only contributes to the hesitant and incomplete expression of ideas that commonly appear in their early writing, as does the often-relayed impression that correctly "guessing" what the teacher "wants" is the expected behavior of the A-student; yet there is little else they can do when we do not show them, by example, what it is that we expect of them.

In order to be successful, these student writers must know what few first-year students in today's composition classes are prepared to discuss: why they're writing. Reasons discussed and analyzed in writing need to include each writer's personal motivation, the demands imposed by the teacher's interpretation of the course-description of the class in which they are enrolled, and elements of the "bigger picture" of how writing "fits" into the life-paths that the student writers with which we work are in the process of examining; student writers need to be made aware that they are not just young people being subjected to a writing class but are young writers learning what it means to be people. As a composition teacher, like many of those who surround me, I too have found myself repeating standard curricula and, in the process, losing sight of my responsibility to communicate my intentions to my student writers and to lead them, by both means of showing and telling, down paths that might help them to explore their own. Without this guidance, my student writers most

often find themselves facing inexplicable hurdles rather than meaningful experiences in our classrooms, and only the most rare learner will be able to construct the latter on his or her own. In order to succeed in the academic arena of which they are now a part, these students need to have the processes and purposes of writing demystified for them by being presented with both rationales and models; they need to see actual examples of writing that is valuable, writing that participates at various levels within the discourse communities of the classroom and university, writing that is effective because of its adherence to grammatical and stylistic standards, and writing that is ineffective because it does not.

Obstacle Two—Incomprehension of the differing standards of "good" writing

The students I teach lack awareness of the fact that different types of writing are effective, valid, and even necessary in different situations. They have experience with being asked to write "correctly" and with being told that their work, for any of a variety of reasons, is somehow less than "correct," but they are not aware that different circumstances call for different forms of writing, different styles of composition, even different standards for "correctness." For the most part, the student writers with whom I have worked do not even realize that they *are* already writers. Although they have all written before, and during the course of the time spent with me they know that they will be writing again; although they have all had some success with the medium, and met with some measure of failure, just as we ourselves have done; although they are all capable of making adjustments to their skill-sets in the arena of writing, they are so accustomed to anticipating failure in the arena that it does not occur to them to consider themselves members of the writing community. They do not see that the things that they already *do* "count" as "writing," even if the only writing that they do upon arrival is in nonstandard or nonacademic forms. By failing to validate such forms, past teachers have neglected to show them both the similarities between standard and nonstandard forms and the ways of transforming ideas from one form type to another. As a result of this, students have become convinced that the are only capable of the nonstandard or the inferior: that which does not "count."

These student writers have been given no way of knowing that, by no actions of mine, they are writers when they come to me, and they are writers when for the last time

they leave my sights; what roles they take and gains they make in terms of understanding their own writing and applying it to the world around them they will have to determine for themselves. These students, in order to be prepared for the variety of written tasks that will be asked of them as part of their academic and professional careers, need to be exposed to a variety of forms of writing. They need opportunities to study and imitate models of different types of written products, and to evaluate the relative appropriateness of different kinds of writing to different audiences and situations. Ideally, they should be able to do this without having to fear that they are being asked to learn the new language of "academic writing" from scratch, seeing instead that they are being given the opportunity to learn it as another form of applying the elements of "writing," with which they are already familiar, to the less-familiar milieu of academia. They also need opportunities to modify pieces of writing from one situationally-appropriate form to another, which will allow them to see that "incorrect" writing can be transformed into "correct" writing by means of global revision: that an imperfect piece needs be neither rejected nor discarded, but can instead be adapted to better fit its audience or purpose—or to account for the changes than an audience or purpose might undergo.

Obstacle Three—Unfamiliarity with the Writing of the Academy

The students I teach lack experience with and even exposure to academic writing. They realize that college-level writing is demanding, and they believe that their own skills are not equal to the task, but they don't know what the task *is*. In their previous education, they have read textbooks and fiction, encyclopedias and websites, but few, if any, academic articles or essays outside of their own hesitant attempts to create them for upper-level high school courses; they have no sense of the scale against which their work will be measured. Within their pre-college experiences and within our own curricula, they have simply never been exposed to exemplary models of the types of writing that we would have them produce. An obvious explanation for this absence is the mission-clouding fact that there is no absolute, cross-disciplinary standard for academic writing; what is expected of upper-level writing in the field of psychology differs greatly from what the engineering school demands of its students, and my freshmen students will be entering all possible fields. I cannot, therefore, present academic writing as a single style to which all students must learn to adhere, but can only

present an variety of possible forms to master; preparing my students equally for the possibility of being asked to write in any field at all is not feasible, of course, especially since I know little about the specific demands of upper-level writing in other disciplines.

These students desperately need models of the types of writing they will be asked to produce; they need models to read, models to study, and models to imitate. In presenting models to them, I cannot provide them with an example of every possibility they might encounter, but I can prepare them to be adaptable, to learn to identify and apply the common elements of standard forms of writing, and to be able to present ideas and information in a variety of forms without losing coherence, so that when they reach the situations in academia or the subsequent arenas of their professions that demand some specific form of writing, they will be able to assume the required form without undue difficulty. Although I cannot familiarize them with every form they may ever be asked to imitate, I can and should accustom them to the work of imitating forms and changing formats; teaching them to write as professionals in their fields is the job of the instructors of the upper-level, in-major Writing Intensive courses offered at Virginia Tech, but preparing them to meet these experiences and succeed in these courses (as well as in the life they will encounter after graduation).

Obstacle Four—Vaguely expressed expectations

The students I teach are accustomed to being given vague descriptions of assignments rather than examples to work from. As a first-year instructor, I had no examples of successful papers from past classes to offer my students, and I found few instructors with examples to offer me; those instructors possessing a collection of past papers used assignments so different from mine that the papers would have confused my students more than guided them. Often these few available samples no longer had assignment descriptions to accompany them: the example-students had done something successfully, but it was no longer clear what they had *done*. My students need examples to work from, both of student-generated prose and of published material that meets the same goals as those of their assignments. By being asked to write to our less-than-explicit expectations without the benefit of exposure to models of "correct" versions of writing in such forms, in the examples of published authors and

essayists, as well as without ample opportunities for them to imitate, with progressively varying levels of originality, these forms, these students have long been denied the opportunity to learn to adapt their writing to fit the array of written tasks that might be required of them in the course of their academic careers. Although there is an existing tendency to assign published material as topic-generating reading assignments (often drawn from topically organized readers), students are too rarely asked to closely analyze and then attempt to reproduce the purposes and organizational patterns of these pieces; they are offered examples of academic writing as reading material, in the hopes that exposure alone will suffice to bring their abilities up to the desired, but are consistently denied encouragement to use these same materials as modeling exercises to exemplify these standard forms, in order that they might be explicitly shown what, for example, a "persuasive essay" is and what its purposes might be, in the extra-curricular realm of the "real world."

Additionally, students' exposure to the successes and shortcomings of student writing aimed at reproducing the effects of given forms is extremely limited; student writers in general encounter only their own errors and accomplishments, outside of infrequent work-shopping scenarios in which they act more as editors than as creative advisors and critics, and receive in-depth feedback on only 3 or 4 pieces of "formal" writing a semester. By sequestering these students from the wealth of both positive and negative exemplary material generated by their peers throughout their academic careers, we have firmly established the teaching of writing in a lonely void; student writers are accustomed to being bereft both of the opportunity to learn by example and the chance to observe the mistakes and the processes of their correction experienced by student writers at similar levels of accomplishment to their own, which further distances them from an awareness of their own participation in what should exist as a community of writers learning together to be more effective communicators. Not only have we, for too long, asked them to produce without being provided a model of a successful product, but we have also demanded that they make their attempts without the benefit of modeling their processes and experiences on the processes and experiences of others, doing them the additional disservice of withholding from them opportunities to learn to critically read and evaluate the types of writing they're being asked to generate, which opportunities might act to demystify the writing process and bring their relationship with their work into sharper focus. These students need to see the

work their peers are producing while it is being produced, so that they can learn by the examples that surround them, and can benefit from seeing modeled both the successes and shortcomings of the written attempts of other students facing the same obstacles against which they are struggling, by learning to adapt their understandings of a task before them as they work cooperatively to accomplish it.

Conclusion

The obstacles noted above are not unique to the experiences of students currently attending this university; in my own educational background, both in my experiences as a student and, later, as a teacher of English and Language Arts in Virginia's public and private school systems, I encountered few texts to model my own work after, few activities leading students in modeling their work on the work of others, and few opportunities to imitate or help others imitate unfamiliar forms in order to become familiar with them. Examples of the five-paragraph-essay can be unearthed, but of more progressive, diverse, or complex forms, there is no sign. Having also both taken and taught classes in a variety of other subjects, I know that teachers model, for their students to imitate, problems in math classes and experiments in science classes—role-playing activities even allow for the modeling of historical occurrences in social studies classes—but the romantic push for students' uninhibited creative expression demands that we leave our writers to discover success or failure on our own. What amazes me is that any of us are still surprised at how often our students *do* find failure, when we offer them so little concrete guidance towards success, and so little instruction in acquiring the changeable attributes of its processes.

By providing my students with abundant and varied models—of finished and mid-process projects, of professional and amateur work, of entire works and isolated elements, of organization patterns and grammatical structures, of written products and writing processes, of writers to imitate and writing behaviors to adopt—to guide their learning of the skills and methods employed in the study and creation of compositions, I hope to replace the confusion and off-topic paper-attempts that have characterized so many conversations and work-submissions in my previous classes with cogent, student-generated papers conforming to the standards, forms, and practices of model-texts and modeled processes. I hope to

make it harder for them to repeat the failure that has already characterized so many of their educational experiences, and I hope to make it easier for them not only to face the challenges of the academic situations they find themselves in during the semester that they are in my classroom, but also to anticipate the changing demands that future academic and professional circumstances will place upon them by learning to use models to guide them in adapting their writing skills to meet these new demands.

Chapter 2—Review of Literature and Contemporary Experience

A Contextual Reference

To demonstrate the relevance of work correlative to this project that has been done in the field of composition and in the works of the ancients preceding its recognition as a field will appear relevant, an introductory look must be taken at the ways of knowing that define research and scholarship in composition. For this purpose, I include here a brief review of the classifications and discussions of ways of knowing proposed by Stephen M. North in his *The Making of Knowledge in Composition: Portrait of an Emerging Field.*

North divides the ways of knowing with relation to composition—ways of gathering and processing the kinds of information that composition teachers and researchers engage in—into three categories (Practitioners, Scholars, and Researchers) that ramify into eight distinct types. He calls those who operate within the first category Practitioners, those in the "scholarly" category Historians, Philosophers, and Critics, and those in the "research" category Experimentalists, Clinicians, Formalists, and Ethnographers. Scholars, according to North, are those who base their work on their training in "the traditions and methods of Western humanist thought" (59) and are most clearly associated with the study of the classical tradition of Rhetoric of all of his groupings. The first type of scholar identified, the Historian, participates in both empirical and interpretive study of what North calls "pedagogical history:"

> the recovery and preservation of teaching practices from the past, and particularly those practices embodied in what is usually called the "classical" tradition, the body of Greco-Roman thought dominated by Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, and Quintilian, but also traceable in its influence through the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and so on to the present. (66)

The next type of scholar, the Philosopher, North describes as being deeply involved in the set of "free-ranging, never-ending debate[s]" that characterize a field both old and newly

evolving and concern its ethics, purposes, traditions, and politics. The Critic, the third type of scholar, is concerned with three things: establishing a canon, interpreting the canon, and generating theories about the canon's elements and the processes of their interpretation (116). The Researchers that North identifies can be described as Experimentalists, those who search for trends that govern and predict "the ways in which people do, teach, and learn writing," Clinicians, who focus on individual 'cases' of doing, teaching, and learning writing, Formalists, whose job it is to create models or simulations to allow them to "examine the *formal* properties of the phenomena" of writing, and Ethnographers, who are concerned with "people as members of communities" and who work to "produce knowledge in the form of narrative accounts of what happens in those communities" (137).

North's first category and type of knowledge gatherer/processor is the Practitioner, whose contributions to the field are of primary concern to this project because it is a practical project. North describes the Practitioner's niche with relation to the others this way: "Scholars and especially Researchers make knowledge; Practitioners apply it" (21). Practitioners are the teachers and workers of composition "faced over and over again with variations on the problem of what to *do* about teaching writing"; they know the field the most intimately because they are actively engaged in the body of knowledge that North calls "lore": "the accumulated body of traditions, practices, and beliefs in terms of which Practitioners understand how writing is done, learned, and taught" (22). "Lore" is experience-based, pragmatic, and ever-expanding. Its contributors are continually involved in the process of changing its methods of acquisition in responses to the changes in situations, expectations, and results that surround them. It is maintained through the patterns or "rituals" of the composition classroom (for example, the wording of margin-commentary, the type of assignments given, and the manner of teacher-student interaction), the textbooks, teachers' guides, and journals published within the field, and the verbal interactions of Practitioners. And it is primarily reactive in nature; Practitioner work is motivated by the identification of a problem and consists thereafter of the work of searching for a cause for the problem, searching for possible solutions to the problem, testing possible solutions in classroom practice, validating successful solutions through repeated testing, and disseminating information about successful and unsuccessful solutions (36-55).

The review of literature and contemporary experience to follow includes contributions from practitioners, scholars, and researchers representing the different types of knowledge gathering that North identifies. Because very few of the workers in the field can be definitively labeled by one of North's types only, crossover and blending are characteristic: an article might mix historical research with practical experimentation to propose a philosophical conclusion. This project is primarily Practical in nature, and I, by North's definition, am primarily a Practitioner. But my work, as with the work of all others in the field, is a product of a combination of methods and influences. The most significant influences on this particular project appear below.

Review of Literature and Contemporary Experience

Finding that imitation, as a pedagogical method, is deemed praiseworthy or even essential in the writings of the ancients should not be unexpected. Imitation, after all, is the method of learning used by the youngest of children who watch and copy what their elders model for them, and one can hardly doubt that the second cave-dweller to make fire did so after watching and imitating the actions of the first. When Cicero, who scholars of rhetoric often consider to be the father of imitative teaching, wrote his notes and dialogues concerning many aspects of the delivery and instruction of oratory, in 55 BCE, he assumed the practice of imitation an innate and inescapable human learning-trait. In fact, he warned aspiring orators to be wary of the ease of practicing imitation because "people often direct their imitation to features that are easily copied…and surely if the model has some fault, it is no great thing to adopt that and to exhibit the same fault yourself." Since imitation was, therefore, a logical strategy in orators' acquisition of the skills of their elders, the most important guidance that an instructor could offer students of the art was to "show [them] whom [they] should imitate" (Cicero 147).

The instructional methods of Quintilian, recorded between 35 and 100 CE, accord with and further refine these assumptions about the role imitation plays in the learning process of speakers and writers, placing it among the highest ranks of necessary steps to successful oration, second only to possessing the power of speech, and prior to diligent practice (Quintilian 4: 3, 5). Like Cicero, Quintilian notes that the selection of proper

models is essential: "it is a universal rule of life," he says, "that we should wish to copy what we approve in others," and one should, of course, in order to become successful, practice by "imitat[ing] whatever has been invented [by others] with success" (4: 75). In twelve volumes of pedagogical philosophy and methodology, Quintilian outlines the strength of imitative exercises such as the memorization of examples of successful works of others (1: 261, 263), the translation of works from one language to another (4: 113), and the paraphrasing of works within a single language from one form to another (4: 115). Additionally, he makes the point that there is educational value in instructing students with models of poorly executed prose, both that generated by fellow students and that written by accomplished orators but with faulty or inelegant style, in order to allow students to learn of errors to avoid, and to practice finding and correcting the faults of themselves and others (1: 249, 251).

From these early educational theorists the practice of practicing—of having students learn the craft of writing by imitating and re-writing the writings of others—remained a dominant theme in the teaching of writing and oratory in schools and academies throughout the western world for almost two thousand years. James J. Murphy, in A Short History of Writing Instruction, charts the progression of instructional theories and practices through the Latin classrooms of the twelfth century, the teaching of the composition of poetry in the late middle ages, the resurgent interest in classical rhetoric of the renaissance, and the eighteenth and nineteenth-century schools of first Britain and then the United States; imitation appears as a common strand, in varying forms of formality, throughout these educational eras. But with a tenth of the pages of Murphy's chronological history remaining, imitation as an instructional technique surfaces for the last time, and is clearly then being mentioned only to be bidden farewell. The mid 20th-century era that Murphy describes as "the period between the wars" is introduced as one of "self-expression and creative writing," and with these approaches to composing on paper assuming priority, the practice of learning to write from model texts is not only eclipsed but relegated to ignominy. The new emphasis, which Maxine Hairston of the University of Texas at Austin would later characterize as a shift to a "new paradigm in teaching writing" (86), was a move away from the "traditional English courses" which "had encouraged conformity and imitation rather than self-expression" (Murphy 260-1). This new paradigm, focusing on the writing process rather

than the written product, and centering the teaching of writing around invention and generation rather than imitation of past successes, placed the old standard in direct contrast to the new, not only guaranteeing its fall from grace, but also creating misunderstandings that would fog the arena of composition instruction for the remainder of the century and into the next.

Dissention towards the new paradigm began to appear as early as 1954, when writers and educators such as Winifred Lynsky began publishing their arguments for imitation as a valid instructional technique deserving of inclusion in the composition classroom. Despite the voices of Lynsky and those who agree with her, its subsequent use has been sparse, its reputation suspect, and its heralds sporadic; the modern temperament has settled into a tenacious romanticism championing "authentic discourse"—the writing of students unadulterated by outside influences—above all forms of writing and practice that might, in any way, inhibit a writer's creative originality.

So ingrained is the urge to fight against such perceived impositions that this becomes the central focus of debate about imitation; although Lynsky's first article on the topic was simply focused on the stylistic gains that her students achieved through the use of a particular writing assignment modeled upon the work of a single writer, her next exposition, arguing on a much broader scale for the validity of the use of such practices, only three years later, is tightly polished to be a weapon in the popular controversy. As in her first article, Lynskey describes and defends her assigning students readings with dramatic stylistic particulars in order to have them practice writing in these styles, learning by doing what options are available to them and what imaginative abilities they, as writers, have that may otherwise have gone undiscovered. Phrasing her argument to be contrary to the expectations of those concerned about the restrictions that imitation may place on the innate creativity of a writer, rather than focusing on the merits of the broadness of experience that her students are gaining, she insists that they "are more original, more vivid, more lively when they imitate than when they write otherwise." In fact, she declares, "the student feels freer when he imitates in the ways [she has] shown than when… he is forced into the narrow confines of his own personal knowledge of what constitutes style" ("Imaginative" 400). Perhaps if Lynsky had found a different way to showcase the laudable achievements of her

student writers, the task of the struggling proponents of retaining one of the most valuable elements of classical education would have been an easier one. Unfortunately, the literature of the field has been and continues to be littered with clearly logical arguments, to little avail.

Robert Wallace, in 1960, was the first of many to appeal to the example of Benjamin Franklin in making a case for the imitative method of improving writing. Crediting Franklin himself for originating the idea, he "assign[s] a short passage of good prose, usually not longer than a page, for [his] students to read, take notes on, and re-write from their own resources, according to Franklin's account," and finds that "students enjoy the assignment… mainly for the sense of direction it gives their own writing" (489). James F. McCampbell, in 1966, stresses the use of models in the writing classroom as being "an aid in helping the expression of [students'] ideas." By "help[ing] them analyze the patterns [the model] involves" before using these patterns as ways to express their own ideas, he reports reducing his "student[s'] frustration by supplying [them] with some of the structural conventions of the written language" (772). Returning to the ever-present concern about creativity, McCampbell reports that well chosen models that "provide an additional technique for the student to use in expressing his [or her] ideas…are not restrictive but, on the contrary, lead to greater divergence and creativity in writing." In 1967, C. D. Rogers uses anecdotal evidence from Robert Louis Stevenson and Winston S. Churchill, in addition to Benjamin Franklin, to support imitation exercises, calling the practice "a long-neglected part of the writer's apprenticeship." Also in 1967, Richard Bamberger writes to share the success of a program, instituted in the English department within which he worked, publishing a collection of successful texts by student writers to serve as model-texts for the next round of students being asked to produce the same types of works in the same classes. He stands out among his contemporaries by simply assuming the logic of having students write with patterns to follow, and emphasizing the idea that writings other than professional works can perform as excellent models for the tasks that students are asked to do in writing classes. J. Mitchell Morse's textbook Matters of Style was published in 1968, using models as a primary method of explaining stylistic convention, and Winston Weathers and Otis Winchester, in 1969, published Copy and Compose, a style textbook relying entirely on the imitation of short elements quoted from published writers to teach the different types and purposes of sentences and paragraphs. Although the lessons and examples in the texts are ageless, the

audience needed to keep the books in print has never thrived as their authors must have hoped, and in 2002 only a few reprints of the books, outside of library collections, can be found.

These examples from the 1960's might give the impression that the proponents of imitation were wide spread, were the reader unaware that the list therein is almost exhaustive; these seven voices were the only ones heard on the topic for an entire decade of educational theory, review, and practice in the area of composition, and the picture presented by the 1970's is much the same.

At the turn of the decade Jack A. Brown introduced a sentence-level imitation exercise of viewing sentences as combinations of "kernels" to be deconstructed and rearranged, so that students locate and then reorder model sentences' kernels and then use them as examples for building and reordering their own in an effort to create longer, less choppy sentences. W. Ross Winterowd, writing at the same time, used imitation "as an enabling device" which "has the chance of giving the student the wherewith to become articulate," so as to "learn to manipulate the system of language" after having recognized the meaning inherent in the choices and manifestations of structural elements (163). Edward P. J. Corbett, in 1971, suggests practical classroom applications of classical imitation, recognizing modern opposition to these "conservative" practices but insisting that "it is the internalization of structures [acquired through paraphrasing activities ranging from sentence-level re-structuring to whole-passage study] that unlocks" students' expressive power as writers, allowing them the versatility to be effectively creative. "There…is the suspicion among us that imitation stultifies and inhibits the writer rather than empowers and liberates him," he concedes, though "the number of creative and expository writers who would testify to the value of limitation to them during their apprenticeship years is legion" (249-50). In doing so he makes the quietly groundbreaking suggestion that the disagreement about whether or not imitation exercises are inherently limiting might not be the only relevance of the practice's potential value; limitations, he indicates, can provide inspiring challenges for writers to create within boundaries while exploring the advantages and disadvantages those boundaries provide.

Phyllis Brooks is also looking at specific stylistic gains when in 1973 she propounds the "revival" of the "archaic technique" (161) of using paraphrase (a type of classical imitation exercise) as a "crucial tool" to teach "specific grammatical points" (168) and "encourage the variety of elegance in the prose of freshman students" (161). Frank D'Angelo, also in 1973, steps forward with an alternative viewpoint to Corbett's, suggesting that imitation exercises, rather than usefully limiting students' possibilities on a given assignment, in fact liberate them "from the obligation to laboriously follow the wasteful processes of slow evolutionary development" with regards to their abilities as writers; students' impressions of their own abilities and styles, he says, limit them to "the constraints of forced invention," whereas opportunities to imitate free them from those requirements and allow them to explore their ideas and interests ("Imitation and Style" 283). William E. Gruber, in 1977, describes the "inability to write" as "an inability to design" and shows how imitation demonstrates overall organization while forcing students to focus in on the small organizational details of word-choice in creating works that "achieve individual freedom" (491-4). Martin Gliserman, in 1978, writes to defend the use of successful student-generated sentences as imitation exercises for the teaching of grammar. And John J. Ruszkiewicz, in 1979, explores the use of parody as a type of imitation exercise connecting literature to composition in a concrete and accessible fashion.

In the early 1980's, a new interest seized the educational community, and conversation began to center around, and penetrate into all other discussions of pedagogy, the idea of the discourse community—a group of people with a common manner or expectation for a style of written and verbal communication. The debates over the validity of imitation in the classroom quickly adopted this focus. As Patricia Bizzell observed in 1982, "teaching style from model essays has not prepared us to explain or repair" the "deficiencies" brought by students into the classrooms of the eighties, because

> teaching style from model essays…is teaching the discourse conventions of a particular community—in this case, a community of intellectuals including, but not limited to, academics. But because we were unaware that we were in a discourse community, we taught the conventions as formal structures, as if they were universal patterns of thought and language.

First, Bizzell insists, "what we should do is teach students that there are such things as discourse conventions" (216-217), since "even something as cognitively fundamental as sentence structure takes on meaning from the discourse in which it is deployed" (225). Problems with students' writing, in this view, are less the result of students' lack of practice writing correctly, and more the product of their unfamiliarity with the expectations of the academic discourse communities in which they find themselves.

Carl Bereiter and Marlene Scardamalia take this idea of the exposure of student writers to specified discursive forms into practice when, in 1984, they examined the effects of providing single reading-models for students asked to write a short piece within a given (or invented) genre—a particular set of discourse conventions—evaluating results in terms of students' previous exposure to the genre and in-study exposure to the model. Their findings support Bizzell's suggestions, showing that models help students understand and replicate discrete discourse forms, even when provided only in a single instance, but also that students without previous exposure to a genre are less able to take constructive guidance from the models, being equipped with fewer of the tools needed to discern structurally-relevant from non-relevant examples in a single example of an unfamiliar type of discourse.

David Bartholomae phrased the quandary of discourse conventions and communities as follows: "every time a student sits down to write for us, he has to invent the university for the occasion…or a branch of it, like history or anthropology or economics or English. The student has to learn to speak our language…to try on the peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that define the discourse… or…the *various* discourses of our community" (134). Although the English language community at large was not summarily convinced that "the main business of English studies should be to investigate the nature of discourse communities," as Bizzell proposed (227), the resulting awareness within the teaching community of the nature and relevance of the surroundings of a piece of writing to not only the most appropriate style for the piece but to the student's understanding of and approach to the piece did affect the attention given to the use of imitation exercises and model texts as a pedagogical practice. Lucille Parkinson McCarthy, in a 1987 case-study of a single student's performance and

skills-acquisition in a series of writing-intensive classes—distinct academic discourse communities—finds that "model texts are…particularly important to newcomers learning the conventions of discourse in a new academic territory" (260).

The end of the twentieth century saw the longstanding debate about the limitations versus liberations brought about by the instructional use of imitation beginning to take a subordinate position to interest in the method's origins and applicability, and the term itself used with less and less apology by theorists and educators concerned more with the perceptions, abilities, and learning-patterns of students than what Dale Sullivan, in 1989, called a "modern inability to appreciate imitation as a serious pedagogical method… attributable…to our modern world view [rather] than to any appraisal of its efficiency as a way to teach rhetoric" (5). In a philosophical study similar to Sullivan's, C. Jan Swearingen, in 1994, looks at imitation in the writings of ancient rhetoricians as compared with its modern treatment, focusing mainly on the concepts of imitation as a form of homage, quoting and incorporating others' works having been once considered both flattering to the copied and a sign of wisdom on the part of the copyist in an era when notions of "self" and the "voice" of the individual were markedly distinct as compared to modern ideas. Robert Scholes, also in 1994, discusses the pedagogical implications of this ideological disparity with regards to modern conceptions of intertexuality as an element of "good" writing and plagiarism as an outlawed practice.

Janine Rider, writing in 1990 to disagree with Bartholomae's perspective on the learning process of the university student, insists that students should be writing to develop individual authenticity as writers before beginning to imitating the works of others; she maintains that "the imitation of forms comes naturally, but with time" (183). Patricia Kelly, director of the Virginia Tech Center for Teacher Education, and writing instructor Hans Ostrom, in 1990 and 1995, respectively, reported using imitation exercises to "fus[e] interpretation with text production…open[ing] up theoretical issues but also ground[ing] them in specific practices" in creative writing classes (Ostrom 170) and to teach style to composition students by "put[ting them] into the author's role, where they would go inside the author's style and manipulate language and structures in the manner of the author" (Kelly 161). Researchers Elizabeth A. Stolarek, in 1994, and Davida H. Charney and Richard A.

Carlson, in 1995, published studies of the effects of the use of model texts on writers' skills-gain and mental writing processes. Stolarek found that prose modeling, contrary to the implications of many earlier writers of its effects appearing "unconsciously" in students' later works, was most successful in improving the writing of subjects who "exhibited the most conscious concern about the task and how they were accomplishing it." The old debate being never put completely to rest, however, Stolarek found it necessary to include this observation: "very conscious, deliberate, word-by-word modeling, did not detract from [a] writer's ability to write in a creative manner" (168-9). Charney and Carlson, studying a group of psychology students learning the specific discourse of research writing within their academic field, found model texts to be

> a rich resource that may prove useful to writers in different ways at different stages of their development. For student writers, models may be effective tools for learning the more enduring conventional forms or for understanding those that apply most broadly across the discipline. At a later stage, models (especially those in professional journals) may provide valuable clues to the status of knowledge in the field. (116)

In her 1982 description of the paradigm shift influencing the move away from imitation and modeling in the classroom, Maxine Hairston warned educators that they "must remember that the new paradigm is sketchy and leaves many problems about the teaching [of] writing unresolved….it is important for us to preserve the best parts of earlier methods for teaching writing," she continued; "we also need to continue giving students models of excellence to imitate" (88). It has become clear that, at the very least, this appeal has not held the attention of educators that Hairston must have hoped for; the use of models to guide the work of students writers has remained absent from classrooms, while continuing to appear among the ranks of methods and practices that successful teachers argue for and insist upon in publication. Bruce Watson, an instructor in freshman composition, satire, and creative writing interviewed at Virginia Tech, shows the typically mixed-emotion response of today's classroom composition teachers. "I don't do it" was his initial response to being asked about using imitation in the classroom, but after our half-hour conversation about pedagogical methods and activities, he had described to me several

imitative exercises he uses, often with his Satire class, occasionally in Creative Writing instruction, and never in Freshman Composition. Although he described the imitative option given to his Satire students for their final exam positively, as "forc[ing] them to get involved" and "really get[ting] their imaginations rolling," he expressed more of the trepidation my research prepared me to expect with respect to Creative Writing: "If I told them what to write or how to write it I'd be taking the purpose out of the class—it's supposed to be Creative Writing," he says; "my goal is not to create a set of highly skilled imitators." Watson models types of poetry and prose extensively with his students, intending to expose them to a wide variety of exempla, especially by authors whose work he considers to be at the "boundaries" of the genres he teaches, but he intends them to learn by reading the models, not by consciously engaging in their imitation. "When you fill your head with interesting [things]," he summarizes, "interesting ideas tend to leak out onto the page." Any imitative works produced by students in Watson's Creative Writing class are produced at the students' request rather than by formal assignment. In Freshman Composition Watson uses outlines to model the structures and processes of effective writing, but never uses direct imitation. "I go back and forth on [the idea of using imitation]," he says. "I want them to learn the skills, but I want them to learn them their way."

The strand of the ideological and methodological web surrounding the idea of imitation that seems to show the most potential for further development as a pedagogical strategy is one in which only a few writers have shown interest. Just as reading a variety of forms familiarizes students with both the distinct elements of these forms and the nature of their diversity, imitating a variety of forms outfits a student to write in a variety of different forms—and to explore the adaptation involved in moving between them. Louise Wetherbee Phelps and Sandra Mano, for example, in the mid-eighties, in an examination of a young writer's reflections on his writing process and the influences affecting his work, brush against the idea of adaptability as they center on the subject's initial awareness of the imitative nature of his own writing, at the age of 12, and his later perspective of the imitative nature of most if not all writing. Their study entirely circumvents the notion that the fixed structures of written forms are, in any way, restrictive of creativity. Rather than beginning as an unrestrained, free-thinking writer, and becoming bound by the forms that he had observed and practiced, by growing to realize that writing exists in pre-determined, familiar forms,

Phelps and Mano's subject becomes less concerned with the elements of his work that he knows are similar to others'. He begins to see an increased potential for originality by making his own variations within these forms and structures; the forms he learns to recognize become tools in his hands.

They are not the only writers who have made this observation, but it seems one whose message is often overlooked. In the short exposition of an exercise imitating sections of a particular author's prose, Lynsky proposed in 1954 that the purpose of teaching by imitation is not to create "a classful of monstrous little" versions of another author, but to provide by each exercise a useful addition to students' stylistic repertoires. Students who imitate the selection effectively and "who have never varied their sentence structure begin to do so. They develop loose and periodic sentences…understand and use parallelism as they do after no other teaching…[and] continue to use such devices long after they have forgotten the particular names for the devices" (129). As Gruber's 1977 summary of the benefits of imitation in his classroom experiment explains,

> if discursive prose is "conventional," we need to know some practical conventions in order to write well. The more practical conventions, or forms, we make our own, the more expertly we may shape language to our designs. Moreover, by copying forms, we are set free to squeeze or to stretch them to our needs, knowing that we are doing so. (494)

Cathee Dennison, Director of Virginia Tech's Writing Center, summarizes the most basic problem that the modeling of various forms and structures can correct as follows: "our freshmen don't understand that they have choices in ways to say things." Exposing them to examples of different ways of "saying things," and then providing them with opportunities to apply these ways in their own writing allows them to incorporate new forms of expression into their own creations. As writers develop, Dennison notes, they will more and more often be making choices of their own, but she exhorts that using examples of correct and effective writing, rather than the imperfect models that their peers produce, is more productive because it "let[s] them make the choice of the good, not the poor."

Conclusion

The authors, theorists, and instructors noted above, whom Stephen North would call a distinguished group of Scholars, Researchers, and Practitioners, have all made significant contributions to the "lore" that is the field of Composition and, in particular, to the awareness of that "lore" that I have to work with as I approach this study. This project is a culmination of their influences, my own frustrations, and my experiences as a Practitioner myself, attempting to problem-solve in a field that will always have as many problems as it has members. My understanding of the nature of the field and the nature of the classroom experience of students struggling to become "better" writers indicates to me that imitation exercises may well be a successful solution to several of the more daunting problems with which the voices referenced above have wrestled and continue to wrestle. I intend for the pages ahead to demonstrate the testing, partial validation, and beginning dissemination of this possible solution that North believes are integral parts of the Practitioner's role in the acquiring and applying of knowledge in composition.

Chapter 3—General Methods, Sample Practices, and Rationales

Applying the ideas of modeling the writing process, the written product, and the adaptive skills that teach writers new writing processes and written forms in the classroom involves a combination of activity-implementation and directed discussion. Students need to understand, for example, that standards of "good" and "bad" writing are determined by the circumstances and expectations of writing assignments and evaluators rather than by the innate characteristics of writers, but a simple announcement of this concept will not convince them to abandon the conditioning of an entire academic career. Nor will attempting to inform them that they must be adaptable because they will be asked to produce different types of writing in their academic and professional careers, especially when teaching a class that requires at most several varieties of a single, major "type" of writing (i.e. "the English paper"), and grades its participants based on their success at producing that type. And students need exposure to the different forms that writing takes as well as to the adaptation of works from one form to another, not just by way of reading samples of several kinds of essay before being asked to produce essays of their own, and not just by being shown a paragraph and a poem written on the same topic. Both of these methods, as I recall, had only marginal impact when used by those bent on presenting such ideas to my classmates and me during our formative education.

The methods, procedures, activities, writing-samples, and results contained in the remainder of this study were employed and obtained in two sections of English 1105, "Critical Literacy," the university's most basic writing course, in the Fall of 2002. The writing-specific purposes of this course, as stated in the Guide for Students, are for students to "learn to compose interpretive and analytical essays" and "come to see that writing is a way of thinking and a 'way of seeing'" and that "academic writing is a process that usually involves revision—the act of 'seeing' and 're-seeing' one's writing to reconceptualize one's ideas on a fundamental level" ("Guide" 7). The general nature and present and progressive-tense explanation of many course elements herein is intended to convey to the reader that the ideas and practices discussed are not to be seen as relevant only to the particulars of a single semester's courses, but to the wider world of first-year composition courses both within this department and throughout the larger community of composition instructors.

As students progress through the activities and exercises in this course, I offer them opportunities to study, imitate, and produce model-texts; they also offer themselves as models of the behaviors of studying, imitating, and producing model-texts for one another. They work with models, they create models for one another, and in presentations, workshops, and other interactive opportunities, they become models themselves, all in order to better their skills at composing and revising essays for the reasons stated above.

The discourse community: Belonging to the writers' guild

To offer my students a sense of membership in the community comprised of both professional and amateur writers, I assign them readings of both published and in-process material, with the former, whenever possible, geared towards expanding their understanding of the processes and trials that even the experienced undergo during the composition process, and the latter drawn from their own work and that of their classmates, in order that all of these elements together combine to create the picture of the world of writers in which they participate. Pieces such as Richard Lederer's "The Case for Short Words," (Rosa and Eschholz 247-252), offering suggestions for successful writing from a successful writer—while at the same time modeling illustrative writing—and Amy Tan's "Mother Tongue" (Ford and Ford 44-49), narrating the author's struggle to find an appropriate voice for her audience in the composition of her first novel, invite student writers into a community whose other members have both advice to share and painful learning experiences similar to students' own to relate. "Sample student papers" from the assigned reader, read and analyzed at scheduled intervals so that the samples' types or purposes correspond with my students' own writings assignments, show students the past successes of others standing in the position they now occupy and facing the same challenges.

Most importantly, drafts, outlines, revision plans, and "final" versions of students formal and informal writing are read, analyzed, and responded to in peer groups and as whole-class exercises, allowing students the opportunity to learn from each others' strengths, accomplishments, weaknesses, and mistakes. Students in my classes submit work in periodically collected portfolios for grading purposes, but also in electronic format before

correction as material to be used in classroom exercises, so that some grammar lessons and model sentences, and at least three or four of the essays they read before submitting for grading essays of their own are student-generated and relevant to students' own experience.

Additional interaction between student writers and peer-generated model text occurs throughout the semester, as classes participate in five-to-ten-minute process-modeling presentations in which one student presents an element of his or her current writing project to the class, and to which other class members listen and respond critically. Such presentations allow students to share and discuss plans for upcoming papers, tentative foci, theses, outlines, sources of evidence, or difficulties encountered at a point when feedback can assist the presenter with the paper in process while modeling elements of that student's experience for the class, so that each writer, at some point in the semester, becomes a working model and living lesson for an element of the composition process.

As students are exposed to and interact with not only polished texts but also the in-process components of the texts of fellow writers, they come to see their own in-process attempts as genuine, valid elements of the larger writing experience. And although the workshops and presentations of students to their peers do not carry the severity or intimidation of the oral declamations in which ancient Rome's rhetorical students participated (Murphy 70-1), students are nonetheless joining the rhetorical tradition of experimenting with the formal elements of their discipline by modeling their attempts, as well as these attempts' accompanying praise and correction, for one another.

The differing standards of "good" writing: Suiting the audience and situation

In order to show students that standards of "good" and "bad" writing are determined by circumstances and expectations rather than by innate characteristics of the writer, I offer them examples of different types of writing appropriate to different situations, and lead them to discuss the ways in which each piece is best suited to its intended audience, as well as the ways in which it would be inappropriate, or ineffective, as a way of reaching a different audience or serving a different purpose.

In one activity, I assign students an essay on the value of using specific, concrete language (Rosa and Eschholz 243-6), and then ask them to paraphrase that essay while deliberately defying the author's advice, by being as abstract and vague as possible. My informal written response questions to this activity ask them to evaluate the two styles as ways of presenting information, to note in what ways the abstract paragraph is weaker writing, and to suggest in what ways it might be stronger or more useful to a different situation or assignment. This analysis of the model's strengths and weaknesses focuses students' attention on the authorial decisions of the model's author, while at the same time placing them in an authorial position to consider making similar decisions with their own compositions.

In another, I present for my students a pair of e-mails introducing distinct but related subject matter (an article from an online article series and one from a published manual, both related to computer science and written by former Virginia Tech Engineering students), one in a professional format and the other in a very chatty, personal style. Students are asked to discuss the differences in form and purpose of these introductory letters, noting especially the types of circumstances in which each would be fitting or unsuited, and then to revise each letter assuming a reversal of circumstance, by means of what classical rhetoric calls transliteration, making the informal introduction appropriate to a formal setting and the formal one fitting to a casual interaction. By doing so, students observe different pieces of writing that are "good" in their original forms, note that in another form the same pieces would be judged "bad," and, by considering and applying the new circumstances of form, revise the "bad" pieces to create "good" ones.

A third assignment asks students, after completing an initial draft of the first major essay due in the class, to outline the draft, then outline an alternate organization scheme for the same information, and then write a second draft following the second outline and demonstrating a major structural change, practicing transliteration on their own texts rather than the texts of others. At the next class meeting, each student's pair of drafts is brought to a peer group charged with evaluating the comparative strengths and weaknesses of the two drafts, with the outcome being each student's decision of which draft to revise for final submission. This authorial decision, then, is based not on the student's impression of which

is the "better" writing, but of which approach better communicates the author's ideas in a manner appropriate to the assignment.

A fourth assignment offers students the chance to take on a persona not their own in creating a modern rendition of several paragraphs of Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal." Students are handed a selection of the original essay, its spelling modernized but its diction remaining firmly 18th century, and after a discussion of the piece's original purpose and the vocabulary and punctuation changes that make it hard to read and requiring of intervention, I ask them to paraphrase the entire content of the selection in modern, standard "newspaper" diction, as if it were their proposal, to be submitted as an editorial to a local paper. Students' paraphrases are evaluated by the standards of modern punctuation, grammar, and diction: the goal is that they adapt Swift's ideas to a different form of expression, making them not "better" but appropriate to a different readership.

Both paraphrase and transliteration are, of course, exercises in imitation according to the classical tradition; they require the careful study of a model in order to extract, for the former, the model's content, and for the latter, its content, purpose, and stylistic principles, in order to modify style while retaining content and re-applying purpose (Murphy 59-60). The final formal essay assignment of the semester asks students to combine these techniques, alongside an application of all they have learned during the course of the semester about paragraph structure, organization, proper grammar usage, and other elements of the writing process from the textual and interactive models they have encountered throughout the semester. For essay four, student writers, following a set of models introduced by a Global Revision lesson and sample (Appendix I), paraphrase and transliterate an earlier "finished" essay from this class.

Each student begins by selects a previous essay that he or she is interested in modifying: my judgment of the essay as a "good" or "bad" example of its original form at the time of its initial submission has no bearing on the work's appropriateness to this new exercise, because the goal of the assignment is to adapt existing material to a new purpose—whether each student makes a "good" essay of one type into a "good" essay of another type or makes a "bad" essay of one type into a "good" essay of another type is immaterial. The

student first paraphrases the original essay into outline form, isolating blocks of content and organizational structure. Then, the student creates a comparative purpose-statement, delineating the original essay's intended type and audience, and the intended type and audience for the revised essay. After outlining a revision, which will include not only manipulating the order of elements but considering which elements need to be removed and which added or expanded upon to suit the proposed essay type, the student will transform the outline and much of the material generated for the original essay into a new one. Lastly, the student edits the new paper based on the grammatical rules and aspects of successful writing that have been modeled for him or her in lessons, published-essay readings, lectures, presentations, and student-generated prose all semester. The final product, then, is both a transliteration of the student's own work, and an imitation of a semester's worth of models.

The writing of the academy: Exposure to forms and to formal adaptation

Of primary importance in students' understanding of the diverse expectation of the academic community is their exposure to different types of academic writing; exposure does not simply mean assigning one or two works in each type to be read. Although it would be absurd to hope that the composition teacher be able to provide readings and writing opportunities from all possible disciplines that students might encounter, it is not only feasible but necessary to familiarize students with a variety of the academic composition forms required in English studies, and by stressing variety and changeability in doing so, to convey a sense of the value of flexibility that can extend to students' later adoption of standard written forms in other areas of study.

The reader that I use in my 1105 classes has been selected to meet this purpose of presenting examples of professional and academic writing samples. Rosa and Eschholz's Models for Writers: Short Essays for Composition (now in its seventh edition) presents its essays in units according to the skill (i.e. thesis-development or thematic unity) or type of writing (i.e. narration or argument) that each included essay models. Unlike many undergraduate readers, "Models" limits its selection to essays of an appropriate length to serve as reasonable examples of the types of writing students will be asked to do in introductory classes such as my own. The text also includes several "model student essays,"

which, although fewer in number than the collection offered to my students in Virginia Tech's First-Year Writing Program Guide for Students, are accompanied by marginal commentary and conclusive analysis, as well as by an unambiguous statement of purpose: the student essays, written in classes using an earlier edition of the text, are presented as "a good example of what can be achieved by studying models" (4); they are included not only as models of student writing, but as *models* of the kind of student writing that results from working with *model*-texts.

The reader's introduction outlines the purpose of the text in a way that shows its clear alignment with the goals that Virginia Tech's Core Curriculum defines for first-year English classes, and makes the idea of trying to teach these skills *without* the use of model texts seem foolish indeed. Models is designed, the introduction assures its readership,

> to help you learn to write by providing you with a collection of model essays, essays that are examples of good writing. We know that one of the best ways to learn to write and to improve our writing is to read. By reading we can begin to see how other writers have communicated their experiences, ideas, thoughts, and feelings. We can study how they have used the various elements of the essay—words, sentences, paragraphs, organizational patterns, transitions, examples, evidence, and so forth—and thus learn how we might effectively do the same. When we see, for example, how a writer like James Lincoln Collier develops an essay from a strong thesis statement, we can better appreciate the importance of having a clear thesis statement in our writing. When we see the way Lisa Brown uses transitions to link key phrases and important ideas so that readers can recognize clearly how the parts of her essay are meant to fit together, we have a better idea of how to achieve such clarity in our own writing.
>
> But we do not learn only by observing, by reading. We also learn by doing, by writing, and in the best of all situations we engage in these two activities in conjunction with one another. [The text] encourages you, therefore, to write your essays…as you are actually reading and analyzing the model essays in the text. (1)

Although this collection of essays is not, of course, entirely representative of the array of writing types and situations to which my students will be exposed throughout their careers, becoming familiar with various types of essays, and, more importantly, practicing the job of adapting existing ideas or previously-completed writing to different types or forms serves as a good behavioral model of the act of familiarizing oneself with and adapting to other types of writing, which is an act that my students will continue to be asked to perform throughout their academic and professional careers, quite probably in genres and formats that I, a practitioner in but also essentially a neophyte of the digital world, cannot even hope to predict. The skills of analyzing model texts, imitating their forms, and transliterating ideas into more circumstantially appropriate forms are as relevant to today's students as they were to those learning rhetoric from Quintilian.

Completed essays alone are not sufficient to model the necessary elements of writing that first-year composition students struggle with. The majority of my students begin each semester far from exhibiting mastery of the standard forms of written expression in English: they exhibit basic or ineffective sentence structures, incomplete or disorganized paragraph development, and significant problems with English grammar; they confuse verb tenses, misuse commas and other punctuation marks, and make flagrant agreement errors. Although all students in the First-Year Writing Program at Virginia Tech are required to purchase a grammar and style manual—for several years the required text has been Diana Hacker's A Writer's Reference—most students, in others' 1105 sections and in the sections I taught previous to this semester, use the reference as exactly that: when told to correct a specific error, students will read the particular section devoted to describing and eradicating that error. There is nothing wrong with using the reference as a reference, or with referring to a specific model—of a comma-splice, per se—in order to learn how do deal with a particular grammatical problem, but the text provides many other modeling opportunities for students to take advantage of.

At the paragraph level, A Writer's Reference includes models of fourteen different types of paragraphs (i.e. example, cause/effect, definition), each with an explanation of the potential uses of its organization structure, and five model paragraphs selected to highlight a

particular organizational feature or strategy (i.e. transitions, direct and indirect linking of ideas). Imitating these forms and features in classroom exercises provides my students with the positive experiences of both creating clearly organized paragraphs and experimenting with different types of paragraph structure. At a more basic level, A Writer's Reference, like any useful reference book in its field, provides "Basic Grammar" instruction covering parts of speech, sentence elements, subordinate word groups, and sentence types. Included in the portfolios of formal and informal writing assignments that I collect from my students is a section devoted to summarizing readings, and included on the list of readings to summarize are these chapters of basic instruction. By writing summaries of each lesson—paraphrasing the material—students not only review the rules of English grammar but also use the model explanations in the text to generate explanations of their own for their notes.

Readings in the primary texts are supplemented by additional materials, of course. In an exercise outlined in the preceding section, for example, I mentioned introductory letters written to me by professional publications of two Engineering-School graduates of Virginia Tech. These examples of electronic communication, at different levels of formality, are appropriate to different types of interactions that students will encounter professionally; reading the samples gives students exposure to these different types, and paraphrasing each letter, formalizing the informal tone of the one and "dressing-down" the formality of the other, provides students the opportunity not only to practice writing in each form but also to adapt content from one form to another. As the role of technology in our daily lives continues to increase, electronic communication methods will become even more prominent aspects of the academic and professional demands my students face, and providing them opportunities to develop exposure and experience in these areas is important; providing them opportunities to develop skills at adaptation, however, is even more important.

In addition to the introductory e-mails, the actual articles written by alumni of the programs in which many of my students are now enrolled—programs that are, especially in students' minds, clearly *not* related to the study of English—are assigned as reading samples and discussed as such in the classroom. Although the material in each article is too technical to provide much value as an imitative exercise, the value of exposure to the model is still clear: students see, first-hand, "real" world applications of the writing skills that they are

practicing. Putting this concrete material in students' hands is far more effective at showing students how and why they might find themselves writing professionally than presenting statistics about how many employers value writing skills in the workplace. And although the articles appear in a form that students have not yet attempted to master, students' exposure to and practice in a variety of other forms prepares them to make the necessary connections. If they had the technical knowledge the article-writers possess (and, no doubt, some of them do), their experience with imitation would enable them to imitate the articles' form and create similar works of their own.

These models also encourage student's awareness that the writing of the academy is not an end it and of itself but is rather a set of standards that they will be expected to master and then move beyond. Exposing students to both the academy's standards and those of the world beyond it helps prepare them not only for the transition from college to their professional careers thereafter but also for the realization that the standards that they learn, no matter at what level they learn them, are transitory, fluid, and subject to crossovers among and between levels and disciplines.

Clear expectations: Leading by example

Providing examples of successful essays will help student writers to better understand what is being asked of them when an essay is assigned, of course; providing examples of successful argumentative essays when students are asked to write one will be even more helpful in students' composition of argument essays in particular, as will analyzing the steps other students take, and observing the effective and ineffective choices they make. Students in my classes experience all of these examples over the course of the semester.

They read successful works in a variety of forms, to gain exposure to some of the standard forms that professional writing takes. They read, in advance of writing, several published examples of each type of essay they are asked to create, to establish familiarity with the expected elements of that particular form. They participate in analytical discussions and writing assignments based on these published examples to generate an understanding and appreciation of the different ways that the authors of these model essays approach

similar topics, and so that they, as student-writers, can then choose between these approaches when creating their own essays. They write analytical questions about their own in-process papers, highlighting recently-studied elements that they are struggling with (i.e. thesis-placement, transitions, paragraph-organization), creating examples of the types of concerns they will consider when reading others' papers as well as providing guidance for the peers reading theirs. They comment on and make suggestions for one another's in-process drafts during workshops, reading student-generated models of the same types of essays that they are writing, and turning their understanding outward to help one another better approximate each assigned form. They present textbook and outside source material during formal group presentations, proving their classmates with further examples of the types of writing they are working with. And they generate, revise, and edit essays, providing themselves with examples of the stresses and successes of the common and distinct writing processes involved in creating each type of essay.

Unfortunately, as I have noted above, many of my students arrive in my 1105 classes not yet prepared to write any essays at all, or to glean enough necessary information from offered models to be able to imitate them with much success. These students often have their attempts to express themselves in writing clouded by a longstanding accumulation of bad grammatical habits and a lack of clear instruction about the nature of standard written English; they write sentences with elementary structures, have trouble constructing organized paragraphs, and show little variety of form in either their sentences or paragraphs. In these areas too, my students need to be led by the examples of correct, varied, higher-level structures, and to have clear models for the types of work they need to learn to produce.

At the beginning of each class period, my students copy one or two pre-selected sentences from the board. Although this ancient practice of employing direct imitation might initially "strike the student as being a rather brainless exercise," writes Edward P. J. Corbett, "it can teach the student a great deal about … style" ("Classical" 510). After the sentences have been copied into students' notes, we discuss the structure and form of the sentences (they might be loose or periodic, simple or complex, interrupted, inverted). Students then compose, in their own notebooks, original sentences that mimic the forms of

the examples. By either copying onto the board examples of these student-generated sentences to discuss or having students take turns sharing their constructions aloud, the class is exposed to repeated examples of each form. Mistaken attempts at constructing successful imitations of the offered forms are also discussed and corrected. Although I ask students to copy the labels of each sentence-type into their notebooks for purposes of comparison, the emphasis of the exercise is on providing models of different types of sentences, to expand the possibilities available to student writers as they develop their own compositions, and to free them from the repetitive patterns that many of them have fallen into in their writing in the past.

Similarly, once or twice a week, I assign a model of a paragraph, selected from the Hacker text or drawn from outside sources, with specific forms or functions (examples include analogy, contrast, definition, classification) and, after discussing the salient points of the model's form or function, have students write into their notebooks their own paragraph in imitation of the example. Exercises can be either a loose imitation, in which the form is generally followed but the topic and precise order of elements is left entirely up to the student writer, or a tight imitation, in which the student re-creates the exact structure of the model sentence-by-sentence. Again, I ask students to share examples of their work with the class, modeling additional examples for their peers, and allowing opportunities for whole-class analysis of the effectiveness of each volunteer's attempt. Both loose and tight imitation exercises offer students experience with constructing successfully organized paragraphs and with the different types of paragraphs they might choose to use when constructing longer works of their own invention.

The elements of basic grammar, too, are modeled and imitated by my students in exercises conducted both during and outside of class. In addition to A Writer's Reference, my composition students enjoy the benefit of Virginia Tech's interactive online grammar module, the Grammar Gym, which features a tutorial system of explanatory text, model sentences, immediate-feedback exercises, and quizzes involving sentences similar to those modeled and used in exercises, allowing them exposure to repetitive models of grammatical forms and structures to increase their familiarity with these basic elements. I also provide my classes with model examples of grammatical sentences from outside sources, as well as

from both exemplary and problematic student sentences, which I write on the board for students to copy, discuss and correct as classroom exercises, thereby not only exposing students to actual models of correct work and of common errors, but also actively modeling of the corrective measures involved in editing and perfecting the grammar of in-process writing; in this way, my students are exposed daily to examples of correct grammar and examples of how to correct the problems that mar their own writing.

Material Rationales

The materials I used as models for the activities my students engaged in were chosen for a variety of reasons, not all of which are reasons I would use now in making new selections for future applications of these activities; in many ways the very nature of this study guarantees its appearance as limited at its conclusion, because only by conducting the class based on guesses and assumptions could I gain the experience needed to make the more constructive choices that would heighten its effectiveness. Within the framework that I began, however, I made the choices that I did for the following reasons.

The sentences I used in sentence-long in-class imitations were taken primarily from Weathers' and Winchester's 1969 Copy and Compose: A Guide to New Prose Style, although I supplemented their selections with examples found in other texts I was reading at the time and with sentences I generated in order to fulfill a specific purpose. These sentences were selected based on their structural variety and the grammatical and mechanical lessons they demonstrated. Some of the sentences, in practice, were difficult for students to grasp, either because of their complexity or because of their use of archaic word-choice (selections from the text had been quoted from a variety of other published sources rather than being generated by Weathers and Winchester), and in future courses I plan to substitute sentences from more modern sources or of my own creation that share structural characteristics with these difficult examples but present them more accessibly to my students. Ultimately, I will be replacing all of the sentences: the source material is copyrighted, and to continue to use the resource in future classes without requiring students to purchase the book (which is out of print) would be to deliberately violate copyright laws.

The paragraph-type models found in A Writer's Reference were used for the pragmatic reasons that they served the purpose of exemplifying different types of paragraph organization and structure and were located in a text students had already purchased as a grammar handbook. The simplicity of material's presentation and its ready accessibility easily overrode the possibility that stronger examples could be brought in from other places. Although with more time to review and select materials I will be able to be more discriminating in choosing materials than relying on the standard text, I found the examples within the standard to be sufficient for these simple paragraph-structure exercises; better sources might be found, but even mediocre sources served the purpose of introducing students to the practices of imitating and some of the common structures for writing paragraphs.

Stylistic paragraph and several-paragraph models, of such writers as Jonathan Swift, Thomas Paine, and Samuel Johnson[1], were selected for their demonstration of stylistic distinction; despite the similarities between their authors (all sufficiently-educated white males writing professionally in the eighteenth century), they are unlike one another as well as being unlike any contemporary writing students are familiar with. These samples, in their difference from modern standard academic language, also serve to help students understand the inherent changeability of language; they show that language changes over time, that different pieces of writing can be "correct" or appropriate in different circumstances, and that even well-educated white males in the eighteenth century did not all have to write alike in order to have their work accepted into the literary canon.

Using only stylistic models from these similar authors does not demonstrate enough of the stylistic variability I would like to expose my students to, nor does it fairly represent the authorship of exemplary writing: stylistically interesting, "correct," canon-worthy writing has been produced in many other time periods as well, by authors of different races, genders, and educational levels. In future classes I would like to employ a much wider range of stylistic models for my students to work with. I think that this limited selection teaches several useful lessons that I would like to continue to teach future classes, but I want to supplement those lessons with opportunities for students to work with a much more diverse

[1] Appendix II

array of styles and authors. The canon has its necessary place in students' educational progress; students need exposure to its works and experience with the styles of writing its standards promote, because these works are a part of the cultural world of academia and professionalism that they are entering, and because their styles, as standards, are among those that students will be expected to show familiarity with and proficiency in reading if not reproducing. Rather than perpetuating the historically limited—and, to many of today's students, alienating—literary canon by introducing only the writing of its members, however, I need to add to such readings and activities those centering around other authorial voices, those representing a wider array of cultural and societal influences, so that my students also gain exposure to and experience with the diversity of human voices and the writing styles that different authors use to effectively convey their thoughts and experiences.

My selection of Rosa and Eschholz's Models for Writers: Short Essays for Composition as the primary reader for my courses was the result of my review of a number of readers designed to be used in courses like my own; of the texts I reviewed, Models had the clearest presentation of instructional information and the most constructive questions and activities accompanying its essay collection, the most appropriate selection of essays to be used as models for the types and lengths of pieces my students would be required to produce, and the most supportive language, in its explanatory sections, to my own approach in teaching the class. As noted in more detail in Chapter 3, Models presents its included essays not only as reading material for students to contemplate as material to write *about* but as concrete models for students to study in learning *how* to write.

Methodology Rationale

I chose the instructional methodology for my classes with consistency of purpose as my primary goal: I wanted all of the activities my students engaged in to expose them to models, engage them actively in the imitation of models, or involve them in the modeling of behaviors, whether in each instance each student was serving as a recipient of another model or as a model for someone else. I wanted to offer my students the widest variety of modeling activities that I could arrange while keeping those activities germane to the types of formal writing assignments students would be asked to perform and the specific skills they

would need in order to perform those assignments. In gaining specific writing skills by using modeling techniques they were also gaining more general skills that would help make them more adaptable to different types of writing in future situations. If any of my activities seem less than completely germane to the formal writing assignments demanded by the curriculum, it is because these activities were geared towards exposing students to diverse types of models and modeling experiences. If any activities seem to miss an opportunity to explore diverse forms, it is because these activities were designed to build towards the assignments students were being asked to produce, often at the cost of an equally valuable writing experience that the time limits of the course would not allow me to fully develop. My hope is that most if not all of my activities successfully juggled the demands of these possibly-warring justifications.

Conclusion

Although the four goals identified above, presented as approaches to helping students overcome the four obstacles presented in Chapter 1, can be discussed distinctly, as the methods and activities outlined above demonstrate, there is no real way to separate them in the classroom. A model of academic writing provided to students for the purposes of a specific assignment serves to expose them to academic writing as well as to show the assignment's demands; it shows them a standard of correctness while allowing them to assume that there are others extant, and it allows them, by the practice of imitating it, to be a part of the world of writers alongside the model's original writer and the other student writers working with the model. Additionally, there are few enough concrete measuring tools by which to gauge the particular effects of the use of models on such a small sample as the study group I have worked with this semester: it would be impossible in such a short amount of time and with so few subjects to describe, in detail, the impact of the varied activities and assignments I have offered to my students on their sense of belonging, familiarity with academic writing, understanding of the variability of the standards of appropriateness, and ability to comprehend and reproduce the requirements of individual assignments. As such, I have focused the remainder of this study particularly on the last goal—with the understanding, of course, that the interrelationship of these goals will cause all of them to continue to be represented. The discussion to follow will center on the issue

of presenting students with clear expectations, based on the idea that providing models—more so than describing assignments without providing models—makes possible students' creation of written work that effectively demonstrates the necessary components of each particular assignment.

Chapter 4—Procedures, Results, and Limitations

Building Blocks

I began the semester working from the idea that the most important reason for using models with students is to make clear to them the expectations of each assignment by providing a completed example of each type of assigned writing. Each assignment, then, is designed to assist students in their creation of the four major essays due in the class, and all of the assignments—the lesser ones and the major essays—worked cumulatively towards the students' increased proficiency at expressing themselves clearly, using effective organizational strategies, and choosing appropriate styles to the standards of the academy. In addition to generating material in imitation of provided models, students also wrote self-assessment and activity-assessment responses to many of the activities I assigned to them. The examples and responses that appear below are the results of these assignments, and have been an invaluable tool in my assessment of my own success at using these techniques to propel their learning[2].

In order to create a successful essay, of course, a student must have not only a strong point to make, but must have an appreciation for organizational strategies in order to choose an effective one, and must have the ability to structure his or her thoughts in logically-connected paragraphs comprised of clear, effective sentences. In order to combine these elements, the student first must master each one. And in order to master each element, the student needs both exposure to and experience with that element. Modeling exercises present students with these necessary opportunities: with a model to imitate, a student can produce a similar item, be it a sentence, paragraph, or essay.

I asked students at the beginning of the term to differentiate between two types of modeling activities—loose and tight imitations—and to experiment with these types in classroom activities. A loose imitation is one in which a student is given a model and then imitates broad, structural elements of the model in creating a sample of his or her own

[2] All quotations are included with the permission of the student-writers, and all students' names have been changed.

writing. A tight imitation is one in which the student follows the model's structure precisely, imitating the order and even the grammar of its sentences, while changing only those words or phrases needed to switch the overall content to the student's topic from the model's. A loose imitation of an illustration paragraph, then, might have the same type of introductory and concluding sentence and a similarly formatted internal description—perhaps in chronological order—illustrating an event that may or may not bear much resemblance to the event illustrated in the model. A tight imitation of the same paragraph would show the same number of sentences and types of sentences, in the same order, revealing a very similar event (because describing a vastly dissimilar event to the one the prescribed formula reveals would be very difficult) in a similar way. The loose imitation is the more creative, the tight the more rigid; the loose provides more opportunity for the student to experiment with ways of achieving the form demonstrated, while the tight locks the writer into the form and forces him or her to experience—by practicing—an unfamiliar writing style.

Both types of imitation require that students study the model closely and then recreate its elements in their own prose, and both make many students predictably uncomfortable. "I feel like I am directly copying," wrote Nick, an 1105 student in my 4pm class, in a written response to the first tight imitation exercise I assigned. "For the past 8 years, teachers always told us do not straight copy from an author or text without citing. Always put it in your own words, teachers would tell us." Both types of imitation also, by imposing limits on students' writing, open up possibilities for them to explore that they might have overlooked before. Another student from the class, Terrence, in response to the same activity, wrote "I enjoyed writing in a preset formula because there were fewer requirements for me to have to meet on my own. I could focus more on the style th[a]n the content." Terrence, I feel safe to assume, has never read D'Angelo or Gruber, but his reactions to the activity speak of the "liberation" from obligation D'Angelo notes ("Imitation and Style" 283) and the "achieve[ment of] individual freedom" Gruber says results from being able to focus on style and word choice (491-4).

My students practiced grammatical correctness and stylistic variety in sentence creation by engaging in a semester-long series of sentence imitations—some tight and some loose—allowing students to practice engaging in the exercise of creating a wide variety of

differently-structured sentences. By first copying sentences created by others, then identifying the structural elements of the example sentences, and then creating examples of their own, different in content but similar or identical in structure, students gained experience with such skills as writing very long and very short sentences, using stylistic repetition and symmetry, correctly employing less-familiar punctuation marks such as hyphens, semicolons, colons, and dashes, and listing while keeping elements in parallel. In one exercise, a set of examples sentences demonstrated the difference in the rules governing comma use with restrictive and non-restrictive clauses:

> Alexander, who was an accomplished scholar, tried to take over the world and almost succeeded. Those who wish to take over the world should follow his example.

Students were initially puzzled by the distinction, but after a few attempts and an involved discussion, were producing correctly punctuated examples of their own, like Matthew's rather simplistic example:

> My taco salad, which had a stale shell, was very gross and didn't taste good today. People who make taco salads should use fresh shells.

A several day series of sentences demonstrating stylistic repetition, and a discussion of its potential uses, prompted these student-generated samples from Matthew and Sean in my 2pm class:

> Consider the music of today's popular society—music of hate, music of prejudice, music of misunderstanding.
> I often imagine the places I'd love to travel—exotic places, warm places, wet places, kind places.

These sentences do not appear particularly difficult to the experienced writer, but for writers as inexperienced as my students tend to be, they are remarkable accomplishments: they are different. They go beyond the technical understanding and basic stylistics with

which most students enter first-year composition classes. They demonstrate students' creation of work in a new style, a style that they learned by imitating a model. To create such examples, students often had to struggle to construct sentences that were unfamiliar to them—sentences that initially sounded awkward or "wrong" to their inexperienced ears. "Who writes like this?" they frequently asked, when met with a particularly complex arrangement. By the end of the semester, however, such constructions were beginning to appear—with varying success—in their own formal writing.

My students also practiced different types and organizational strategies of paragraph writing by doing tight and loose imitations of sample paragraphs from *A Writer's Reference*: over the course of the first third of the semester, students read analytically, discussed, and imitated example, illustration, narration, description, process, comparison and contrast, analogy, cause and effect, classification, division, and definition paragraphs. The following pair of comparison and contrast paragraphs, organized in block style (rather than point-by-point) shows the original excerpt included as an example in the Hacker text and a tight imitation created by a student in my 4pm class:

> So Grant and Lee were in complete contrast, representing two diametrically opposed elements in American life. Grant was the modern man emerging; beyond him, ready to come on the stage, was the great age of steel and machinery, of crowded cities and a restless burgeoning vitality. Lee might have ridden down from the old age of chivalry, lance in hand, silken banner fluttering over his head. Each man was the perfect champion of his cause, drawing both his strengths and weaknesses from the people he led. –Bruce Catton, "Grant and Lee: A Study in Contrasts" (29)

> So Steve and Mike were in complete contrast, representing two diametrically opposed elements of American high school life. Steve was the modern jock emerging; beyond him, ready to begin, was the great career of a professional football player, of crowded stadiums and cheering crowds. Mike might have come straight from the science fair, test-tube in hand, pocket-protector in his

> pocket. Each man was the perfect champion of his cause, drawing both his strengths and weaknesses from the activities he enjoyed. –Omar (student)

By completing an entire series of imitations of this type, students gained not only exposure to these different ways of generating paragraphs but also first-hand experience writing in each of these ways. Terrence summarizes his gains as follows:

> I feel that writing in other styles is a faster way at learning new styles of writing than just reading about them. Pieces of the author's writing style became part of my writing subconsciously. The style becomes part of my own and it becomes my own individual work

Mary, a student in my 2pm class, notes an additional benefit of completing another of these short imitation exercises, supporting the claims of research with her own experience:

> Since sentence structures and coherence were pretty much already set up for us, the work process was creative and simple. My finished product was less dramatic than the [example], but it was smooth and effective…. I struggle a lot composing intelligent meaningful coherent sentences and was relieved of that pressure in this exercise.

Exercises like these also prepare students to compose their own essays by providing them specific strategies; instead of making random attempts to organize their material, students can draw upon their experience with paragraph types to choose the most effective type to relay a particular idea.

My students explored the changes that "good," "standard" language undergoes over time, and the different stylistic decisions that different authors make in communicating their ideas, by doing tight imitations of longer passages by Jonathan Swift, Thomas Paine, and Samuel Johnson—all exemplary writers of "good" prose according to the standard academic cannon, and all writers of prose stylistically different from one another and from the

contemporary samples of "good" writing that students experience. The following paragraph, a sentence-by-sentence tight imitation of a 1776 selection of Thomas Paine[3] by a student named Becky, although awkward and dramatically overstated by today's standards, shows a writer engaging in a deliberate, conscious study of style and word-choice:

> These are the times that try students' souls: the summer slacker and the sunshine beach bunny will, in this dilemma, shy away from their academic obligations; but he or she that stands it Now, deserves the love and pride of mother and father. Diligence of study, like anticipation, is not easily overcome: yet we have this comfort with us, that the more difficult the class, the more relieving the passing grade. What we learn too easily we boast too excessively:--It is difficulty that gives everything its earned value. Professors know to place a rightful price on their information; and it would be odd indefinitely, if so grand a thing as INTELLIGENCE should not be in high regard. The World, with all the schools to enforce diligent studying, has proved (not only to students) that KNOWLEDGE is "THE KEY to ALL SUCCESS," and if knowledge works, in such a way, then there is no reason to deny the value of education. Even the expression is true, for so unlimited an element rests in the hands of us all.

In the following sentence-by-sentence paraphrase of Samuel Johnson's preface to his 1755 dictionary, Brett, a freshman composition student, demonstrates his understanding of Johnson's content while carefully altering his style; although the punctuation is still primarily Johnson's, the word choice reflects Brett's assignment to modernize the language to be readily comprehensible to a modern audience:

> When I first tried to understand my thoughts, I found our language repetitious without order, and including no grammar rules: wherever I looked, there was a great giant spaghetti mix that needed to be untangled, choices of words were uninhibited, with no grammar rules; hyperboles were made to be known, without a norm; and figurative language was either

[3] Originals of the samples of Paine and Johnson imitated on these pages can be found in Appendix II.

> received or not, without a standard to follow like a proper set of rules to follow or a proper author to compare to.

If the learning gained from these activities requiring conscious attention to style, structure, and word choice was not grasped in time to be applied to the first formal paper of the semester (new techniques take time to understand and utilize), it was made immediately relevant to students in the task assigned to them for their second formal paper: to work cooperatively with another student to create a single, cohesive, analytical paper. Although I did provide students with models of organizational structures appropriate to the paper assignment before they began, for this paper the primary responsibility for creating and imitating models fell on the students themselves, as they found themselves having to model sentence and paragraph structure to one another while attempting to combine their voices and ideas into a unified presentation. Brady, a student in my 2pm class, has this to say about working cooperatively with his partner, Rob, on such a paper:

> The drawbacks of writing with a partner were making the paper sound like one person had written [it]. We both have very different writing styles so sitting down together and writing the paper took a while. Creating individual sentences together was also difficult because we write very differently. We had trouble writing transitions between our individual paragraphs. We had each written half the paper by ourselves and then we stuck them together, so getting it all to flow together was challenging. In the end I was most proud of the fact we did make it sound like one person did write it.

Brady's response shows the results of earlier imitation exercises bringing style and sentence-types to his attention; he is acutely aware of the difference between his writing and his partner's, and is struggling with the complex issues of voice, flow, and consistency in tone, issues that usually appear in the lesson-plans for advanced composition courses.

Analyzing the Process

The ultimate goal of these various imitation activities, of course, is for students to gain proficiency at both the specific elements imitated in each activity and the general technique of using models to guide their own writing. In addition to the smaller-scale models of paragraphs, sentences, and stylistic elements, students work with essay-length models from their text, prior to drafting their own essays in the type modeled (narrative illustrations, for the first assignment, and argument papers for the third), and the peer-generated models of one another's drafts during the revising activities that precede final paper submissions. Working with different kinds of models—peer-generated and professional—offers different benefits to students while providing them the opportunity to examine those benefits and their differences.

Some students found peer-generated models more beneficial because of the similarity in the writing situations of the model-writers and evaluators; student-writers found it easier to be comfortable analyzing and critiquing work by writers of their own ability level. Colleen writes, "I think that student models are more helpful to improving your writing because they contain mistakes in them [that] you can point out and correct, whereas all the text book models are perfect." Gary summarizes a similar opinion this way: "Student models are more helpful than text models because they are examples of how a student would really write. By seeing the errors on paper, the writer will become more aware of the problems and how to fix [them]." Working with imperfect papers, as Colleen and Gary observe, allows students the opportunity to develop editing skills that they can then use to better self-edit their own work; by encountering in models mistakes similar to those they make themselves, students in peer workshops model for one another the skills of effective editing that they can then imitate when editing their own drafts.

Other students were more comfortable imitating published, professional models than the imperfect work generated by their peers. As Adriana explains, "Student models are helpful in that I can refer to what level of writing I am on with my classmates. However, because we are all learning, I find the text models better references because I know they must be accurate and I should practice from them." David makes a concordant point, expressing a downside of working from student-generated models: "I think the text book models are more effective because they are totally correct and the student models tended to

have errors which distract the reader from the real point." David's observation of the potential "distraction from the point" inherent in working with student-models is particularly astute: in an introductory class such as this one, where students have so many difficulties with correctness in writing, peer-evaluators, and I as the primary evaluator, often have trouble attending to the larger issues of clarity and organization in papers instead of being bogged down in making editing-type corrections. Editing skills are important, of course, but need to be secondary to the global concerns of a paper's success at conveying its message, and David's comment shows his growing awareness of the relative values of these aspects.

Interacting with different kinds of models in these ways brings students a first-hand understanding of the benefits and drawbacks of different ways of using models to learn writing, revising, and editing skills. Students are not only gaining experience in writing to specific standards by imitating models, but are also gaining experience in thinking about writing—in analyzing their own writing and learning processes—which skills will be useful to them in future writing situations far removed from the specific requirements of individual papers in this course. Colleen's description below of the specific lessons she learned from working with text- and student-generated models is complemented by Diane's summary of the educational benefits of working with models of different types to guide her own writing and revising:

> One thing that I have learned from the essays in the text is that word choice is extremely important to get your point across to the reader. I have tried, in my own writing, to carefully choose my words so that they say exactly what I want them to. In someone's paper today I read a lot of repetitiveness. It was not the good kind of repetition that gets a point across clearly, but rather a bad type that sounded as if [the writer] couldn't think of anything else to support his argument so he just kept repeating the same point in slightly different words. I want to avoid this in my own writing. –Colleen (student)

> I believe that [text and student-generated models] are equally helpful. The text models often give you ideas on how to organize your essay and structure it. Student models on the other hand give you good ideas from your peers

> and they also show mistakes that you do not want to imitate in your own writing. I often find mistakes in my partner's writing and then I go back and look at my writing to make sure I did not make the same mistakes. –Diane (student)

Results: Student Responses and Teacher Observations

Student Response Method—The Survey:

In order to gauge students' responses to the variety of modeling activities employed throughout the semester, I asked them to participate anonymously in a 41-item survey[4] containing statements phrased positively about modeling experiences, statements phrased negatively about modeling experiences, statements about students' comfort-level using English in academic settings, and statements about students' background (from which much of the demographic information to follow was obtained). Each survey item, phrased to act as an evaluation of classroom activities or student experiences, had four possible multiple-choice responses: A (agree), M (mostly agree), P (probably disagree), D (disagree). Students were also given the opportunity to substitute written responses for any statement they felt was phrased inappropriately or unfairly; in order to maintain anonymity, written responses were asked to be typed and submitted at the same time with all other student responders' statements. No students chose to elaborate in writing upon any of the 41 statements.

The survey was administered during the last third of the course, after students had had ample time to become familiar with activity procedures and experience a variety of different modeling activities, but prior to the end-of-semester evaluations required by the university, so as to avoid fatigue on the part of the responders.

Statements were grouped by activity type on original survey, to lead students through a logical progression of evaluating course elements. Student responses were re-grouped by statement type for analysis. Statements phrased positively were reviewed together, as were

[4] The original survey distributed to students can be found at Appendix III.

statements phrased negatively, statements about students' comfort-level in English usage and English courses, and statements about students' backgrounds[5].

For evaluation purposes, student responses were awarded numerical values with a gap between assigned values allowing for a neutral position to result from an average of positive and negative responses. A response of "disagree" was assigned a numerical value of 0, "probably disagree" a value of 2, "mostly agree" a value of 6, and "agree" a value of 8, leaving 4 as the unassigned neutral value[6].

In analysis, student responses were reviewed according to numerical values and averages, and these numerical averages were each assigned an ultimate response value of "positive," "neutral," or "negative." These values were assigned both by individual statement (the average of all students' responses to each survey statement, corresponding to each particular activity) and by individual student (the average of each student's responses to pro-modeling statements, anti-modeling statements, and comfort-level statements). Background statements were not averaged.

Students:

The demographics of the course participants and survey responders are summarized below: My class rosters for the observed semester totaled 49 students, 25 women and 24 men, one of whom withdrew before the end of the term. The final grade distribution (with plusses and minuses normed for simplicity) for the semester was as follows: 6 students earned A's, 27 B's, 12 C's, and 3 D's. Of the 40 students who completed the survey, eight identify themselves as minorities in some way, six as having been previously enrolled in a less-than-exemplary high school, four as having come from a background that could be considered "underprivileged," and two as non-native English speakers. My own observations in the classroom identified only one non-native speaker, which implies to me that the other, whoever he or she might be, has been speaking and writing in English for such a considerable time so as to "pass" for native. I visually identified seven students as

[5] Survey statements regrouped to coordinate with type organization can be found at Appendix IV.
[6] A full chart of student responses can be found at Appendix V (8 pages).

belonging to racial minorities, and am assuming the eighth responder to be the one student in the class to openly identify with a minority sexual orientation. Of the seven non-Caucasian students in my classes, two are of Middle-Eastern descent, four are African-Americans raised in the United States, and one student is African. None of the students in my two classes was identified to me as warranting any adaptive teaching methods due to any learning difficulties, and none were members of student athletics subject to scheduling modifications. One student enrolled in the class with junior standing, one as a sophomore, and the rest as freshmen.

These distinctions, although undoubtedly relevant to the students themselves, showed no discernable impact on students' responses to survey statements, participation in classroom activities, or ability to contribute constructively to discussions and benefit from lessons beyond the diversity of response, participation, and ability to be expected of any group of individuals.

Survey Responses and Analysis:

Students' responses to the modeling experience support an assessment of the techniques as being beneficial to the learning of writing skills in the classroom. 27 of the 40 student responders averaged a positive response to the positively phrased modeling statements, 13 averaged a neutral response, and none averaged a negative response. To the negatively phrased statements (those inquiring about students' frustrations with, dislike for, or indifference toward modeling practices), 20 students averaged a negative response (indicating that they were not frustrated, displeased, or indifferent), 18 averaged a neutral response, and only 2 averaged a positive response (indicating frustration, dislike, or indifference).

Question or Question-Set	Pos Resp.	Neg. Resp.	
#1 (imitating sentences)	34	6	
#4 (imit. Par. Structure)	32	8	
#7 (imit. Authorial voice)	27	13	Overall Response Averages to
#10/11 (reading models)	37	3	Positively Phrased Statements:
#15 (student oral models)	34	6	Posivite = 27, Neutral = 13, Negative = 0
#18 (peer models)	29	11	
#20 (using models diff. Ways)	37	3	Overall Response Averages to
#22 (prefer model to desc. Only)	32	8	Negatively Phrased Statements:
#30 (learned to write in diff. Ways)	32	8	Negative = 20, Neutral = 18, Positive = 2
#31 (confidence w/new ways)	36	4	
#32 (will seek models in future)	22	18	
#40 (comfort level w/new ways)	32	8	
#41 (importance of adaptation)	35	5	

For full table of all responses and averages, see Appendix V

Positively and Negatively Phrased Statements

Positively phrased statements were designed to evaluate students' reactions to individual activities using modeling and to the benefits of modeling as a general practice. Negatively phrased statements were designed to evaluate students' responses to some of the frustrations and perceived limitations that working with models can generate, especially in inexperienced student writers. On the survey distributed to students, topic-groups of statements generally included one or two positively phrased statements about the particular benefits of an activity or practice and then one or two negatively phrased statements about the potential difficulties the activity or practice could present for students. The specific problems identified in these statements were inspired by the findings of past scholars working with modeling in classrooms, and by my own observations of my students' difficulties as they became acclimated to the new techniques.

Students averaged positive responses to six of the eight positively phrased statements focusing on individual activities: 34 students responded positively to imitating new types of sentences, 32 to imitating paragraph structure to learn how to write a particular type of paragraph, 27 to imitating an author's voice to explore an unfamiliar style or approach to writing (more below), 37 to reading model essays in the text to gain experience with the necessary elements for writing similar essays (2 statements), 34 to listening to student presentations wherein students model their own experiences with particular writing

processes to the class, and 29 to reading and workshopping with peer-generated models. Considering the natural variations in human preferences and learning styles, we should expect to see at least as many dissenting voices to the phrasing of these statements as are apparent, if not more. Assuming that the average classroom involves students representing a range of learning styles and preferences, these numbers suggest that students of several different learning styles and preferences felt that these methods of learning to write were beneficial, and only a few were dissatisfied with the methodology. Expecting that no method pleases all students or benefits them all equally, we can conclude from these student responses that the students asked found modeling to be quite helpful indeed.

Student responses were mixed (average neutral) rather than overwhelmingly positive in reference to the activity in which they evaluated a sample essay with my grading rubric, to model the grading-process so as to gain familiarity with it, and to the statement "Imitating the voice of a specific author was helpful to me because it gave me a chance to explore a style or approach to writing that I wouldn't have tried otherwise." All but one of the 13 students who responded negatively to this statement offered, by way of explanation, a positive response to one of the following two negatively phrased statements:

> (Statement 8) Imitating the voice of a specific author was frustrating for me because I didn't like having to sacrifice my own style to copy someone else's.
>
> (Statement 9) Imitating the voice of a specific author seemed wrong to me because it made me feel like I was cheating, like I was stealing the ideas or forms of someone else.

Like in these two statements, students' positive responses to other negatively phrased statements were most pronounced when the issues raised were of comfort or restriction. 26 students agreed with one or both of the above statements, 21 students agreed that "imitating model-sentences [made them] uncomfortable by forcing [them] to write in a way that is unnatural for [them]," and 19 felt that "imitating the paragraph structure of a type of paragraph was restrictive" because it didn't allow them to "structure the paragraph in a different but equally effective way."

In response to the statement that I initially felt to be most indicative of students' overall impression of their work with models during the semester, their answers were not impressive: when asked to agree or disagree with the statement "When I am assigned a writing project in future classes, I will try to find a model of the type of writing that is expected of me," 22 students expressed agreement, and 18 disagreement. As I evaluated their other responses, however, my enthusiasm was revived. 37 students felt that "using models in different ways was beneficial because it [widened their] exposure to and experience with different kinds of writing," 32 said that they would prefer to work with a model than just a description of an assignment, 32 that the class's activities had helped them learn to write in different ways, and 32 that working with models had increased their comfort level with regards to "unfamiliar types, styles, and levels of formality in writing."

Despite the divided nature of their stated intentions to seek models in the future, that my students, as a whole, have had positive experiences with modeling and appreciate the benefits it offers them is clear, and the reluctance many express towards seeking models in the future might be due in part to their relative inexperience in using models—a fifteen-week course is a short span in the 13-year educational career most of my students have already experienced. Another factor probably more influential is their almost total inexperience with selecting models on their own; all of the models students used in my courses were provided by me or the other students in the class, and these activities are arguably insufficient in preparing students to select their own models in future situations. Possible solutions to this problem will be addressed in Chapter 5.

Additionally, after most of a semester of lectures, discussions, and activities designed to stress the importance of adaptability (emphasizing models as tools to be used in adapting to new forms), 35 students agreed that being "able to adapt to different forms of writing with some success was more important than being able to write in one or two forms perfectly," and 36 students expressed confidence in being "able to continue to learn to write in different ways when encountering different expectations in future classes." Because teaching students to be adaptable is the ultimate purpose of teaching them to use models to guide their appropriation of new forms and techniques in writing, the appreciation for the

importance of adaptability and the confidence towards achieving it that they show in these responses testifies that the modeling activities I have employed are serving the purpose for which they were intended.

Comfort-level Statements

Comfort-level statements were composed with the intent of comparing students' responses to modeling activities to their feelings about English classes in general, and of comparing students' comfort level in past courses to their reactions to the present course. Accordingly, averages were computed of students' past comfort-level (in courses prior to this one and regarding their opinion about the effectiveness of past courses preparing them for this one), present comfort level (regarding only this particular course), and overall comfort-level in both past and present situations.

Most students reported a similar comfort-level in previous courses as in the present course; of the 40 student responders, only 13 expressed a significant distinction in comfort between the past and present, and of these 13, the preference was almost exactly split: seven students reported a higher comfort-level in this course than in past courses, and six students reported a higher comfort-level in past courses than in this one. Overall responses were split equally between positive and neutral response-average, with the exception of only four students who averaged a negative comfort-level response.

All four of the students who expressed a negative overall comfort-level with regards to English usage and English classes averaged neutral responses to the positively-phrased modeling statements, and three of them also averaged neutral responses to the negatively-phrased modeling statements. These findings suggest that the mixed responses these students offered to statements about modeling, both those promoting and those disparaging the activities, are more a result of these students' lack of comfort and confidence with any English-language classroom activities than of a particular difficulty working with models over participating in other types of lessons.

The implications of these statements to this study at this time are therefore significant only in their lack of particular significance. Students were not distinctly more or less comfortable working with modeling activities than with other classroom practices in English courses. Most students have a positive or neutral response to English classes in general and to this course in particular, and those who average a negative response to English classes in general are no more uncomfortable in this type of class than in any other. Students who are usually comfortable and successful in English classes are not adversely affected by the practices of this course; survey responses suggest that their confidence remains intact.

Teacher Observations

Although survey responses and trends in response-values are informative, there are limits to what can be definitively said about the experiences of students working with models by speakers other than the students themselves. I can report that the majority of the students I asked agreed with a particular statement extolling the virtues of working with models, but I cannot guarantee that any individual student was giving an honest response, was an effective evaluator of his or her gains by means of exposure to any particular teaching method, or that he or she would have had a similar response in a different classroom with different modeling techniques used or a different teacher; there are too many variables in human experience to claim to prove absolutely that the difficult task of learning to write effectively is actually easier for students when models are used. I can, however, having taught first-year composition both with and without employing these techniques, state without reservation that using models makes effective writing easier to teach.

At this point, I must acknowledge recognition of the potential danger in praising a technique for being "easy" to administer—education in this country is already rife with shortcut techniques that sacrifice effectiveness for easy administration. In saying that teaching with models is easier than teaching without them, I am not attempting to imply that the methods require less time or effort than others, and I by no means believe that effectiveness is being sacrificed. The ease involved in using modeling is instead a measure of clarity: what is so often difficult about the teaching of writing is the nebulosity of the

medium and the learning-processes. The unclear expectations that most students struggle against when striving to write effectively are equally frustrating to teachers: we ask for "good" writing without knowing much better than they what we mean. We feel that we will recognize quality when we encounter it—and sometimes we do—but we often have no real way of conveying our ideas of quality to our students.

When working with models, teachers and students alike find their tasks less cloudy. Just as it is infinitely more feasible for a student to effectively "write an essay like these examples," when provided appropriate examples, than "write an essay that does this, this, this, this, this, and this," when provided only a list or description of criteria, it is easier for a teacher to evaluate a student's success at completing a specific task—at imitating a specific model—than at meeting such a list of criteria, especially when the individual elements of such criteria often have variable or even negotiable relative importance.

In an oversimplified example, I cannot ask a student to write a "good" sentence, an "interesting" one, or even a "long" one, and expect that he or she will be able to produce what I expect, nor could I, collecting sentences from 49 students, assign defensible grades to them based on such criteria. But I can ask a student—or all 49 students—to write a compound-complex sentence, after discussing a model compound-complex sentence with them, and evaluate the success of each sentence precisely. A compound-complex sentence is not necessarily a "good" or "interesting" sentence (although it is usually long, especially by my students' standards), but it has the potential to be so. Additionally, it is far more useful for a student to have in his or her repertoire—in my courses, this means in his or her portfolio—a compound-complex sentence than a "good" or "interesting one." When we tell students that "sentence variety" is an important element of "good" style, we don't mean for their sentences to vary in relative goodness or interest but to vary in structure. A student who can look back into his or her notes and see some "good" sentences and some "bad" ones is not even prepared to explain the distinction between them, let alone to construct a series of varied sentences based on the information to be garnered from them. A student with a compound-complex sentence, a simple sentence, a sentence with an inverted structure, and one exhibiting stylistic repetition, on the other hand, has the necessary tools to construct variety out of variety, and by imitating and creating each of these sentence types

has learned about sentence structure through the practice of several concrete, repeatable skills.

Teaching the structural elements of successful essays is also easier when using models than when relying on description and discussion, for the same reasons of clarity. As students, we have all been assigned chapters or sections of instructional materials describing the characteristics of an effective introduction. Often, these chapters or sections also include examples of different types of introduction: these usually appear in isolation, essay-heads without bodies or feet, with no connection to anything other than a label or, at best, a brief explanation of the types of essays for which they might be appropriate. A Writer's Reference, for example, includes a paragraph describing the usual length and "common strategy" for shaping an introduction, an isolated example-paragraph including an italicized sentence identified as the thesis (of a paper that does not appear), and a sentence listing "characteristics of an effective thesis": it "should be a generalization, not a fact; it should be limited, not too broad; and it should be sharply focused, not too vague" (15).

While these summative statements might be true, they are wholly unhelpful; as a student inexperienced with writing effective introductions, or, worse, overly experienced at writing ineffective ones, I would have no working definition in my toolbox for "too broad" or "too vague." As a teacher working with students of these experience levels, I have no ready answers for the questions those explanations beg. "How limited is 'limited'? At what point does a 'generalization' become 'too broad'?" These aren't questions that can be reasonably answered at all, and the usual dodging reply, "That depends on the scope of your paper," communicates nothing but additional frustration to an already struggling student. Trying to answer such questions in my first semester teaching 1105, before I adopted a text with appropriate models for my students, was as frustrating to me as hearing my answers must have been for my students: *I* understood what I meant, I was acutely aware that *they* did *not,* and I had no way of bridging the gap. Attempting to explain how scope related to their working understanding of the concept "too vague" generated the same blank looks as telling them I wanted them to vary their sentences.

My students still read the section in A Writer's Reference on writing introductions: it gives us a common vocabulary for our discussion of the effectiveness of the introductions used in the model essays I then assign them to read and respond to. After reading the essays, students write or speak in answer to several questions about the passage introductions as they relate to the essays as unified wholes:

> How does the author begin the introduction? How does he or she conclude it? Where does this author place his or her thesis? Which placement seems most effective to you? Which was the most clear? Which was the most confusing? How is the introduction for this piece different from the introduction to the last piece? How effective is the author at conveying in the introduction a clear representation of what the reader should expect to find in the rest of the piece? How well does the rest of the piece match the expectations he or she sets up in the introduction?

Many of these questions could not be answered about an introduction in isolation, or even a series of them; their effectiveness as a teaching tool relies on the students' ability to evaluate several whole pieces of model writing, focusing on the interaction between a common element of several of these pieces and the interaction between that element and the remainder of each individual piece. By providing students multiple models of introductions in the context of entire essays, I prepare them to approach writing introductions in their own essays not as a frustrating attempt to decode ambiguous criteria but as a set of choices to make between imitating several viable approaches they have already seen used effectively in real pieces of writing.

And although my students, in their survey responses, might project that only half of them would be likely to reach for a model in an unfamiliar future writing situation, my observations of their behavior tells a slightly different story. In one activity during the last week of classes, I assigned a page-long writing assignment of a different type than students had yet attempted. The only familiarity students had with the assigned form was a longer example of the same type that they had been assigned to read the night before; they had not been warned that they would be writing from the example, and were not given instructions

to take note of structural elements when they read it. The assigned piece, a classification essay by Judith Viorst, had as its topic the grouping of the author's friends into different types. In my 2pm class, I led a 10-minute discussion about Viorst's essay, focusing in particular on structural elements and her organizational approach. When I told that class to write a similar essay, without specifying that they should use the assigned essay as a model, half of the students (10 out of the 20 who were present that day) reached for the text containing the essay and wrote their own essays with the text open, following the form Viorst's example provided them. To my 4pm class, I simply announced that they were to write an essay classifying their friends into types. Without the benefit of the discussion of structural elements and organization, two thirds of these students—18 out of the 24 present, almost twice the 10 in the earlier class—immediately reached for their texts to find Viorst's example.

This simple test, enacted only once, carries little weight as statistical evidence for students' likelihood of using models on future assignments, but it does indicate to me a clear trend in support of what researchers like Elizabeth Stolarek found: students respond the best to working with models, discussion *and* descriptions, second-best with only models and descriptive criteria, and the most poorly using only descriptive criteria (170). That students given only a description would, therefore, be more likely to look to the aid of a handy model than those benefiting from both a description and a discussion is logical based on these findings, but my students seemed to know it intuitively: a high percentage in both model-deprived scenarios sought a model to provide additional guidance, and even more of those with only the description were driven to do so.

Project Limitations

That the possible scope of such an inquiry as this project begins far exceeds its capabilities goes without saying, even were the study's sample-size larger, its duration longer, its variables more controlled, its methods more strict and its data more empirical. As it stands, the two sections studied involved only 49 students and lasted only 15 weeks—on a Monday/Wednesday schedule, my contact with my students was limited to 31 meetings including the final exam period. In comparison to the only control group I might have

identified, the 1105 course I taught last year—one section only, with an enrollment of only 18—I have almost no constant variables. I used the same grammar reference, but for different activities and in different ways; I assigned the same sections of the Grammar Gym, but supplemented those sections with different in-class grammar activities and lessons; I assigned the same readings from the Guide for Students but asked for a different type of response requiring a different type of attention to detail; the students in both fall semesters attended the same university, and had all been placed in the most basic of first-year writing courses upon entrance, but there their similarities ended.

The methods of teaching using imitation activities and of evaluating students' approval of and success with the activities I used varied widely, a circumstance I created deliberately: although it might have been better for my study had I used a more consistent set of lessons and evaluative techniques, my interest in teaching my students adaptability as the primary goal of using imitation prompted me to use as much variety as possible, to allow them exposure to and experience with not only many activities but also the process of adapting from one to another. And the data that I have presented, even in the cases where my analysis appears mathematical, is almost entirely subjective in nature. I can count empirically the number of "x" responses to a given question, but the fact remains that the responses I count and relay are opinions. I can note that 6 of the 49 students taught using imitation and modeling this semester earned A's, while none of the 18 students taught without emphasis being placed on these methods last year did so, but the difference in sample size alone, let alone the lack of variable control between the two sets of data, prevents this statement from having any real value.

Conclusion

That the study itself is valuable beyond these limitations, however, I am firmly convinced, and my students' survey-responses to the methods used in the study confirm my impressions. In the absence of hard, factual proofs, testimonial evidence, itself a valuable assessment tool, especially when dealing with the subjective nature of human interactions, learning preferences, and writing styles, tells us a great deal nevertheless about the success and worth of these methods in the teaching of composition. As Stephen M. North points

out, with respect to documenting and verifying the success of tested methodologies, "the causal chain is not simple, and validation of any solution only tentative." Hard evidence is hard to come by, and the work of the Practitioner—most often, the classroom teacher—is far more vulnerable than the work of the Scholar or Researcher to the criticisms and skepticism of outside audiences. As North describes the problem: "to accept the validation of practical inquiry," or, as it may be termed, experimental pedagogy, "is to accept that Practitioners can see or sense or feel signs of change that outsiders, and even students, cannot: that things are happening that require both involvement and an appropriate sensitivity to perceive" (50). The lack of concrete, causal proof of the success of classroom experiences might daunt the outsider trying to accept the results of these experiences, but it is through just such success as I have seen that the practical "lore" of the composition classroom is built.

Chapter 5—Conclusions, Implications, and Projections

Project Conclusions

The effects of this project on the teaching of first-year composition seem to me to be only positive. Imitation exercises of varying types benefit students in different ways, but all of the activities employed had the specific result of students' gain in writing experience, the lack of which is probably the largest contributor to the lack of success they tend to have in college-level writing classrooms. Imitation exercises offer students exposure to the published writing of the academy and the developing writing of their peers, granting them entrance into the writing community, and show them examples of the different types of writing appropriate to different situations, helping them to understand that "right" in the world of writing is dependant on situational expectations. Completing a variety of different imitation exercises allows students to practice the different styles of writing that might be expected of them in different situations, and gives them hands-on experience varying their own writing, which in turn develops their ownership of their own writing and leads them to view writing as a series of choices that they, as writers, are in control of making. Models of the types of writing that students are being asked to produce show students clear expectations for their individual accomplishments, and studying these models allows students to generate their own approach to doing what the model-writers have done. Modeling their own writing processes for their peers, and studying the model processes demonstrated by their peers allows students to participate actively in developing processes that are appropriate and effective for them as individuals. Teaching writing using models is a more feasible task than doing without them, and learning to write in specific ways by imitating models is more productive and less frustrating by far than trying to meet the writing-specific expectations of teachers or employers with only a description or a set of assumptions about the desired product. Some students are more comfortable working with models than others, but all students who become experienced with the technique have gained a skill that they now have the choice to employ or not employ as they see fit.

Implications and Projections

Theoretical Considerations

About the ongoing debate between imitation's proponents and those who believe it stifles creativity, this study holds a firm position: the age-old fear that learning to perform writing-tasks by imitating the writing of others will inhibit students' ability to be original in creating their own is one to which I simply cannot give credence. Although my students did note that they felt less freedom to produce entirely generative material when asked to work with a particular model, they were nonetheless each quite capable of producing a unique work in each circumstance. Asking 49 students to imitate the structure of a particular sentence resulted in my receipt of 49 different sentences—some about monkeys, some about soldiers, and some about teen romance, despite the topic of the original sentence having been an ocean wave—expressing students' individual experiences and creative approaches to meeting the challenges of the particular task. Not all of the sentences successfully appropriated the form that they were trying to learn on their first try at doing so, but all of them were distinctly original. And while working with a particular model on a particular assignment limits a student's options for structuring the writing piece demanded by that assignment, it does not go on to preclude the student's completion of other assignments in other ways.

Learning a way of organizing an essay does not prohibit learning or inventing other ways to organize essays any more than a musician's mastery of a new song causes him or her to forget old songs or to be incapable of writing new ones. Some of my students, after the experiences that they have had this semester, are as creative as they ever were, and have gained new tools with which to express their creativity. Some might even be more creative than they were, after having been forced to attempt heretofore unfamiliar tasks and discovering in their accomplishment skills, ideas, or talents that the students previously did not know they possessed. None of them have had their creativity damaged by their practicing of the specific styles, structures, and forms of others' written examples. At the very worst, some of my students have probably ignored all of the opportunities to gain new skills that I presented them, and have still walked away with whatever creativity they originally possessed intact.

The other prominent concern not to lose sight of when considering the issue of creativity and originality in the first-year composition course is the pedagogical purpose of the course itself. In a creative writing course intended as a place for students to explore their expressive preferences, telling students exactly "what to write or how to write it" *would* be, as Bruce Watson noted in the interview in Chapter 2, "taking the purpose out of the class." A first-year composition class has different goals, however: to outfit students with the basic—and in some cases remedial—skills they need to effectively communicate their ideas in writing. Effective writing is writing that serves its writer and audience honestly, that successfully communicates the author's intention to whomever he or she is trying to reach. It is not necessarily creative, original, or stylistically advanced, although these are goals that any writer can pursue if he or she wishes to. In the three sections of 1105 that I have taught, one of my 67 students has expressed an interest to me in doing any creative writing unrelated to the requirements of the course. Any of the other 66 might find him or herself interested in pursuing these advances at a later time, or might not; what all 67 of them *will* find themselves doing is needing to communicate effectively. Learning basic skills in a first-year composition class will not impede a student's chances at writing creatively in other situations, but not learning those basic skills will keep students from being able to write effectively, both in circumstances allowing creativity and those demanding simple clarity.

Teaching students to model their work on the work of others while they are learning to write in a particular style or for a particular purpose is a little like teaching them to read music: with the behavior instilled as a practical way to gain access to new styles and forms, they see the new forms they encounter as a series of elements, like notes, that they can imitate, or play, on the instrument that is their own writing. The experience that they gain from these new forms can always be turned towards improvisation, embellishment, or the creation of new forms once they are familiar enough with the basic element of the new forms to stretch beyond them.

Practical Considerations

Of course the assigning of imitation exercises, like any other teaching method, can be overdone; a variety of classroom activities, as any experienced teacher knows, must be

employed in order to maintain student interest and allow students to experience various types of learning. I am not proposing that modeling be used to the exclusion of all other techniques and activities, but that it take a much larger role in the learning students do regarding the forms and structures of different types of writing, especially at the sentence and paragraph level, and especially with inexperienced writers needing a great deal of guidance to be successful at assigned tasks.

Experienced writers can also gain from imitation exercises, both to learn new forms (even the most experienced writer is not an expert at all possible forms of writing) and to explore the variations in style and voice that writing in conscious imitation of someone else can provide: the most experienced writers probably have as much to learn as the most inexperienced, for they are in many cases the most confident in the particular way of working that has proven "best" to them throughout their own schooling, and have often stopped looking for new input and trying new styles.

All writers need opportunities to work through the early-learning exercises that imitation activities provide, just as they once had to work through a handwriting book in order to learn to shape letters legibly according to the standard shapes their society has agreed to recognize. After they have mastered these skills, all writing students need opportunities to explore their own ideas about structure, style, and organization. Some of these explorations will be successful and some will not, just as the individual preferred handwriting that students develop once they have mastered the workbook pages is sometimes legible and sometimes not—but most students, at least those with normal motor skills, are capable of legible, "standard" printing in addition to whatever script or scrawl they prefer. I foresee the same fortuitous circumstance for students who use imitation to master the basic skills of effective writing: they can be creative and experimental when they so desire, but will also possess an understanding of and an ability to approximate standards, both old and new.

Designs for Future Study

In continuing to work with first-year composition students and the intricate, difficult task of helping them make gains in their understanding of and ability in writing effectively, I will certainly be making use of models, in many of the ways I have found successful through the exercises and activities outlined in this project, and in others I have not yet had the opportunity to devise and/or employ.

Taking into account the limitations this project has suffered and the benefits I believe that could be gained from working around them, the following needs seem to present themselves automatically:

I. Studies should be done to:

1. Track the progress of student writers learning with and without the benefits of using models over a longer period of time.

In the university environment, this might take place over both sections of students' first-year English courses, or, more informatively, over a several-year period of following a group of students through not only first-year courses but other writing-intensive courses in their relative majors. Lucille Parkinson McCarthy's 1987 case study provides a model of how such a study might be conducted, although her work focused primarily on the student's awareness of the commonality of his different classroom experiences, whereas the purpose of doing such a continuation of this project would be to chart student gains in their appropriation of divergent skills: those that demonstrate their growing ability to adapt to new and varied academic demands.

2. Evaluate students' reactions to and comfort-level with English classrooms using modeling over a longer period of time.

While it is easy to justify students' mixed responses to working with models during the first semester of their exposure to the techniques as being born of a natural human distrust for the unfamiliar, and to project that they would only become more pleased with the methods and their results after longer exposure, only a longer study will reveal whether or not these projections are accurate. Again, in the university environment, this could be done during a

two-or-more-course sequence that a group of students is locked into, or could be accomplished by tracking a set of students through different classes that all provide models for students to work with.

3. Compare the assignment-based effectiveness of writing produced by students learning from model-assignments to those without, using a large enough sample-size that variations in grade distributions could be considered indicative of student ability and performance.

Grades are not an absolute measure of student learning, of course, especially not overall course-grades, but if a specific rubric (or set of rubrics designed to shift with the demands of different assignments) were used to evaluate students' gains in adhering to the standards of each model-type in creating their own works, students grades, as reflections of their success at meeting the demands of the rubric(s), could be used to accurately reflect their successes at mastering individual writing styles or forms.

4. Compare the gains made by students in similar courses taught with the same materials and methods in all areas except for modeling activities, so that a control might be established to better attach observational differences in student performance to the specific application of modeling techniques.

The individuality of human subjects, as opposed to the relative similarity between white lab mice, makes the establishment of an absolute control impossible, of course, but a much more informative analysis of the results of the application of these techniques in the classroom could be gained by having a set of comparative test-environment with many fewer discrepancies than characterized the two semesters of my interaction with students in English 1105.

II. In addition, material selections need to be broadened so that the voices students are exposed to and offered chances to learn flexibility by imitating present a broader range of styles and influences, and more thorough diagnostic measurements need to be taken prior to the beginning of experimental semesters so that the differences in students abilities to write using the basic tools available (as improved through the imitation of grammatical structures, sentence styles and paragraph organization) and to adapt to new writing situations (perhaps

measured by students' success at imitating their first model as compared to their success at imitating a final new model at the end of the period of observation) can be evaluated with more concrete data than the confidence of their instructor to speak for them.

III. In a more ambitious projection of possible future-applications of the work begun in this study, I would like to incorporate as an evaluative tool to measure students' growth in stylistic variance and grammatical maturity a computer-based analysis of the ratios of structural sentence-types students utilize before and after working with models of grammatical structures and sentence styles. My evaluative impressions of the improvement of the complexity and quality of student work will always be subjective, but a quantitative measure of the percent of each students' simple to compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences at the beginning of a study compared to a measure of the same percentages at the end of the study would demonstrate empirically the gains of specific students and thereby the possible gains for other students in the concrete skills of higher-level sentence-construction.

IV. Most importantly, the next course that I teach putting imitation exercises and theories to work needs to offer students a more clearly developed opportunity to learn how to choose models for themselves, both among options presented and in efficient, deliberate searches when no pre-selected models are presented. As noted in Chapter 4, only half of the students I surveyed agreed that they would seek models to write from when faced with future writing assignments in their own academic or professional careers. Because their responses to the results of working with models in this class were so overwhelmingly positive, I have to assume a logical reason for this disparity; my assumption is that, because I devoted little attention to the issue of them finding models for themselves or choosing between possible models, my students do not feel empowered to make these choices on their own. The models I gave them, it seems, were beneficial, but they don't know how to apply their recognition of that benefit to other situations in which models are not pre-selected and provided.

For future classes, I need to develop better strategies for helping students learn this skill and allowing them to apply it. I need to assign students a set of models written in different styles or to different purposes, for example, and let them choose which would be

the best guide for their writing of a particular kind of assignment. I need to lead them in a discussion of where they might find models on their own (libraries, textbooks, magazines, literary publications, journals within their fields) of the types of writing they will be asked to produce. I need to assign them to go out and collect models for their own use rather than providing for them all of the models that they will use in the course of the class.

Program-Specific Implications

The First Year Writing Program at Virginia Tech might not be ready to entirely re-structure its introductory course in the pattern of the classes I taught this semester or to adopt Models as its primary 1105 reader, but I hope to see the text included among the suggested readers in the Handbook, and I further hope that some of the activities and techniques outlined in this project find their way into other First Year Writing classrooms at Virginia Tech in years to come. I firmly believe—and my students responses seem to strongly support this belief—that the active process of imitating the writing of others is an invaluable tool not only for students learning to write in the unfamiliar milieu of college but also for all students learning to write different types of papers to different sets of expectations, the fundamental tasks of the 1105 student in our program.

I would like more imitation exercises to be implemented in our classrooms, and to that end, I hope to see some of the activities that I have successfully implemented appear in the next edition of the Faculty Handbook. I'm sure that some of my colleagues are already using the occasional imitation activity to help their students improve at some aspect of the writing process, but I am equally sure that a number of my colleagues do nothing of the sort, and I suspect that a primary reason for that is that they have simply not been trained to do so. As the history of its controversy has shown, imitation has been out of favor in the writing classroom for as long as most of the teachers I know have been teaching; in their training, both initial and subsequent, these teachers, like me, learned a wide variety of strategies for teaching writing to students, most of them generative and focusing on originality. Now, however, looking at the things that these strategies have not prepared our students to do, or us to teach, I hear a voicing of common frustrations, and I believe that the methods I have outlined above will provide a constructive solution to many of the problems

our program, and its students, faces. I don't believe that the activities I have devised are perfect, by any means, or are necessarily the same activities that everyone else in the department ought to be implementing, but I hope that by providing them as examples, I can offer my colleagues some suggestions from which to start designing activities that best fit their own teaching styles.

In particular, I hope to see the inclusion of these activities—and possibly the text, as well—in the training materials provided for GTA's, who are taking on new teaching responsibilities in a new setting, and, in many cases, are teaching for the first time. Using models in the classroom, as discussed in Chapter 4, clarifies tasks and expectations for both students and teachers, and such clarification has the potential to profoundly impact the classroom effectiveness of new teachers, as well as reducing their anxiety levels about the subjective and often nebulous process of assigning grades to student writing.

One of the tasks set before incoming GTA's during the two-week orientation period Virginia Tech offers is a process-modeling activity in which GTA's, after some discussion of the standards of "good" writing the program assumes for its first year students, are asked to grade a set of sample-essays. The grading is done individually, and then the GTA's brought together in groups to discuss their responses. Invariably, each GTA has graded each sample-essay based on his or her individual response to the piece, and the final grades awarded by group members vary widely; a paper that one GTA has awarded a D another might consider an A. This activity swiftly demonstrates the subjectivity of writing evaluation and the necessity of having clear and consistent evaluative standards. The sample grading-rubrics offered to the GTA's after this activity, however, differ greatly from one another (the admirable rationale being to show new teachers different ways of designing rubrics that might suit their teaching preferences) and, in some cases, have as many as 25 different criteria to evaluate; as a result, the standards the new GTA's are then asked to apply are neither clear nor consistent.

If a "good" model of each of the essay types that GTA's were asked to grade were provided, and they were then asked to evaluate the success of other papers at imitating the model's form and/or function, rather than being asked to grade papers with no set task or

standard set before them, these new teachers would find themselves faced with a much less subjective task, and I believe the grades that they awarded would be much more consistent. Clear expectations are necessary not only for students, in order that they might appropriately accomplish a task, but for teachers, in order that they be able to fairly and consistently evaluate students' success at its accomplishment. While experienced teachers have, in most cases, designed rubrics that work for them and revised their assignments to the point where their expectations can be communicated to their students with relative clarity, new teachers lack both the tools to do this and the time to acquire them. If new GTA's were given models of the types of papers their students were to be writing during the semester, and in turn were to share those models with their students, both the student and the evaluator would be working with clear expectations for the creation and the evaluation of each formal assignment.

In essence, the implications for the use of models on the GTA program would be doubly beneficial—as teachers, new GTA's would be more effective at communicating their expectations to their students and teaching students a specific set of skills through the use of models, and as students of the teaching process, new GTA's would be better taught by being provided models of the products and processes they will be asked to engage in and asked to ask their students to create. However, the benefits that such modifications would bring to the program should in no way be limited to the GTA's; all new composition teachers would benefit from such instruction in these uses of models and with these modeling techniques, and most experienced composition teachers would find their jobs easier and less frustrating if they were to employ similar methods in their own classrooms. The Practitioner's field is a cooperative one; successful problem-solving is enthusiastically shared, and I hope to see success similar to what I experienced in classrooms all around me.

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Appendix I:

Conceptual, or "Global," Revision

What the word "revising," brings to mind most often for students is, in fact, what should be considered "**editing**": the correcting of grammar, spelling, and mechanics, and the small-scale concerns of choosing precise vocabulary words and re-working sentences to increase clarity.

Editing, of course, is a worthwhile and necessary component of the writing process. What most students fail to realize, however, is that editing the small details of a text is not the only way to change or improve upon a piece of writing. Revising is not only an entirely different activity than editing; it also requires an entirely different frame of mind.

To sit down to edit a piece of writing is to make the following assumptions about the piece: that its ideas, organizational strategy, tone, and purpose have been selected successfully and executed effectively, that nothing more needs to be added to the piece, that all of its elements are relevant and explained fully, and that there is no better way to present the material than the one chosen for the piece. In effect, the assumption is that the piece is "finished" except for the last-minute clean-up job of making corrections.

To approach a piece of writing with the intention to revise is an entirely different task. Breaking down the word "revise" reveals the prefix "re-," meaning "again," and the root "vis," meaning, "to see." **Revising**, then, is the act of seeing a piece or an element of the piece again, of erasing the assumptions that can be made about its completeness or its appropriateness and considering changing its very concept.

Types of Revision:

Revision can take place within a sentence or paragraph, in which case the revising writer re-examines the purpose of the sentence or paragraph and considers the way the element is written, trying to determine if a different type of sentence or a differently structured paragraph could do a better job achieving that purpose.

Revision can also take place at the organizational level, in which case the revising author considers the structure of an entire piece of writing in an effort to determine whether its purpose could be better met or its ideas more clearly shown by ordering elements differently. Sentence-, paragraph-, and organizational-level revisions can also be called **"local" revision**: they occur within a particular place or regarding a single element of a piece.

Conceptual or **global revision** takes place at the most basic level of a piece of writing: that of the piece's purpose or intended method of revealing information. If, for example, a letter-to-the-editor that an opinionated citizen submitted to a local newspaper received a great deal of interest from the paper's readers, its author might consider publishing an essay or article addressing the topic, perhaps in a journal related to the topic, or in a national magazine. Because the accepted forms of these types of publication differ from that of a letter, because the new piece would be addressed to a different audience, and because the writer's purpose would be slightly different, a global revision would be necessary. The writer would be working with the same information, ideas, and in some cases, probably particularly apt wordings as in the original letter, but in order to be suited to its new purpose, the piece would have to be "seen again," viewed and re-structured from an entirely new perspective.

Global Revision in Practice:

The following pair of papers shows a model of a global revision project by Michelle, a student writer in English 1105. The first paper is an Illustration/Example Essay written mid-semester in response to D. H. Lawrence's essay "Give Her A Pattern." Michelle's assignment was to use an example from popular culture to support or deny the central argument in one of the readings assigned to the class; the examples she uses to illustrate the essay's main point are found in the lyrics of a song performed by Britney Spears. For the second paper, the Michelle was asked to enact a global revision on the original piece, re-using the information that she had collected in her first attempt, but presenting the material in a different way, for an altered purpose. Michelle chose to create a Synthesis Essay demonstrating the common message—and a few unexpected differences—found in Lawrence's essay and the popular lyrics.

As you read the following models, be aware of the similarities and differences between them: notice how Michelle has had to add and remove a few elements from her first essay in order to focus on her new purpose in her second, and how she has presented much of the same information in both essays but in two very different ways, creating two essays that serve quite different purposes. Pay particular attention to how the thesis in her first essay becomes quite different when the information is re-ordered through the new perspective in her revised essay. Further analysis of the revision process follows the essays:

Essay 1:

***My Loneliness is Killin' Me*: A Social Stereotype**

Society places social constructs upon its members, especially women. Women are expected to follow suit with what men want. As D.H. Lawrence states, in "Give Her a Pattern," women will choose a specific stereotype, such as being a "noble Agnes," because that's the type of woman they think their type of man wants them to be. These hidden manipulations are employed either consciously or subconsciously, and are directed through the media. TV, radio, literature, and music set the standards for how we should act. If the music and movie stars make women look submissive to men, that then becomes the new social stereotype of women.

Such messages can prove beneficial to women. In the 1980's, a massive feminist movement empowered women to be less submissive and take control of their lives. Media leaders such as Madonna (music), Roseanne (TV), and Margaret Thatcher (government) set the standard and made it commonplace for women to form bands, star in TV shows, and become politicians. This new feminist role changed society by changing the previous stereotypes of women; social constructs for women to be housewives and behave submissively were loosened.

However, the feminist movement of the 1980's has lost its momentum. Nowadays, different social constructs and stereotypes have been initialized. The media has changed the idea of the strong, independent businesswoman, and replaced it with the young, dependent MTV girl. Sure, women *can* be independent business leaders, but why not instead be the dumb blonde in the revealing swimsuit on the MTV set? The media (particularly the music industry) seems to be re-shaping the idea of being female, turning it into the young, sexy, submissive girl without a brain or ambition.

Pop sensation Britney Spears', *"…Baby One More Time"* is a horrific display of such negative female stereotypes. The basis of her entire song surrounds Britney wanting more than anything to get back together with her boyfriend after he has dumped her. She is willing to do anything to avoid being by herself and experiencing the terrible loneliness that she feels without him. She gives the message that women should be weak, dependent, and equal to nothing without men.

Britney says that the reason for her existence lies solely in being with her boyfriend: *"Oh, baby, baby, the reason I breathe is you / Boy, you've got me blinded / Oh, pretty, baby, there's nothin' that I wouldn't do."* It's as if any life she has had previous to being with him is obsolete. Moreover, she says that there's nothing she wouldn't do to keep him. This presents the idea that the woman is not only dependent upon her man, but that she also has to be the one making all of the sacrifices.

As if the stereotype of being weak and dependent weren't exemplified enough in the previous lines, she continues with, and repeats throughout the entire song the line: *"My loneliness is killin' me."* She only makes herself appear even more weak and dependent upon her ex-boyfriend. It's as if she is nothing without a man. This re-iterates the idea of the weak MTV girl, not the power woman of the 1980's.

Not only is she very lonely without her boyfriend, she also goes crazy: *"When I'm not with you I lose my mind…."* This goes beyond the stereotype of basic female neediness and crosses into absolute dependency. She doesn't just need her boyfriend to be with her at all times, she has to have him there or she will **die**. *"My loneliness is killin' me…"*; how sad. Why is it that women are stereotypically portrayed to be not just needy, but also absolutely dependent upon men?

Britney follows up with "*Show me how you want it to be; Tell me, baby, 'cause I need to know….*" As she repeats these lines throughout the song, she gives the impression that she willfully allows her man to dominate her, as if he were more important than she is. It is horrendously stereotypical to think that women must be submissive to men in this way. Why should *she* change? He obviously doesn't want to be with her, not that I blame him. Her opinion of herself, and of all women in turn, seems rather pathetic. After all, how sad is the implication that a woman can't even live without her man? There are many women out in the world who are not completely inept without a man, myself included. Britney does not seem to incorporate **any** female independence themes in her song.

Moreover, Britney is so dumb in the song that she can't figure out why the relationship ended, or understand the fact that it's over between them: "*Oh, baby, baby, how was I supposed to know / That somethin' wasn't right here… I must confess I still believe (Still believe)…Hit me baby one more time.*" I choose to interpret the line "*Hit me baby one more time*" in its non-literal context, seeing that if it were literal, Britney would also be the victim of physical violence. I assume that it means that she wants him to "hit" her with another sign that the relationship was going wrong, not with an actual physical attack. Neither interpretation changes the fact that she lacks the strength and/or intelligence to see the truth. If she lacks the strength to recognize that the relationship is over, then she is re-iterating the weaker-sex stereotype. If she is just ignorant, then she is playing up the dumb-blonde stereotype. Either way, neither stereotype is very flattering towards women.

But the most insulting aspect about this song is that it comes from Britney Spears herself. She is an immensely famous pop-artist with millions of fans, many of whom are children. Such messages as the one in this song greatly influence younger minds, either consciously or subconsciously. It teaches young girls that it is good to be weak and needy, just like their hero Britney. And to top that, Britney's style of dress and her overall 'look' is pretty revealing, considering that so many of her fans are children. She has been condemned by many critics regarding her clothing, or more correctly, her lack thereof, but there is obviously a reason that she continues to dress this way. She exemplifies the MTV girl stereotype. In fact, her most recent

music video, *"I'm a Slave for You,"* may as well have been pay-per-view; it was nothing but sexual imagery that didn't seem to have any kind of plot or story or anything…doesn't its name say it all? Such degrading performances are typical of Britney. It's as if she were saying that the whole point of life is to find a man and serve him forever. Such messages completely disintegrate the feminist empowerment movement, and replace it with the degrading suggestion of women existing exclusively for men.

It's sad, but the image of the MTV girl has become the current social stereotype for females. But why do women even bother conforming themselves to such degrading categories? D.H. Lawrence's "Give Her a Pattern" suggests that women have to assign themselves some sort of pattern, because of the mere fact that they are women. These patterns are what they perceive their type of man wants to see, so they conform to a given stereotype. He describes the "noble Agnesses, chaste Beatrices, clinging Doras, and the lurid *filles de joie*" (Lawrence, 214). And he also describes the most secret desire of men, the prostitute. This type is brought quickly to mind by girls who wear very seductive clothing, like our little Britney.

Lawrence never clearly states why women have this underlying need to conform to specific stereotypes. Even the feminists of the 1980's were following the power woman stereotype of their time, so they were never truly contradicting his assumption. Even at such a turning point in female rights, one stereotype just changed to another. Perhaps the new stereotype was an improvement over the old, in the sense that women in the 1980's were given more freedom and expression, but the point remains that women never truly emancipated themselves from the enslavement of specific patterns. One pattern merely gave rise to another. Sadly enough, the present day MTV girl pattern has become the norm.

And yet Lawrence states that women are not the fools in the situations he describes. On the contrary, men are the fools, since men have a tendency to change the type of girl they want after they've already gotten married. But if women are not fools, why do they force themselves into a pattern? Why don't men place themselves into patterns as readily as women? By forcing themselves into a pattern, women only lose their own identity. Society chooses their personality for them, and as such, women are perpetually enslaved by an invisible

and subconscious force. In an ironic way, women **are** pre-determined, by society rather than by biology, to be subservient to the male gender. They fit themselves to their males' desires, and as such, are crushed themselves.

The media concurrently reinforces this fated futility by idolizing stereotypes. Images of Britney and other MTV type girls are paraded through music, TV, radio, and literature. While the power woman was the main figure of the 80's, who nowadays wouldn't place a beautiful, young, sexy, submissive super-model in her stead? One stereotype changes to another, and women are merely carried around in the tides of social evolution.

Lawrence offers no solution to this problem of women assigning themselves patterns, as he says it's inevitable in their case. However, perhaps if women begin to recognize this rather unfair role they've been given as their mark of being female, they'll be able to at least partially transcend their pre-determined role in society. Perhaps their true self will be allowed more dominion in their personality. At the very least, they might be able to alter the pattern they would have chosen by creating a less degrading one.

Works Cited

Lawrence, D.H. "Give Her a Pattern." The Conscious Reader. Ed. Shrodes, Caroline, et al. Needham Heights, Massachusetts: Pearson Education Company, 2001. pg 212-215.

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Essay 2:

Helplessness as a Pattern for Women to Follow

Society has always placed social constructs upon its members, especially women. In the 1920's, D.H. Lawrence observed that women were expected to follow suit with what men wanted, in obeying these social constructs made by men for them to follow. In the 2000's, Britney Spears shows that these social constructs have hardly changed in the past 80 years. Although popular culture has become very different, and feminism has made many gains for women since the time when Lawrence was writing, women still seem to be playing some of the same roles that he observed. More importantly, women still seem to be expecting men to decide what roles they will play.

In his essay "Give Her A Pattern," D. H. Lawrence states that women will choose a specific stereotype to follow, such as being a "noble Agnes," because that's the type of woman they think their type of man wants them to be. Lawrence suggests that women have to assign themselves some sort of pattern, because of the mere fact that they are women. "The real trouble about women is that they must always go on trying to adapt themselves to men's theories of women, as they have always done," he observes. "When a woman is hysterical it's because she doesn't quite know what to be, which pattern to follow, which man's picture of woman to live up to" (212). These patterns are what women perceive their type of man wants to see, so they conform to the given stereotypes in order to please their men.

Women can be the "noble Agnesses," kindly and womanly wives who fit "the ideal of the matron." They can be "chaste Beatrices," who are pure and untouched, or "clinging Doras." They can be "fast" women, or "learned women." They can even be the lurid "*filles de joie*," the most secret desire of men, the prostitutes (Lawrence, 212-214).

Lawrence also makes it clear that the most important factor influencing the patterns available to women is the popularity of a particular pattern in the eyes of men. "Noble Agnesses" apparently wanted to be like the wife of Caesar. When the ideal of the "chaste Beatrice" was invented by Dante, "chaste and untouched Beatrices began to march self-importantly through the centuries." "Dickens invented the child-wife," Lawrence adds, "so child-wives have swarmed ever since." As fashion changes, so do the patterns that women are asked to

live up to. The one thing that does not change is that women don't know how to behave if not offered these patterns. Lawrence shows pity towards women for being victims of this situation when he says "…poor woman, destiny makes away with her" (213), and when he adds "the fact of life is that women must play up to man's pattern" (215).

In today's society, TV, radio, literature, and music set the standards for how we should act. Such standards can prove beneficial to women. In the 1980's, a massive feminist movement empowered women to be less submissive and take control of their lives. Media leaders such as Madonna (music), Roseanne (TV), and Margaret Thatcher (government) set the standard and made it commonplace for women to form bands, star in TV shows, and become politicians. This new feminist role changed society by changing the previous stereotypes of women; social constructs for women to be housewives and behave submissively were loosened. However, the feminist movement of the 1980's has lost its momentum. The media has changed the idea of the strong, independent businesswoman, and replaced it with the young, dependent MTV girl; Britney Spears appears as the most popular example. Sure, today's women still *can* be independent business leaders, but why not instead be the dumb blonde in the revealing outfit on the MTV set? The media (particularly the music industry) seems to be re-shaping the idea of being female once again, turning it into the young, sexy, submissive girl without a brain or ambition. If the music and movie stars such as Britney make women look submissive to men, that ideal then becomes the new social stereotype of women.

Britney Spears' popular hit *"…Baby One More Time"* is a horrific display of such negative female stereotypes. The basis of her entire song surrounds Britney wanting more than anything to get back together with her boyfriend after he has dumped her. She is willing to do anything to avoid being by herself and experiencing the terrible loneliness that she feels without him. She gives the message that women should be weak, dependent, and equal to nothing without men, by saying that the reason for her existence lies solely in being with her boyfriend: *"Oh, baby, baby, the reason I breathe is you / Boy, you've got me blinded / Oh, pretty, baby, there's nothin' that I wouldn't do."* It's as if any life she has had previous to being with him is obsolete. Moreover, she says that there's nothing she wouldn't do to keep him. This presents the idea that the woman is not only dependent

upon her man, but that she also has to be the one making all of the sacrifices.

As if the stereotype of being weak and dependent weren't exemplified enough in the previous lines, she continues with, and repeats throughout the entire song the line: *"My loneliness is killin' me."* And not only is Britney very lonely without her boyfriend, she also goes crazy: *"When I'm not with you I lose my mind…."* This goes beyond the stereotype of basic female neediness and crosses into absolute dependency. She doesn't just need her ex-boyfriend to be with her at all times, she has to have him there or she will go crazy or **die**. It's as if she is nothing without a man. This re-iterates the idea of the weak MTV girl, or the "poor woman" pitied by Lawrence for being "hysterical," not the power woman of the 1980's.

Britney follows up with *"Show me how you want it to be; Tell me, baby, 'cause I need to know…."* As she repeats these lines throughout the song, she gives the impression that she willfully allows her man to dominate her, as if he were more important than she is. It is horrendously stereotypical to think that women must be submissive to men in this way. Why should *she* change? He obviously doesn't want to be with her, not that I blame him. Her opinion of herself, and of all women in turn, seems rather pathetic. *"Oh, baby, baby, how was I supposed to know,"* she asks, pleading for instructions. After all, how sad is the implication that a woman can't even live without being told how to act by a man? At the same time, this opinion seems to support Lawrence's observations about women's helplessness unless given patterns by men.

Lawrence's essay at least blames men for not being fair to women. He observes that the patterns men give women are often contradictory, as well as unsatisfactory for both the men and the women. And he criticizes men for changing their minds about what they demand from women. "Modern men are idiots," he says. "They don't know what they want, and so they never want, permanently, what they get… They are fools. If only women weren't bound by fate to play up to them!" He complains about the patterns that women are forced to take, and says that if men want anything from women, they should "give women a decent, satisfying idea of womanhood—not these trick patterns of washed-out idiots" (215).

Britney's song, on the other hand, lays no blame on the man at all. Instead, she repeatedly calls him "pretty," and "baby," while begging him to take her back, to tell her how to act, and to save her from the horrible loneliness that she, as a poor little woman, can't conquer on her own. Even when she says, "*tell me…'cause I need to know*," she's begging for forgiveness like a punished child, not demanding information she has a right to, like a strong woman would.

Although we might expect totally different things from this 1920's essay and this modern pop song, the impression they make upon their audiences, in many ways, is remarkably similar. Both stress the helplessness of women and their dependence on men for direction. And both make it clear that the responsibility for deciding how relationships will go lies entirely with the men; women can only ask to be told how to act. Most surprisingly, however, it is the essay from the time period and social situation in which women had fewer rights and freedoms that seems to offer the most sympathy with women and criticism of the behavior of men. Lawrence says that, although women are helpless and "hysterical" without guidance, it is men's fault that they have such stupid roles to play, and men's responsibility to ask reasonable things of them. Britney, on the other hand, in her provocative videos and popular music, seems to be saying that helplessness itself is the role that women should be playing in order to please their men.

Works Cited

Lawrence, D.H. "Give Her a Pattern." The Conscious Reader. Ed. Shrodes, Caroline, et al. Needham Heights, Massachusetts: Pearson Education Company, 2001. pg 212-215.

Martin, Max. "…Baby One More Time". perf. Britney Spears. Jive/Zomba. 1999.

Overview of Model Essays:

As you can see, Michelle has created two very different essays here, but they are essays that have a lot in common. Rather than writing an entirely new essay to make a different point about Lawrence and Spears, Michelle was able to revise an old essay—to view it again, in a new way—creating a new essay with a new thesis and a different main point, using much of the work that she had already done.

The Revision Process:

The process that Michelle followed in this assignment was simple: **first,** she re-read her old essay, to see what its strengths and weaknesses were, and to re-familiarize herself with the material. **Second,** she created an outline of her first essay, so that she could clearly see how the structure of her essay helped create the point she was making. Here is her outline:

Introduction: As D. H. Lawrence's "Give Her A Pattern" shows, women tend to conform to stereotypical patterns determined for them by outside forces: most notably the influences of the media.

- I: Some such patterns, such as the power-woman movement of the 1980s, can be positive patterns for women to follow.
- II: Unfortunately the power-woman of the 1980s has been replaced by the modern MTV girl.
  - III: Britney exemplifies this stereotype in her song "…Baby One More Time."
  - IV: The song's lyrics state that its narrator is nothing without her man.
  - V: Even worse, the lyrics indicate that she is not only worthless; she has no reason for living without him.
  - VI: The lyrics also imply that being without him causes Britney to lose her sanity, becoming completely dependent and powerless.
  - VII: As the song continues, Britney begs for the man to tell her why the break-up was her fault and how she should change.
  - IIX: Underlying her basic intelligence, Britney insists that she is unable to understand the reasons for the break-up or to believe it really happened.
  - IX: The most degrading aspect of the song's message is that it is delivered by a pop idol that many young, impressionable fans listen to, and from her they also learn to dress in revealing clothes.
  - X: The MTV girl image has become the most popular of the patterns that women follow, which agrees with Lawrence's assumptions about the necessity of women needing a pattern.
- XI: Although Lawrence provides no reason for his claim, the behavior of women seems to support it for him, as each age chooses a new favorite pattern to conform to rather than choosing to get rid of the patterns.
- XII: Society creates these patterns for women, who then find themselves pre-determined to follow them. Men feel no such pressures but are, Lawrence says, the more foolish ones for not being consistent with their demands upon women.
- XIII: The media reinforces current standards; women allow themselves to blindly follow these changes.

Conclusion: Lawrence offers no solution to the pattern problem, and society seems to agree with him. Women need to be aware that these patterns exist and act in an informed matter to either a) break out of the system of patterns, or b) make intelligent choices about which of the offered patterns they should follow.

Michelle's **third** step was to decide what she wanted the main point of her new essay to be. Her old essay was written to use Britney Spears as an example illustrating Lawrence's stereotypical and insulting belief that women needed patterns to follow. Although her new essay has to deal with the same topic, her assignment is to present the information to a new purpose. The purpose of her second essay, Michelle decided, would be to show how little society's vision of women had changed in the years between the writing of Lawrence's essay and the present-day. Because she wanted to show clearly the similarities in the views presented by Lawrence and Spears, she decided to write a Synthesis Essay that would show the highlights of each view and allow her to present them with relation to each other; choosing the format for her second essay was the **fourth** step in Michelle's revision process. Her **fifth** step was to outline the new essay that she wanted to write. Because she was trying to compare the two texts this time, she structured her outline differently, labeling paragraphs relating to Lawrence with (L) and those about Spears with (B), so that she could keep the pieces parallel. By using the information in her old outline and her understanding of the structure of a Synthesis Essay as guides, she was able to create the following:

Introduction: Here are two different examples from different time periods (1920's and present-day) exemplifying the same social constructs that women are victims of.

(L)I. D. H. Lawrence made the observation that women tended to follow patterns proposed for them by men, because as women they wouldn't know how to act otherwise.

(L)II. Examples of several of these patterns, what he called them, how they're different.

(L)III. Popularity of patterns based on what men like best at any given time, changing through history—the part that doesn't change is that there's always a pattern, and women are always victims to these patterns.

(B)IV. In spite of the changes in society between then and now, modern media, such as TV and music, i.e. Britney Spears, seems to be making a similar claim about women.

(B)V. Britney, in the pop hit "…Baby One More Time," portrays women as being totally dependent on men to tell them what to be and how to live

(B)VI. Britney implies that being without her man's love makes her crazy (hysterical) and her life meaningless

(B)VII. Britney helplessly asks her man to tell her how the relationship should be, so that she will know how to act in order to please him and be loved again.

(L)VIII. Lawrence's observation at least criticized men for not treating women fairly; men are fools, he says, because they ask women to conform to a pattern, marry them, and then change their minds about what they want from the women; they should offer better patterns that don't make women act stupid.

(B)IX. Nothing in Britney's song places any blame at all on the man, and of the failure within is implied to belong to the women. Even when she says "tell me what happened" it sounds like a regretful, stupid child, rather than an adult defending her rights.

Conclusion: Although we might expect different things from the essay and the song, the impression they make is remarkably similar, and, it is the one from the more improbable time period/social situation that seems to offer the most sympathy with women and criticism of the behavior of men.

Finally, working from this outline, Michelle was able to write her second essay. In some instances, she kept sentences from her first essay just as they were, because she felt that she had presented information in a way that would still work well in her new essay. In some instances, she had to re-write some of the information she had already written about. In some instances, she decided to omit information from her first essay, because she thought

that it would be off-topic in the new one. And in a few cases, she had to return to her sources to add a bit more detail to balance the two parts of her new essay.

Application:

In order to successfully do what Michelle has done, it will be helpful to follow a process very similar to the one she has followed. By re-examining your original paper, both globally, to see what your points are and how they are made, and locally, outlining it to see how each paragraph contributes to the whole, you will be able to clearly see the structure of the essay, and how the structure helps to support the thesis. By deciding on a new thesis, and outlining a structure that will best support that thesis, you will be giving direction and purpose to your revision project. And by adhering closely to your new thesis and outline as your write your new paper, you will be sure that you aren't just editing your old paper; you're using its parts to see its topic in a new and different way. Here are the same suggestions for modeling your approach after Michelle's, formatted as a checklist:

____ **1. Re-read original essay, noting thesis and content.**
____ **2. Outline original essay, noting structure of supporting evidence.**
____ **3. Write new thesis for revised essay.**
____ **4. Choose appropriate structure to support new thesis.**
____ **5. Outline new essay with appropriate structure.**
____ **6. Write new essay from new outline, using, changing, adding, and deleting information from old essay.**

Appendix II

Thomas Paine
from *The American Crisis*, Dec. 23, 1776.

These are the times that try men's souls: the summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country; but he that stands it Now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly:—'Tis dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price on its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as FREEDOM should not be highly rated. Britian, with an army to enforce her tyranny, has declared that she has a right (not only to) TAX but "BIND *us in* ALL CASES WHATSOEVER," and if being *bound in that manner*, is not slavery, then there is not such a thing as slavery upon the earth. Even the expression is impious, for so unlimited a power can belong only to God.

Samuel Johnson
from Preface, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 1755.

When I took the first survey of my understanding, I found our speech copious without order, and energetic without rules: wherever I turned my view, there was perplexity to be disentangled and confusion to be regulated; choice was to be made out of boundless variety, without any established principle of selection; adulterations were to be detected, without a settled test of purity; and modes of expression to be rejected or received, without the suffrages of writers of classical reputation of acknowledged authority.

Jonathan Swift
from "A Modest Proposal," 1729

It is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin doors, crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags and importuning every passenger for an alms. These mothers, instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in strolling to beg sustenance for their helpless infants: who as they grow up either turn thieves for want of work, or leave their dear native country to fight for the Pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.

I am assured by our merchants, that a boy or a girl before twelve years old is no salable commodity; and even when they come to this age they will not yield above three pounds, or three pounds and half-a-crown at most on the exchange; which cannot turn to account either to the parents or kingdom, the charge of nutriment and rags having been at least four times that value.

I shall now therefore humbly propose my own thoughts, which I hope will not be liable to the least objection.

I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout.

I do therefore humbly offer it to public consideration that of the hundred and twenty thousand children already computed, twenty thousand may be reserved for breed, whereof only one-fourth part to be males; which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle or swine; and my reason is, that these children are seldom the fruits of marriage, a circumstance not much regarded by our savages, therefore one male will be sufficient to serve four females. That the remaining hundred thousand may, at a year old, be offered in the sale to the persons of quality and fortune through the kingdom; always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month, so as to render them plump and fat for a good table. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends; and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter.

Appendix III:
Original Student Survey, Arranged Topically

Anonymous Survey—Mid-Process Course Evaluation

Instructions: Please **print** the following survey. Please read all introductory information thoroughly. Please read all statements carefully. Please circle the answer choices that best correspond with your feelings. Please complete any supplemental responses on a separate sheet. Please **DO NOT put your name** or any other identifying mark on this sheet. Responses will be collected in class **December 2nd.** There are 41 questions to this survey. Please **take your time** and make thoughtful responses!

Over the course of the semester to date, you have done tight, word-by-word or clause-by-clause imitations and loose, organizational-pattern imitations. You have imitated paragraph structure, language usage, written form, sentence structure, punctuation, and style. You have practiced "being" Thomas Paine, Samuel Johnson, Seneca, Jonathan Swift, and Jane Goodall, among others. You have written sentences, paragraphs, and essays from textbook or teacher-generated models, and you have had sentences, paragraphs, and essays modeled to you by your own peers and by student writers in another class. You practiced evaluating writing by reading and commenting on a model essay that I wrote, and you gained an impression of the essay grading process by "grading" a model-essay from an anonymous student.

The following statements investigate your responses to these activities: they are designed to tell me how effective different activities were to you, and to give me insight as to how to make these activities more constructive for future students. They are also designed to encourage your **thoughtful self-assessment** of your own learning this semester.

For each statement, please circle the letter that corresponds **most closely** with your feelings about the activity under consideration. An (A) indicates that you agree strongly with the statement, an (M) that you agree somewhat ("m" is for "maybe"), a (P) that you disagree slightly ("p" is for "probably not") and a (D) that you disagree strongly. For all statements, **you are free to write a longer response** if "agree" or "disagree" is not sufficient for your expression: I know from experience that there is little more irritating about surveys than having your own answer not available, and having no way to express what you'd like to say instead. If you choose to write out individual responses to any questions, please type your responses in a word file, numbering them according to the numbered statements to which you are responding, print those responses, and staple them to your survey.

In-Class Imitation Sentences

1. Imitating model-sentences is beneficial because it allows me to practice styles of sentences I may be unfamiliar with or may not have considered using.
   (A) (M) (P) (D)
2. Imitating model-sentences is not helpful to me, because I already write sentences of varied lengths and structures.
   (A) (M) (P) (D)

3. Imitating model-sentences makes me uncomfortable by forcing me to write in a way that is unnatural for me.
   (A) (M) (P) (D)

In-Class Imitation Paragraphs

4. Imitating the paragraph-structure of a type of paragraph (definition, cause/effect, illustration, etc.) is beneficial because it allows me to learn how to write that type of paragraph.
   (A) (M) (P) (D)
5. Imitating the paragraph-structure of a type of paragraph is useless to me because I already write competent paragraphs.
   (A) (M) (P) (D)
6. Imitating the paragraph-structure of a type of paragraph is restrictive because it doesn't allow me to structure the paragraph in a different but equally effective way.
   (A) (M) (P) (D)

Tight Imitations of Authors (Paine, Goodall, Swifte, etc.)

7. Imitating the voice of a specific author was helpful to me because it gave me a chance to explore a style or approach to writing that I wouldn't have tried otherwise.
   (A) (M) (P) (D)
8. Imitating the voice of a specific author was frustrating for me because I didn't like having to sacrifice my own style to copy someone else's.
   (A) (M) (P) (D)
9. Imitating the voice of a specific author seemed wrong to me because it made me feel like I was cheating, like I was stealing the ideas or forms of someone else.
   (A) (M) (P) (D)

Textbook Models of Essays

10. Reading examples of "Illustration" and "Argument" essays in the book gave me a good sense of how to write an illustration or argument essay of my own.
    (A) (M) (P) (D)
11. Reading examples of "Illustration" and "Argument" essays in the book was somewhat helpful to me because it gave me an idea of how to approach each project.
    (A) (M) (P) (D)
12. Reading examples of "Illustration" and "Argument" essays in the book didn't help me at all, because the authors in the book know what they're doing, and I don't.
    (A) (M) (P) (D)

Model Essay-Grading

13. Modeling the grading of a sample essay with the class rubric made me more comfortable about the processes by which my paper would be graded.
    (A) (M) (P) (D)
14. Modeling the grading of a sample essay with the class rubric wasn't useful to me because I didn't clearly understand the criteria.
    (A) (M) (P) (D)

Peer Models

15. Hearing and seeing students model examples of the problems they encountered and solutions they tried in their own work (during individual presentations) gave me helpful ideas about how to solve or avoid similar problems in my own writing.
(A) (M) (P) (D)
16. Hearing and seeing students model examples of the problems they encountered and solutions they tried in their own work (during individual presentations) wasn't useful to me because I really didn't pay much attention to what they were saying.
(A) (M) (P) (D)
17. Hearing and seeing students model examples of the problems they encountered and solutions they tried in their own work (during individual presentations) wasn't useful to me because I have trouble applying others' ideas to my own writing.
(A) (M) (P) (D)
18. Reading and workshopping my peers' essays gave me helpful ideas about how to approach essay topics and correct or avoid errors in my own writing.
(A) (M) (P) (D)
19. Reading and workshopping my peers' essays did not help me construct my own papers, because reading examples with mistakes does not help me learn how to write without mistakes.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

<u>General Responses to Modeling</u>

20. Using models in different ways is beneficial because it widens my exposure to and experience with different kinds of writing.
(A) (M) (P) (D)
21. Using models in different ways is no more beneficial to me than any other type of writing instruction I have experience with.
(A) (M) (P) (D)
22. I would prefer to work with a model on a writing assignment than to work with only a description of the type of product I am expected to produce.
(A) (M) (P) (D)
23. I would prefer to work without models so that my work is mine alone and is not influenced by others' work.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

<u>General Information about the Subject's (that's you) Linguistic, Cultural, and Educational Background.</u>

<u>(remember: this survey is anonymous!)</u>

24. The English classes I had prior to this one prepared me adequately for this course.
(A) (M) (P) (D)
25. The work we have done in this class has helped prepare me for the assignments I have been graded on.
(A) (M) (P) (D)
26. I am usually comfortable in writing classes.
(A) (M) (P) (D)
27. I am comfortable in this writing class.
(A) (M) (P) (D)
28. I have usually been confident about my writing ability.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

29. I am confident that my writing ability is improving.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

30. The activities we have done in this class have helped me learn to write in different ways.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

31. I am confident that I will be able to continue to learn to write in different ways as I encounter different expectations in different classes.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

32. When I am assigned a writing project in future classes, I will try to find a model of the type of writing that is expected of me.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

33. The high school I attended was a "good" high school.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

34. I have usually been comfortable speaking and writing "formal," "standard," or "school" English.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

35. English is my first language.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

36. I consider myself to be a member of a minority.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

37. I consider my background to be what some would call "underprivileged."
(A) (M) (P) (D)

38. I have previously made "good" grades in English.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

39. I expect to make a "good" grade in this class.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

40. Working with models has increased my comfort level with regards to unfamiliar types, styles, and levels of formality in writing.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

41. I think being able to adapt to different forms of writing with some success is more important than being able to write in one or two forms perfectly.
(A) (M) (P) (D)

Appendix IV:

Survey Questions Ordered by Type, in Concordance with Spreadsheet

Benefits of Modeling

1. Imitating model-sentences is beneficial because it allows me to practice styles of sentences I may be unfamiliar with or may not have considered using.
4. Imitating the paragraph-structure of a type of paragraph (definition, cause/effect, illustration, etc.) is beneficial because it allows me to learn how to write that type of paragraph.
7. Imitating the voice of a specific author was helpful to me because it gave me a chance to explore a style or approach to writing that I wouldn't have tried otherwise.
10. Reading examples of "Illustration" and "Argument" essays in the book gave me a good sense of how to write an illustration or argument essay of my own.
11. Reading examples of "Illustration" and "Argument" essays in the book was somewhat helpful to me because it gave me an idea of how to approach each project.
13. Modeling the grading of a sample essay with the class rubric made me more comfortable about the processes by which my paper would be graded.
15. Hearing and seeing students model examples of the problems they encountered and solutions they tried in their own work (during individual presentations) gave me helpful ideas about how to solve or avoid similar problems in my own writing.
18. Reading and workshopping my peers' essays gave me helpful ideas about how to approach essay topics and correct or avoid errors in my own writing.
20. Using models in different ways is beneficial because it widens my exposure to and experience with different kinds of writing.
22. I would prefer to work with a model on a writing assignment than to work with only a description of the type of product I am expected to produce.
25. The work we have done in this class has helped prepare me for the assignments I have been graded on.
29. I am confident that my writing ability is improving.
30. The activities we have done in this class have helped me learn to write in different ways.
31. I am confident that I will be able to continue to learn to write in different ways as I encounter different expectations in different classes.
32. When I am assigned a writing project in future classes, I will try to find a model of the type of writing that is expected of me.
40. Working with models has increased my comfort level with regards to unfamiliar types, styles, and levels of formality in writing.
41. I think being able to adapt to different forms of writing with some success is more important than being able to write in one or two forms perfectly.

Drawbacks/Indifference to Modeling

2. Imitating model-sentences is not helpful to me, because I already write sentences of varied lengths and structures.
3. Imitating model-sentences makes me uncomfortable by forcing me to write in a way that is unnatural for me.
5. Imitating the paragraph-structure of a type of paragraph is useless to me because I already write competent paragraphs.

6. Imitating the paragraph-structure of a type of paragraph is restrictive because it doesn't allow me to structure the paragraph in a different but equally effective way.
8. Imitating the voice of a specific author was frustrating for me because I didn't like having to sacrifice my own style to copy someone else's.
9. Imitating the voice of a specific author seemed wrong to me because it made me feel like I was cheating, like I was stealing the ideas or forms of someone else.
12. Reading examples of "Illustration" and "Argument" essays in the book didn't help me at all, because the authors in the book know what they're doing, and I don't.
14. Modeling the grading of a sample essay with the class rubric wasn't useful to me because I didn't clearly understand the criteria.
16. Hearing and seeing students model examples of the problems they encountered and solutions they tried in their own work (during individual presentations) wasn't useful to me because I really didn't pay much attention to what they were saying.
17. Hearing and seeing students model examples of the problems they encountered and solutions they tried in their own work (during individual presentations) wasn't useful to me because I have trouble applying others' ideas to my own writing.
19. Reading and workshopping my peers' essays did not help me construct my own papers, because reading examples with mistakes does not help me learn how to write without mistakes.
21. Using models in different ways is no more beneficial to me than any other type of writing instruction I have experience with.
23. I would prefer to work without models so that my work is mine alone and is not influenced by others' work.

<u>Comfort-level with Writing</u>

(past)

24. The English classes I had prior to this one prepared me adequately for this course.
26. I am usually comfortable in writing classes.
28. I have usually been confident about my writing ability.
34. I have usually been comfortable speaking and writing "formal," "standard," or "school" English.
38. I have previously made "good" grades in English.

(present)

27. I am comfortable in this writing class.
39. I expect to make a "good" grade in this class.

<u>Background</u>

33. The high school I attended was a "good" high school.
35. English is my first language.
36. I consider myself to be a member of a minority.
37. I consider my background to be what some would call "underprivileged."

	Average	*	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	Student 6	Student 7	Student 8	Student 9	Student 10	Student 11
Question #: Benefits of Modeling													
1	6.181818	P	8	8	8	2	2	8	8	6	8	8	2
4	6.181818	P	8	6	8	6	8	8	2	6	6	8	2
7	5.454545	E	8	6	6	8	6	0	8	8	2	6	2
10	5.8	P	6	n/a	8	2	2	8	6	6	6	8	6
11	6	P	2	6	8	8	2	8	8	6	6	6	6
13	5.636364	E	6	6	6	6	2	8	8	6	6	6	2
15	6.727273	P	8	6	8	8	6	8	6	6	8	8	2
18	6.181818	P	2	8	8	6	2	8	8	8	8	8	2
20	6.909091	P	8	6	8	6	6	8	6	6	8	8	6
22	5.636364	P	2	6	8	0	8	8	8	6	6	8	2
25	5.090909	E	6	6	8	2	6	6	6	6	6	2	2
29	6.545455	P	8	6	8	6	6	6	8	6	8	8	2
30	5.272727	P	8	6	8	8	0	6	6	6	2	6	2
31	6.363636	P	8	6	8	6	2	8	8	6	6	6	6
32	4	E	2	2	8	6	0	6	2	2	6	8	2
40	5.818182	P	8	6	8	8	2	6	8	2	6	8	2
41	6.8	P	6	6	6	n/a		6	8	8	6	8	8	6
Average	5.917647	P	6.117647	6	7.647059	5.5	3.882353	6.941176	6.705882	5.764706	6.235294	7.058824	3.176471
Split			P13, N4	P15, N1	P17, N0	P12, N4	P8, N9	P16, N1	P15, N2	P15, N2	P15, N2	P16, N1	P5, N12
Question #: Drawbacks/Indifference to Modeling													
2	2	N	2	2	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
3	2.909091	E	0	0	6	0	6	2	0	2	6	2	8
5	1.4	N	2	2	2	2	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	6
6	1.818182	E	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	2	6	2	6
8	4.727273	E	2	8	6	6	2	8	0	2	8	2	8
9	3.272727	E	0	8	2	6	0	8	0	0	6	0	6
12	1.636364	N	0	6	0	6	0	0	2	0	2	0	2
14	2.545455	N	0	2	0	8	2	0	2	0	2	6	6
16	1.636364	N	2	0	0	8	0	0	2	0	0	0	6
17	2.545455	E	0	6	6	8	2	0	2	0	2	0	2
19	2	N	0	2	2	2	6	0	6	0	0	2	2
21	1.636364	N	0	6	0	0	2	0	2	0	6	0	2
23	2.181818	E	2	2	0	8	0	0	2	2	6	0	2
Average	2.331469	E	0.769231	3.384615	2.461538	4.615385	1.666667	1.538462	1.384615	0.615385	3.384615	1.076923	4.769231
Split			P0, N13	P5, N8	P4, N9	P8, N5	P2, N10	P2, N11	P1, N12	P0, N13	P6, N7	P1, N12	P8, N5

Question #: Comfort-level with Writing												
24		6	8	6	2	0	6	0	2	2	6	6
26		6	2	6	6	2	2	2	6	6	6	6
28		8	8	6	8	2	6	8	6	6	8	6
34		6	6	8	0	6	8	0	6	6	8	6
38		6	8	8	6	6	8	8	6	8	6	8
(present course)												
27		8	6	8	n/a		2	8	6	6	6	8	6
39		8	6	8		6	6	6	6	6	2	8	8
Average		6.857143	6.285714	7.142857	4.666667	3.428571	6.285714	4.285714	5.428571	5.142857	7.142857	6.571429
Av(past)		6.4	6.4	6.8	4.4	3.2	6	3.6	5.2	5.6	6.8	6.4
Av(pres)		8	6	8	6	4	7	6	6	4	8	7
Question#: Background												
33		6	8	8	2	8	8	6	6	2	8	8
35		8	8	8	0	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
36		0	0	0	8	0	0	6	0	6	0	2
37		0	0	0	n/a		0	0	0	0	2	0	0

Survey Response Key: A (Agree)=8, M (Mostly Agree)=6, P (Probably Disagree)=2, D (Disagree)=0 (Mean=4)

Benefits of Modeling			Positive Responses: 27			Neutral Responses: 13			Negative Responses: 0		
*Overall Response	P	P	P	P	E	P	P	P	P	P	E
Drawbacks/Indifference to Modeling			Positive Responses: 2			Neutral Responses: 18			Negative Responses: 20		
*Overall Response	N	E	N	E	N	N	N	N	E	N	E
Comfort-level with Writing			Positive Responses:18			Neutral Responses:18			Negative Responses:4		
*Overall Response	P	P	P	E	E	P	E	E	E	P	P

*Spreadsheet Trend/Response Key: 0-2=N (Negative), 3-5=E (nEutral), 6-8=P (Positive)

Demographics (according to students' self-assessment):

Students from "good" High Schools: 34	Students not from "good" High Schools: 6
Students not raised "underpriviledged": 36	Students raised "underpriviledged": 4
English Native-Speakers: 38	Other Native-language Speakers: 2
Students not considered minorities: 32	Students considered minorities: 8

Student 12	Student 13	Student 14	Student 15	Student 16	Student 17	Student 18	Student 19	Student 20	Student 21	Student 22	Student 23	Student 24	Student 25
8	0	8	6	6	8	6	6	6	8	6	2	6	8
6	2	8	2	8	8	8	2	2	6	6	0	8	6
6	6	8	0	6	2	8	2	0	2	6	0	8	2
6	0	8	8	8	6	6	8	8	6	2	6	8	0
8	6	8	8	6	6	8	8	8	8	2	6	8	2
8	8	6	6	2	8	2	2	2	8	8	6	6	2
8	6	6	6	6	6	6	8	8	6	2	6	8	6
8	0	8	8	6	2	8	8	2	8	2	6	8	2
6	2	8	8	6	6	6	6	2	8	6	6	8	8
2	6	8	8	8	6	2	6	8	6	8	8	8	6
6	2	8	2	6	8	6	6	2	6	6	6	6	2
6	6	6	2	6	8	6	6	2	8	6	6	8	6
6	2	8	2	6	6	8	6	2	6	6	6	8	6
6	8	8	6	6	8	6	6	2	6	2	6	8	6
6	6	8	6	8	8	2	2	6	8	6	2	8	0
6	2	8	6	6	6	8	6	2	6	8	6	6	6
8	6	8	2	6	6	8	2	6	8	6	2	6	6
6.470588	4	7.647059	5.058824	6.235294	6.352941	6.117647	5.294118	4	6.705882	5.176471	4.705882	7.411765	4.352941
P16, N1	P9, N8	P17, N0	P11, N6	P16, N1	P15, N2	P14, N3	P12, N5	P7, N10	P16, N1	P12, N5	P12, N5	P17, N0	P10, N7

0	2	2	0	0	0	6	0	2	2	2	6	0	0
6	8	0	2	2	6	6	2	2	6	6	8	6	6
0	2	2	6	0	0	6	2	2	2	2	6	0	0
6	8	6	2	2	0	6	6	6	6	2	8	6	2
6	2	0	8	6	2	6	6	8	6	2	8	8	0
6	6	0	2	2	2	8	2	2	0	2	6	0	6
6	6	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	2	2	2	0	6
0	6	2	0	2	0	6	6	2	2	0	0	0	2
0	2	6	0	0	0	6	2	0	2	6	0	0	2
2	0	6	6	2	0	8	2	2	2	2	0	0	6
0	2	0	0	6	8	2	2	6	2	2	0	0	6
2	0	0	0	2	2	6	2	2	2	2	2	0	6
6	8	0	0	0	6	6	2	2	6	8	6	0	0
3.076923	4	1.846154	2	1.846154	2	6	2.615385	2.769231	3.076923	2.923077	4	1.538462	3.230769
P6, N7	P7, N6	P3, N10	P3, N10	P2, N11	P3, N10	P12, N1	P3, N10	P3, N10	P4, N9	P3, N10	P7, N6	P3, N10	P6, N7

0	8	6	0	6	0	6	0	0	8	2	6	8	2
8	6	6	0	6	8	8	6	0	6	0	6	8	8
8	8	2	0	2	8	6	0	0	2	2	2	8	8
6	6	8	2	2	8	8	6	2	8	6	6	8	8
8	8	8	6	8	8	8	8	6	8	6	6	8	8
0	8	8	0	6	2	2	2	2	6	2	6	6	2
8	8	8	8	8	6	6	8	2	8	6	6	6	2
5.428571	7.428571	6.571429	2.285714	5.428571	5.714286	6.285714	4.285714	1.714286	6.571429	3.428571	5.428571	7.428571	5.428571
6	7.2	6	1.6	4.8	6.4	7.2	4	1.6	6.4	3.2	5.2	8	6.8
4	8	8	4	7	4	4	5	2	7	4	6	6	2

6	2	8	8	6	8	8	6	6	8	8	8	8	6
8	0	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
2	8	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	8	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0

P	E	P	E	P	P	P	E	E	P	E	E	P	E
E	E	N	N	N	N	P	E	E	E	E	E	N	E
E	P	P	N	E	P	P	E	N	P	E	E	P	E

Student 25	Student 26	Student 27	Student 28	Student 29	Student 30	Student 31	Student 32	Student 33	Student 34	Student 35	Student 36	Student 37	Student 38
8	2	6	6	6	6	8	8	8	6	6	6	8	6
6	6	2	6	6	8	8	8	8	6	6	6	8	6
2	6	2	6	6	8	6	8	6	6	6	8	2	2
0	8	8	8	8	8	8	6	6	8	6	8	8	6
2	8	6	8	8	8	8	6	8	8	6	8	8	6
2	6	2	6	2	6	6	0	8	8	6	6	6	2
6	6	2	6	2	6	8	6	8	6	2	0	8	6
2	8	6	2	6	8	8	6	6	8	8	8	2	6
8	8	2	6	6	8	8	8	8	6	6	6	8	6
6	6	6	6	8	2	6	6	6	0	8	8	6	6
2	2	6	6	8	8	6	6	8	8	8	2	6	6
6	0	2	2	8	8	6	6	8	6	8	6	n/a	2
6	0	6	8	8	8	6	8	6	8	6	6	2	6
6	0	2	6	8	8	8	6	8	8	6	6	6	2
0	2	2	8	8	8	6	2	8	2	6	0	8	2
6	2	2	6	6	8	8	6	8	6	6	8	6	2
6	6	6	6	8	8	6	8	8	6	6	2	6	6
4.352941	4.470588	4	6	6.588235	7.294118	7.058824	6.117647	7.411765	6.235294	6.235294	5.529412	6.125	4.588235
P10, N7	P10, N7	P8, N9	P15, N2	P15, N2	P16, N1	P17, N0	P15, N2	P17, N0	P15, N2	P16, N1	P13, N4	P13, N3	P11, N6

0	6	2	0	2	6	2	0	0	0	6	0	6	2
6	8	6	0	0	0	2	6	2	2	8	2	8	6
0	6	6	6	2	2	2	0	0	0	6	0	2	2
2	6	2	2	2	0	6	6	2	0	6	2	6	6
0	6	8	2	0	0	2	2	0	2	8	6	0	6
6	6	2	0	0	0	6	0	0	2	2	6	8	6
6	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	8	2
2	6	6	0	2	0	2	6	0	2	2	0	6	0
2	2	6	2	8	0	2	0	0	2	2	6	6	2
6	6	6	8	2	0	2	2	0	2	6	6	2	6
6	2	0	6	6	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	6	2
6	2	6	6	6	0	2	n/a	0	2	6	0	6	2
0	6	2	2	2	8	2	0	0	6	6	0	8	2
3.230769	4.923077	4.153846	2.615385	2.461538	1.230769	2.307692	2	0.461538	1.538462	4.769231	2.461538	5.538462	3.384615
P6, N7	P9, N4	P7, N6	P4, N9	P3, N10	P2, N11	P2, N11	P3, N9	P0, N13	P1, N12	P8, N5	P4, N9	P10, N3	P5, N8

2	2	0	0	6	8	2	2	6	6	8	6	8	2
8	0	6	6	6	8	6	6	8	6	8	2	6	0
8	0	6	0	2	8	6	6	8	2	8	2	8	0
8	0	6	6	6	8	2	6	8	2	8	6	8	0
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	6	6	2
2	0	2	6	8	8	6	6	8	6	8	2	6	6
2	2	2	6	6	8	6	6	8	6	8	6	6	2
5.428571	1.714286	4.285714	4.571429	6	8	5.142857	5.714286	7.714286	5.142857	8	4.285714	6.857143	1.714286
6.8	2	5.2	4	5.6	8	4.8	5.6	7.6	4.8	8	4.4	7.2	0.8
2	1	2	6	7	8	6	6	8	6	8	4	6	4

6	6	6	8	8	8	6	6	0	0	8	6	8	2
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	6	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	6	6	0	0	0	2

E	E	E	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	E
E	E	E	E	N	N	N	N	N	N	E	N	P	E
E	N	E	E	P	P	E	P	P	E	P	E	P	N

Student 39	Student 40			
			6	2
8	8		6	2
8	6		8	2
6	8		8	8
8	8		8	6
6	6			
6	6		2	2
6	8		0	6
2	8		5.428571	4
6	6		7.2	4
0	6		1	4
2	6			
6	6		8	8
6	6		8	8
8	8		0	8
2	2		0	0
2	8			
6	6			
5.176471	6.588235			
P12, N5	P16, N1		E	P
2	0		E	N
6	6			
2	0		E	E
6	2			
6	2			
8	6			
0	0			
0	6			
2	0			
0	2			
2	2			
6	2			
8	0			
3.692308	2.153846			
P6, N7	P3, N10			

Curriculum Vitae

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Graduate:

Masters of Arts in English.
Virginia Tech, Blacksburg VA, May 2003.
Thesis: Imitation and Adaptability in the First-Year Composition Classroom: A Pedagogical Study.

Undergraduate:

Bachelor of Arts in English, Minor in Middle School Education.
Summa Cum Laude
James Madison University, Harrisonburg VA, December 1996.

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT:

2001-2003 Graduate Teaching Assistant in English, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA.
Taught for 4 semesters in the first-year writing curriculum, at 18-26 students per class. Designed curricula and syllabi, selected materials, lectured, led classroom discussions, held group and individual student conferences, implemented and evaluated grammar exercises, monitored workshops, met with students outside the classroom both personally and electronically, and graded at least 20 pages each of formal and informal prose per student per semester.

Courses Taught:
1105 "Critical Literacy and *The Conscious Reader*" (1 section, Fall 2001)
1106 "The Writing Project: Spirit and Mystery" (2 sections, Spring 2002)
1105 "Critical Literacy: Modeling the Writing Experience" (2 sections, Fall 2002)
1106 "The Writing Project: Cross-Cultural Connections" (2 sections, Spring 2003)

1998-2001 Teacher of English, College Prep Inc, Annandale VA.
Designed curriculum for and taught between 4 and 9 different preps per session, including 3-5 courses per session of SAT Preparation in English for high school students and 2-4 courses per semester of Middle School English Enrichment and SSAT Prep. Worked closely with both native speakers and ESL (English as a Second Language) students in grades 6-12 in classrooms, in small groups, and on an individual basis to develop vocabulary, critical reading, grammar, and writing skills.

1997-1998 Teacher, Dublin Middle School, Dublin VA.
Team-taught 50 students in 2 6th grade classes in varying subjects including language arts, spelling, reading, math, and science. Designed, updated, and implemented curricular materials, graded class work, papers, and tests, worked with computer-based grading system, assisted students with Power Point presentations in on-site computer lab, met with parents, counselors, and other teachers to discuss students' academic achievements and behavioral patterns, participated in an extra-curricular faculty creative-writing course, and acted on a faculty-wide textbook adoption committee.

1997 Substitute, Fairfax County Public Schools.
Taught a variety of courses culminating in a 3-month long-term substitute position in drama and journalism at Robinson Middle School, which included directing and producing two eighth-grade productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and overseeing publication of the April and May 1997 issues of Robinson's middle school newspaper, *The Medallion*.

PUBLICATIONS:

An Annotated Bibliography of the Ballad of Tam Lin.
Scholarly bibliography with annotations of historical references, cultural resources, and literary allusions to as well as literature and children's fiction based on or incorporating the influences of an anonymous Scottish ballad. Online publication at www.tam-lin.org/tyra; work posted permission of Abigail Kitaguchi, site owner, September 2002.

Twomey, T. "Promising." *the brush mountain review* 2 (Spring 2003).

PRESENTATIONS/CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES:

Topical presentation: Mentoring. GTA Workshop, Graduate School of Virginia Tech, Blacksburg VA, August 19-20 2002.

Conference Coordination:

"Transversing our Intellectual Communities," Graduate Student Conference at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, 2003.
Member of Conference Coordination Committee.

Conference Presentations:

Twomey, T. (2003) Imitation and Modeling in a First-Year Composition Classroom. Paper presented at the Graduate Student Conference, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Committee Member, First-Year Writing Curriculum Revision Taskforce, English Department, Virginia Tech. Summer 2002.

Co-President, English Graduate Student Society, English Department, Virginia Tech. August 2002-May 2003.
Organized meetings and social events, coordinated and oversaw 2 department-wide book fairs, contacted publishing representatives, scheduled room availability for activities, organized and implemented department-wide recycling program, and managed society's finances, as well as serving as a liaison between the graduate student community and the department's faculty and administration.

AWARDS AND HONORS:
Academic Honors:

Syracuse University Graduate Fellowship, 2003-2007 (pending).

Member, VPI & SU Chapter of Phi Kappa Phi, from 2002.

"English Award" James Madison University Graduating Class of 1996.
Award recognizes the highest GPA in the English department's graduating class.

President, Alpha Chi Chapter of Kappa Delta Pi 1996.
James Madison University's Chapter of an Honor Society in Education.

Member, Alpha Chi Chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, 1995-1996.

Lifetime member, Golden Key National Honor Society, from 1995.

Creative Awards:

First Prize, Fiction, Conference on Christianity and Literature Annual Student Writing Contest, 1996. Announced in *Christianity and Literature*, 45 (1996): 272-4.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES:

Private Tutor in English, Summer 2002.
Worked with a high school student on compositional organization skills, written expression, and developing familiarity with and applications of formal grammar in English, his second language.

Counselor, Camp Easter Seal West, New Castle VA, Summer 1996.
Worked one-on-one and in small and large groups on various projects and at various activities with individuals with a wide range of types and severities of disabilities, including mental, physical, visual, and hearing impairments.