EXPRESSIVE WRITING: EXERCISES IN A NEW PROGYMNASMATA

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I. Current-Traditional, Classical, and Process Models of Composing

Much of the work in composition theory for the past decade has explored alternatives to the "current-traditional paradigm" of teaching (and learning) writing.[1] Recent treatments of the relationship of classical rhetoric to modern practice illustrate two clearly different solutions, one that looks back to ancient systems and one that turns away from them. Both camps firmly agree that teachers need to move away from presenting students with finished examples of the modes of discourse for study and imitation. However, they disagree on the source of this widespread methodology and on directions for change. Looking to Quintilian's educational system, James Murphy suggests a return to an integrated language arts curriculum in order to heal the split he sees between reading and writing in modern classrooms (3-13). Others regard such classical models as the very source of the problem in modern writing courses.

C. N. Knoblauch and Lil Brannon, for example, contend that the current-traditional paradigm persists precisely because composition teachers still follow the methods of Quintilian. In *Rhetorical Traditions and Modern Writing,* they explain two basic objections to this legacy. First, they argue, composition teachers are unacquainted with the history of their discipline and do not understand its evolution. Without a

guiding philosophy, their composition classes become "sterile" repetitions of a system of education that no longer applies in the twentieth century. Second, current-traditional methods repeat ritualistic, ceremonial conventions that do not have any clear application to our students' communicative contexts. Nor does the focus on "modes" (comparison/contrast, process analysis, cause/effect) reflect what we have learned about how writers actually compose or help students use writing to discover anything meaningful to say.

On the surface, it is difficult to argue with Knoblauch and Brannon (certainly much of composition repeats a classical model without fully examining it). However, this essay will try to prevent teachers from throwing the philosophical basis of classical thinking out with its current misapplications. At the close of their book, Knoblauch and Brannon argue for a more conscious examination of the rhetorical tradition in order to learn and practice a truly modern rhetoric, one where students use writing to explore ideas and to find genuine reasons for communicating them to actual audiences.

We propose to relate this call for a new pedagogy to an idea inherent in both classical models and modern theory — that of the student writer as both learner and communicator. Much modern theory and research has clarified the important function of self-reflective or expressive writing in the development of writers. We shall attempt to connect this focus on the expressive aim and the writer's development with the classical concept of the exercise. Expressive writing, we believe, can become the link between the persuasive, communicative aims of classical rhetoric and the writing-as-discovery models of more recent research. This essay will present two sequences of writing-speaking-reading exercises that illustrate how expressive and communicative languages can and must be integrated in the process of teaching and learning composition.

Susan Miller, in a recent essay in Murphy's collection, provides an old-fashioned rationale for our somewhat new-fashioned pedagogical synthesis of expressive and communicative languages. She describes classical *progymnasmata,* particularly as fostered by Quintilian, in specific terms:

> First the young scholars reconstructed the texts of the works to be read from often fragmented, faulty manuscripts. Then, they read the texts, memorizing them and presenting expressive readings to practice public deliv-

> ery and correct pronunciation. In the third stage, called exegesis or exposition, the students dealt with what the texts meant. They parsed sentences grammatically, defined and learned vocabulary words, studied allusions to geographical, historical, or literary matters, and explained the content of each work. In the fourth and final stage, the class drew moral lessons from the texts. Although this stage was called 'criticism,' it was never the thematic, generic, or formal analysis of literature we know; rather, it was a demonstration of the moral and ethical use of the work (49).

Since Miller is arguing from a historical rather than theoretical context, she does not go on to explain how this learning process is different from current-traditional rhetoric's emphasis on the product of writing rather than on the process of producing a writing, nor does she point out in specific terms how current-traditional rhetoric's emphasis on critical-expository discourse over all other aims is undercut by the more integrative process of copying, translating, paraphrasing, reading aloud, and discussing that the best of Quintilian's followers from second and third century Rome through the Renaissance had their students produce.

Miller's essay and, in fact, all the essays in the book from which it comes, argue that classical models of teaching reading and writing were far more well-rounded and balanced in their treatments of the entire writing process than are the majority of their twentieth-century counterparts. Contemporary researchers and teachers are finding this return to the classics increasingly attractive for both political and educational reasons: politically, because the beleaguered writing teacher, a second-class academic citizen in the twentieth century, finds a strong and consistent tradition with which to identify in scholastic applications of rhetoric in the classical tradition; educationally, because many of the theories that have been suggested by current learning and discourse theorists have brought writing teachers back to a reconsideration of integrated language arts curricula, where reading, speaking, listening, writing, and thinking become interactive processes.

This essay picks up on the second of these reasons for returning to a classical curriculum. But, we hope, it does not do so by suggesting a reductive and mechanistic set of exercises, into which the worst of Quintilian's pedagogical followers often turned the classical *progymnasmata.* We, instead, believe

that current composition theory's emphasis on process, combined with current learning theory and rhetoric's emphases on the organic, interactive nature of sophisticated or mature thinking and writing can provide today's writing teacher with a model for developing a new concept of exercise, a renewed sense of *progymnasmata,* in the classroom. At this point in our field's development of theory, the base of that new sense of integrated exercise lies in the development of strategies for combining expressive and communicative discourse in the process of composing.

Three paradigms or models describing the writing process, then, lie behind this article's attempt to evolve a new sense of composition exercise: the classical, the current-traditional, the new. The classical we are returning to because it integrated the acts of reading, imitating, copying, thinking, writing, and speaking into a developmental continuum that has been missing from the current-traditional paradigm, which has consistently focused upon imitation of the surface structures (the modal patterns, the paragraph, the sentence, the arrangement of the whole) of writing. Current-traditional rhetoric also focused almost entirely on informative writing; the classical emphasis on persuasion and the romantic emphasis on the expressive were replaced by situations in which students wrote as experts to an audience that was supposed to be informed by what it read. In combining the first, the classical, with the third, the current emphasis on process, we hope to include the best of the old and the new, while avoiding the mistakes of the so-far dominant current-traditional paradigm of teaching writing.

II. Expressive Discourse and the Act of Writing

Three theorists have recently provided workable summaries of the aim, function, and context of expressive discourse. James Kinneavy defines expressive discourse according to its focus upon the discovery processes and self-creative functions of language as they create belief and understanding in the writer.[2] Kinneavy argues that expressive writing is "psychologically prior" to all other types of discourse. He means by this that teachers, who are interested in how language and writing skills are developed, and philosophers — the existentialists, for example — who are interested in how thought comes into being, should understand the aims of discourse

developmentally, as types of speaking, writing, and communicating that are psychologically arranged in an order that will enable writers, first, to discover and learn what they have to say and, second, to express the results of that learning to others.

Much of what Kinneavy suggests about the primacy of expressive discourse in the overall learning process is comparable to what many researchers and theorists such as Donald Murray, Linda Flower and John Hayes, and Nancy Sommers are suggesting is true of written composing as a result of their work with protocols, case studies, and other empirical methods.[3] These composition theorists and researchers find that writers, while engaged in the act of putting words on the page, are constantly looking back at what they have written and forward to what they have yet to write. Sommers and Flower and Hayes point out that students seem to revise in two general stages, the first of which is "writer-based," where writers look backward and forward over what they have written in order to shape their own thoughts and the second of which is "reader-based," where writers look backward and forward according to a plan that has been developed earlier in the writing process. These later writings usually address a more transactional or public audience than the earlier ones.

From expressive discourse, then, are evolved transactional aims. Certainly empirical research also indicates that this process is not totally linear, with the expressive always leading in a straight line to the transactional. Yet the overall pattern does seem to hold, and recent empirical research in composition does, in its call for more careful attention by teachers to student drafts, reinforce Kinneavy's argument for the psychological priority of expressive discourse. Writers discover what Kinneavy describes as general goals, teleological purposes, for writing during the expressive stage; they transform those goals into particular discourse aims during the transactive, or communicative, stage.[4]

James Britton, in his influential work on composition theory, provides the most complete account of the function of expressive discourse within the overall development of writing skills. It is expressive writing, Britton contends, that helps teachers and students focus upon the process of "shaping at the point of utterance," of using writing to see and re-see evolving intentions. Expressive writers are free to take on a "spectator's" stance, reflecting on and observing their own ideas before committing themselves to participate in a com-

municative transaction. Expressive discourse, for Britton, is a means whereby writers become self-conscious, where they come to know the origins and patterns of their thought, and where they begin to discover, or internalize, an audience that might be interested in and need to know what the writer has thought. Britton argues the need to include both expressive and transactional discourse, in both spoken and written forms, within an interactive, general curriculum in language arts.[5]

Recent research makes it clear that particular classroom composing exercises must help students to integrate other language arts with writing as they learn to compose. Students can benefit from a return to classical models, to the *progymnasmata* of the Roman classroom, but this benefit will not be achieved unless we imitate the spirit rather than the letter of the transcribing, copying, translating, paraphrasing, criticizing, and judging exercises that were frequent in these classical pedagogies. First and second century Roman and later Renaissance and medieval schools existed in very different cultural contexts from our own: for them writing was not the sole coin of power that it often is today. Students today have been influenced from birth by a dominantly visual-scribal culture. They do need to retrain memory and to sharpen basic rewriting skills such as paraphrase and summary, and they do need to renew the traditional skill of close reading and careful attention to words that the translation, reading aloud, and dictation exercises of the traditional classroom were meant to instill.

All these skills, however, had a kind of equal importance in classical contexts that they do not, and should not, have in our writing classrooms. They are important, in contrast, because they are subordinate means of training students to take on the essentially private experience of writing. Students, in other words, who must train their memories so that they can hold in their heads the content and language of what they have already written because they will then be better able to follow their lines of thought as they develop on the page are not being asked to do the same kind of work with memory that a Roman student memorizing someone else's lyric poem or speech in order to use bits and pieces of that speech in a subsequent, original oration is being asked to do. Our students are self-consciously reworking their own language and thought before or while they consider how it would look to

others; the Roman student is consciously memorizing pieces of language that might be incorporated into an oration later when that student has developed someting to say.

Today's writing teachers need a less mechanistic, more organic model to work from as they devise classroom sequences and exercises, but they need also to find a model that will accommodate all the language arts, as the classical model did.

Much of what Richard Young has called current-traditional rhetoric has emphasized a separation of the expressive and communicative functions of writing. Perhaps because of a modern, empiricist skepticism, inherited indirectly from Locke and Hume, modern rhetoric fostered a utilitarian emphasis on the craft rather than the genius required of good writing. This attention to craft, however technically adept in its treatment of particular rhetorical and linguistic skills as they were manifested in the product or text, has been singularly unsuccessful in connecting in our students' or in the public's minds the processes of thinking and knowing and the act of writing. It is often this false separation of thought and writing that leads to the oversimplified public outcries concerning illiteracy and basic skills, and this same separation causes many students of writing to demand quick, cosmetic cures for their writing ills.

The numbers of current writing teachers, however, who argue for a new-romantic revolt against the practitioners of craft seem also to oversimplify the writing teacher's problems. Much of both current and classical rhetoric, with its philosophical underpinnings, should indicate to us that many but not all of what the nineteenth-century romantics, with their emphases on the expressiveness of writing understood as undefinable and rationally uncontrollable processes, can be empirically studied, are reducible to systematic theoretical analysis and description, and — ultimately — can be made into pedagogical models. Certainly this does not mean that we will ever be able to reduce the teaching of writing to a totally mechanical system of mental and physical operations that behavioral theorists might have once argued was possible, but it also does mean that we can, as a profession, organize ourselves around a set of heuristic operations that are neither too mechanically simplistic nor too romantically mysterious.[6]

This article argues that a synthesis of current work on expressive discourse, learning theory, and classical exercises of

the kind that are represented in Quintilian's *progymnasmata* might provide just such a flexible yet systematic heuristic model for writing teachers. The sequences of exercises that follow provide a foundation for the pedagogical integration of expressive and transactional functions of writing. They bring together the teacher's concern with rhetorical skills in a learning context that encourages the relation of those skills to the larger aims of discourse. They also encourage what we believe is a more honest assessment of the classroom learning situation, where developing writers must write for the purposes of their own self-discovery before they can with any integrity address a more public audience.

III. Integrating Expression and Communication: Two Stages of Exercises

We deliberately call the assignments within these stages "exercises" because we want to connect them to the spirit of Quintilian's *progymnasmata,* a systematic process of integrating reading, speaking, listening, and writing that was designed to foster facility with language. These exercises, too, combine all language arts in ways that many exercises in the current-traditional paradigm, with their emphasis on the finished, edited copy, do not. We believe that a return to the classical concept of exercise — where students gradually develop control over language forms and come to see how language shapes thought — can become the basis for a genuine process-oriented pedagogy for college writing. We suggest that such a return should be grounded in expressive writing, which can combine the best of the classical sense of exercise with what modern research in learning theory has shown about the development of language.

Much has been written on the theoretical level about the value, or primacy, of expressive language in overall verbal development; however, little has been done on the practical level to indicate how a teacher should elicit such discourse or use it to help students gain control of reading and writing. These exercises, we hope, will provide teachers with methods for intervening in students' composing processes in ways that will help them consciously control developing thought.

These exercises will also help teachers understand how expressive discourse functions as an intermediate process between private and public forms of written communication. Writers who work through these sequences of exercises, with

teachers as informed collaborators, will learn to look back on their perceptions and feelings as they conceive a topic while they simultaneously look forward to a defined audience of those who need the understanding and information the writer can supply. The expressive writer, then, includes within the act of writing both the subjective "I" looking back on ideas developing and the objective "I" beginning to assume the role of an imagined audience.

Each sequence of exercises moves, therefore, from expressive to transactional writing. Like their classical predecessors, however, the sequences are recursive and depend upon students' developing consciousness of using writing to objectify and decenter from what they are reading or discussing. In other words, the exercises first make the student aware of the roles of participant and spectator and then use that consciousness as a basis for combining those roles to produce a final writing. In the process, the exercises should help students train their memories as they re-examine earlier writings and synthesize them into later drafts.

The final exercise in one sequence requires exposition, the other persuasion — the two types of discourse which predominate in college composition courses. Unlike assignments in the current-traditional paradigm, though, these exercises lead students to a more natural discovery of rhetorical context and aim rather than beginning with artificial contexts designed to stimulate "invention." In our overall sequences of exercises, invention is based on the students' reading of the texts at hand and their re-seeing of those texts through their writing of copies, paraphrases, summaries and responses. According to both learning and reading theory, that writing should be based on the students' larger, individual categories of experience. Until students can discover that individual perspective on a text or on an exercise, their writing will lack the personal investment which marks the fluent writer's ability to engage a subject or an audience.

Stage 1: From Discovery to Generalization

The first sequence of exercises is based on Kate Chopin's "The Story of An Hour," a short story written in 1896 that describes a woman's reaction to the sudden news of her husband's accidental death. Because the exercises ask students to enter the world of a literary work, they require that students

discover the roles that the narrator gives both to the characters and to the reader. They must, then, use the oral and written exercises to simultaneously identify with the short story and to stand back to analyze it.

Exercise Sequence 1

1. Read the first four paragraphs of "The Story of An Hour." Write, in class, a short response to these paragraphs in which you explain what you think will happen in the rest of the story. What do you expect when you read the title? What do the first four paragraphs make you think will happen? Why do you expect what you do?
2. Listen as several members of the class read these paragraphs aloud. Then add to your response statement a description of the voice telling the story and your reaction to its sound.
3. Read what you have written aloud and listen as other students read theirs. Copy down those parts of the paragraphs that led to your predictions. What particular words or images did you record and respond to? How did hearing the various sounds of the narrator's voice aloud add to or change your reactions?

This first sequence of exercises aims at making students more conscious readers. Much has been written lately about the need to re-integrate the processes of reading and writing, as well as oral and written skills, but very little classroom methodology has been suggested. Yet modern students do need to develop the ability to see and remember more clearly what is actually on the page of the texts they read and write.

We believe that this ability can be practiced through expressive discourse, which can also provide the link between reading, speaking, and writing. Although several theorists recently have advocated a return to an integration of reading and writing through expressive "response statements," these suggested student writings are often disconnected from the process of producing a final writing for a public audience. These theorists base their pedagogy, as do we, on psycholinguistic reading theory, which shows that readers bring much more information to a text than the words on the page provide. They suggest that writing down such non-visual information in the form of reaction statements will enhance awareness of how both reading and writing work. In the last ten years, too, some teachers have drawn on reader-response

literary criticism, which sees the reading process as an "interaction" between the text and the reader, and which, like psycholinguistic reading theory, insists on the reader's participation in the creation of meaning.[7] Both these recent approaches to reading can provide the material for expressive writing in response to a literary text.

Two recent articles exemplify this relatively new approach to teaching writing by using reading theory. Elizabeth Flynn presents student samples to illustrate the movement from expressive response statements, through drafts focused on an audience, to a final paper. Her student case study certainly displays a developing sense of how to organize around an emerging generality that would make sense to an outside audience and that first surfaced in the response statement. In this sense, Flynn sees response statements as "links between the texts and students' experience," as a way into the world of a literary work (347).

Flynn's purpose is to illustrate how such exploratory writing can help students move outward from identifying with characters or summarizing plots toward observing patterns of meaning in the text. Because her aim is to teach literature through writing, she does not focus on how a writing teacher might use the particular world or dramatic context of a literary work to teach composing skills. Thus, Flynn does not ask the crucial question of how the movement from response to observation occurs, or how teachers might help students re-see their intitial reactions with greater critical distance.

Our first exercise sequence, on the other hand, makes the connection between composing and reading theory much more explicit. The first exercise draws on psycholinguistic reading theory by asking students to become conscious of their roles as readers who predict meaning by associating with particular images, characters, or settings. These exercises slow the writing and reading processes down so that students can examine their responses to the textual cues at the beginning of the story. The second exercise, drawing on reader-response theory, asks students to become conscious of the tension that often exists when new cues must be matched with that initial response.

Exercise Sequence 2

1. Read to the end of paragraph ten, or listen as class members read it aloud, and write another response statement

in which you add to or change your initial predictions about how the story will end.

2. Copy the paragraphs which you think caused you to revise your expectations. What new images did you notice? How does the sound of the narrator's voice change?
3. In small groups, read your two reaction statements aloud and compare how your predications have changed, and why. How might you fit your two responses together?

These exercises introduce students to controlled practice in handling conflicting responses, which reader-response critics, such as Wolfgang Iser, suggest is the mark of fluent readers. In a recent *College English* article, Mariolina Salvatori uses the Iserian concepts of consistency building and wandering viewpoint to argue for greater attention to reader response as a means of improving writing skills. She claims that students tend to engage far too much in consistency building, or confirming familiar meanings with which they can identify. Students, she says, tend to exclude the wandering viewpoint from their reading — not recognizing the need to revise the perspectives they have built from the text's consistencies. Thus students often summarize or reproduce the texts they read rather than reflect on them critically.

The exercises in the second sequence make this distinction between summary and criticism clear. First, the act of copying involves looking at the text very differently than when reading silently. Separating this type of copying from their more distanced response to it ensures that students will recognize the simultaneous processes of becoming involved with textual cues and stepping back to observe that involvement. Our exercises, too, are designed so that students, as Salvatori suggests, "confront the ambiguities and uncertainties in the reading process" (662). They require that students practice the two language roles that students must practice as they write expressively: first, students write as participants in the story, recording reactions and making predictions; next, they take on the role of spectator to reflect on those expectations and to examine their causes. Finally, by requiring that students read their responses aloud to other members of the class and discuss them, the exercises move students toward an integration of private and social production of meaning, a synthesis of expression and communication. Because they have experienced the tension they feel as readers of the short

story, they will be better able to handle and structure that tension in their own work.

Salvatori and Flynn point out many of the characteristics of expressive writing identified by the theorists and researchers cited earlier: its language tends to be private, with idiosyncratic, personal meanings; its grammatical subjects are often "psychological," and therefore missing; and its structure tends toward narrative as it follows the contours of emerging thought.[8] Our next exercise sequence gives students practice with these forms.

Exercise Sequence 3

1. Read to the end of paragraph twenty, making notes to yourself in the margin that record your responses to the story as it develops. What associations can you make with Mrs. Mallard's feelings and thoughts in this section?
2. Looking back at your notes, write a first-person narrative, telling your reactions to the story and describing how your perceptions and expectations changed as you read.

These exercises slow the reading process down even more and, again, ask students to move among the roles of participant and spectator as they first record emerging responses and then to look back on those associations in order to shape them into narrative form. The next exercise sequence requires still more distanced reflection on their initial encounter with the story.

Exercise Sequence 4

1. Write a paragraph in which you summarize your narrative and generalize about your reactions to Mrs. Mallard up to this point in the story. Look back at this summary and explain how your reaction to the main character might account for your expectations concerning how the story might end. What in your own memory or experience might have led to your reactions?
2. In small groups, read your narratives and summaries to another student. Then exchange papers and write a third-person paraphrase of the other student's response to the story. Compare your responses, summaries, and paraphrases in a report for the class.

These exercises ask students to become objective about their subjective responses. Linda Flower and Sondra Perl have both

advocated this gradual movement from initial writing for the self toward a re-seeing with others in mind.[9] Here students begin to structure their responses by re-shaping narrative into summary and generalization. Here students also begin to look towards an audience as they read over the paraphrases of their work that others have written. Like the classical models, then, our exercises offer controlled practice in seeing a text through various forms of language.

Unlike the classical *progymnasmata,* however, in these exercises the student's own texts take over from the text of the short story as the focus of critical reading. The classical models intended that students re-examine another writer's thinking. In our sequence, each successive exercise sequence requires students to re-examine what they have already thought and written in terms of another rhetorical form or aim. That aim naturally develops into a sense of "other" as audience when students re-read their own work to themselves and to others and begin to incorporate what others might think into their own thinking. The other members of the class, in the reactions to drafts and summary or paraphrase of each other's work, also function to develop a sense of audience in student writers. The teacher, too, as she structures and comments on successive exercises in the role of informed collaborator, can clarify for students where and how their responses can be revised to fit a particular rhetorical context.

The next sequence of exercises encourages students to deal with the surprise ending to the story, first, in an objective way in order to ensure that they can identify with the irony in the narrator's voice. Then, they must move back from that identification to reflect on the irony's effect on them as readers, which leads them to the defined context in the final assignment.

Exercise Sequence 5

1. Copy the last three paragraphs of "The Story of An Hour." Paraphrase, in your own words, the last line.
2. Write a short paragraph describing your reaction to the story's ending. Were you surprised? Were you satisfied with the ending or did you feel manipulated? Do you think the surprise was necessary? How does your reaction to the ending fit with your responses and predictions up to this point?
3. Listen as three or four students read these paragraphs in

class and summarize your reactions to each, accounting for their differences.

Obviously, students now will need to take the longer, other-oriented view, in which they look back over all of these exercises, in order to arrive at a generalized reaction to the whole story and their cumulative response to it. The final assignment, then, moves from subjective evaluation of their exercises so far to more objective interpretation of those writings.

Exercise Sequence 6

1. Look back over all your exercises in response to "The Story of An Hour" and write a summary that describes your reactions to the story and makes connections between that response and your own memories or assumptions. How is your generalization different or similar to those of others in the class?
2. Imagine yourself in this situation:
   The literary magazine on your college campus, in answer to an escalating argument against required Humanities courses, has decided to devote its next issue to a defense of such a requirement. Other students have been asked to submit papers on the value of studying the liberal arts, history, music, and philosophy. You have been asked to write an essay on the value of reading fiction. Using Kate Chopin's "The Story of An Hour," demonstrate how reading fiction leads people to examine their own expectations and assumptions and how literature can function as a way of teaching readers something about themselves. Remember, the cumulative effect of the entire magazine will make the argument for required Humanities courses; you should concentrate only on Chopin's story as an illustration of what students can learn from reading fiction. Write in third person, using the hindsight you have gained by working through earlier exercises on this story. In other words, you have something to tell others about how reading this story caused you to examine and re-examine your own assumptions.

Finally, this exercise sequence uses writing to explain the process of reading, which, in turn, uses all the language arts and forms of the classical *progymnasmata* to arrive at a final synthesized paper. However, the sequence also uses modern

learning theory in that it makes students conscious of how responses recorded and objectified *as* they are read can be combined with their own memories and personal experiences to shape discourse that will explain that process to others.

This combination of classical exercises integrating speaking, reading, writing and current learning theory places these exercises into a more naturalistic, functional, and goal-oriented process. This process can enable English teachers to return to the best of the old in the context of the best of the new. The literacy crisis is not going to be lessened by a wholesale return to oral dictations, group recitations, or mechanical imitations of professional writers. Such exercises, however much they integrate all the language arts, are simply too separate from the processes of actual thought and expression to engage students. But, once placed into an expressive context where students learn by using language to explore — in front of other learners — their patterns of thought, what were previously rote, mechanical exercises can become tools of learning.

Stage 2: From Response to Persuasion

Our second stage of exercises focuses on persuasion, a very different type of discourse from literature. Persuasion aims at identification between writer and reader in which, under ideal persuasive circumstances, the reader is completely controlled by the logical, emotional, and ethical appeals of the writing. Advertising, perhaps *the* most manipulative form of persuasive writing, often emphasizes these appeals in more explicit ways than does political oratory or debate. Advertising ought, then, to provide an ideal contrast to literary discourse, where the reader must be able simultaneously to follow both the thematic and the literal levels of the story, poem, or play. On one, more superficial level, a critical reader of persuasion must be able to understand the intended effects of the discourse; on a second, more sophisticated level, a critical reader must maintain an analytical distance. The participating and judging selves should be more consciously contrasted in the reader of advertisements. This balance of what Peter Elbow has called the "doubting and believing" games should be obvious in the following sequences of reading and writing exercises. This entire stage of response is

based on the Coca-Cola advertisement that appears on the following page.

Before students can be asked to take on a critical role, however, they must identify with the advertisement's appeals and intended effects. The following exercises should help students understand how the images evoked by the words and picture of the advertisement come to produce particular effects on them.

Exercise Sequence 1

1. Read over the whole advertisement for Coca-Cola. Copy down each of the visual, sensual images that you find there and group them under either the heading of "good things" or "good times."
2. Next to your list of images, write descriptions of the situations or scenes that these words and phrases call up from your memory or personal experience. What particular associations do you have with "Big Sur," "a Florida sunrise," "Saturday night," or "your team winning," for example?
3. Pick one of these images and write a short narrative which tells a particular story about your association with it. Did Coke play a part in the experience? How might Coke be related to "good times" or "good things"?

These exercises serve to link the students' reading of the text of the advertisement to their own experience. In order to understand how it achieves its persuasive aim, students first need to experience the effect of the advertisement's language in a personal way. The next exercise sequence will help them see how those personal associations connect to the larger, collective, "American" audience.

Exercise Sequence 2

1. Combine your list of associations with the lists of several other students in the class. Add to that list a response to the headline, "America." How are these responses related?
2. Write a summary of these associations in which you explain how the lists of images can be connected to the title of the advertisement.

This sequence begins to connect the students' personal, individual perspective to the collective associations of the class. It establishes common responses and begins to develop an awareness of the roles the advertisement asks them to play

America

If you'll stop and think for just a moment, you'll find we have more of the good things in this country than anywhere else in the world.

Think of this land. From the surf at Big Sur to a Florida sunrise. And all the places in between.

The Grand Canyon . . . the wheat fields of Kansas . . . Autumn in New Hampshire . . .

You could go on forever. But America is more than a place of much beauty. It's a place for good times.

It's Saturday night.

It's a trip down a dirt road in a beat up old jalopy.

It's your team winning. It's a late night movie you could enjoy a thousand times.

And, yes, when you're thirsty, it's the taste of ice-cold Coca-Cola. It's the real thing.

In fact, all of the good things in this country are real. They're all around you, plainly visible. We point to many of them in our advertising. But you can discover many, many more without ever seeing a single commercial for Coke.

So have a bottle of Coke . . . and start looking up.

The Coca-Cola Company

Coca-Cola and Coke are registered trademarks which identify the same product of the Coca-Cola Compan

as a general audience. The next exercise sequence will introduce students to the role of the speaker in the advertisement.

Exercise Sequence 3

1. Re-read the advertisement while you listen to the teacher or another member of the class read the text aloud. Copy words or images that stand out or come to mind when you hear them.
2. Think back to your reaction to the sound of the advertisement as it was read aloud. How would you read it? In groups, read the advertisements to one another and answer these questions: what kind of person is speaking in the advertisement? Who listens to this sort of voice? Can you compare this advertisement's voice to voices you have seen or heard in other advertisements?
3. Write a paraphrase of this advertisement in your own words and read it to your group. Compare the difference between the sound of the advertisement itself and the sound of a few of the paraphrases. (This exercise will help students experience the tone of the speaker's voice, and it will establish the beginning of a rhetorical analysis explaining this voice's effect on students as readers of persuasion.)
4. Write a summary of these associations in which you explain how the lists of images can be connected to the title of the advertisement.
5. Read your summary to other students and listen as other students read theirs. Paraphrase each other's responses, using the third person.
6. Looking back at both your summary and your paraphrase, write a description of the general, or ideal, audience that this advertisement intends to persuade. What would they need to identify with, or believe in, in order to be persuaded?

Here students move even further toward a consideration of others in the role of audience, after they have explored their own reactions to that role. Looking back at all their reactions and evaluations of the text, students can prepare themselves to evaluate the effectiveness of the advertisement. This exercise will prepare them for the final exercise, where they must take on the role of persuaders themselves.

Exercise 4: Final Assignment

> You work for an advertising agency that is trying to land Coca-Cola as its newest client. Although Coca-Cola has been enormously successful, your company wants to convince them that their current line of advertising has gone stale. "Have a Coke and a Smile," "Coke Adds Life," and "It's the Real Thing" have been repeated too often to remain effective, you think. Your company, therefore, has developed a new advertisement with "America" as its headline. Your boss has given you the task of presenting this new advertisement to Coca-Cola to convince them that it makes a fresh and more effective appeal. In an introductory letter that will accompany the advertisement, persuade Coca-Cola to buy the advertisement by showing them how the new advertisement works to re-inforce their image as the producers of the nation's leading soft drink. To be persuasive, you will have to show how your advertisement identifies Coke with America and with the reader through its imagery, headline, and photography.

Here, students will have to adopt an objective stance toward the advertisement, just as they needed to be objective about their reading experience in the final exercise on "The Story of An Hour." However, we believe that because they have explored their subjective responses to earlier exercises, through practice, expressive writing in various forms and with varying degrees of distance, they will be more prepared to combine subjective and objective responses into a balanced critical perspective. Each sequence of exercises deliberately blends objective tasks (paraphrase, imitation, summary) with subjective responses, encouraging writers to work through these sequences in a way that will help them become critics without sacrificing their ability to participate in constructing the meaning of the texts they are reading.

Exercises do not have to be dull, mechanical activities. They can become an active, functional part of reading, writing, and learning processes. But they can do so only when all types of language arts are brought together to support and help develop thought and communication. Learners have as much, sometimes more, to say than their professional counterparts. They also have the potential to use language in fresh and direct ways because they can be free of the jargon and restricted codes of many professional communities. But, as

teachers, we must respect the learner *as* learner, as someone whose discovery process is as authentic and as important as any professional utterance. Perhaps then we shall be able to return to the classical tradition free of the skepticism and doubt of a profession beleaguered by cyclical "literacy crises," and we shall be able as well to place the emphasis in college writing where it should be — on writers as learners expressing what they have learned.

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NOTES

[1]Our use of the term "current-traditional" in referring to the common approaches to teaching writing in twentieth-century English Departments is based upon Richard Young's description of that term in "Paradigms and Problems: Needed Research in Rhetorical Invention" (31).

[2]See particularly Kinneavy's general discussion of the aims of discourse in Chapter Two of *A Theory of Discourse* (48-72) and his particular discussion of the expressive aim in Chapter Six (393-449).

[3]See Nancy Sommers, "Responding to Student Writing," (148-156); Linda Flower, "Writer-Based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing" (19-37); Linda Flower and John Hayes, "A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing," (365-388); and Donald Murray, "Internal Revision," (85-103).

[4]In a recent short article reviewing empirical research on composing processes, particularly revision, Richard Gebhart points out that what was formerly a separate emphasis on rhetoric and composing process in composition theory has been replaced by a more synthetic perspective on rhetoric and process (294-296). This more synthetic perspective, as Gebhart suggests, indicates that writers must gradually evolve a sense of rhetorical goals *as* they write, revising in order to clarify those more general goals in the form of particular audiences and aims (296).

[5]See "The Composing Processes and the Functions of Writing," (24) and also *The Development of Writing Abilities, 11-18* (35).

[6]See Richard Young, "Concepts of Art and the Teaching of Writing" (103-141). In this article, Young describes in detail the two "schools" of rhetoric that we discuss above: the neo-romantic and the current empirical-technicians, which he respectively characterizes as the schools of "glamour" and "grammar." He closes by suggesting that these schools of thought be synthesized in a systematic but flexible heuristic model for teaching writing.

[7]For psycholinguistic descriptions of the reading process, see Frank Smith and Charles B. Cooper and Anthony Petrosky. Among theorists who take this model of comprehension (the reader's active participation with