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Lesson Plan Introduction

After I graduated from high school and began my writing career, I had to teach myself how to write for different purposes than just formal essays and research projects. I had fun playing around with a variety of ideas that eventually morphed and evolved into creating an interactive website for my book world that brought the people and places to life in more ways than was possible within the confines of the book itself. This exploration helped me to be adaptable for my other professional experiences, such as working as a web content creator, SEO writer, feature writer, and more. I never learned how to do those things during school; my website was my practice and exploration that led to success in my career. I believe students should be immersed in multigenre writing to experience a little bit of everything *before* they get to the “real world”, not after.

My writing unit will have students create a website based on a topic they are interested in. The technical aspects of creating the website (such as picking out domain name and setting up an account) will be handled by the instructor; the students will focus on writing all the content for the website.

The lesson plan will be divided into four weeks that take place at the end of the school year to allow students to put their skills learned during the year into practical use. The website project will culminate with a presentation to other faculty members and students from the school.

The weekly plans will cover the following topics and lessons: 1. Voting for a topic based on a skill or hobby, piece of media, or historical event, a free-write note taking assignment, and an idea proposal. It will also include the instructional time for learning about the parts of a website. This week will also see students pre-write about the selected topic and engage in a workshopping activity to discuss their writing and ideas. 2. Students will learn the basics of research and complete the articles they began

in week one. They will also write a brief literature review and spend class time in the library and computer lab researching their topics. 3. Students will Learn about headlines, flavor text, and social media. They will work as groups to create titles and headlines for the website. 4. The final week will involve design and layout of the website, with students selecting fonts and layout options. This will also include the final presentation.

While a website might seem unorthodox and complicated, the idea is simple—it provides students a huge variety of real-world writing opportunities and covers almost all genres and types of writing, from brief social media posts to researched articles aimed at a specific audience and demographic. It will also provide opportunities for working individually and in groups, for workshops, and for greenbelt and feral writing alongside formal requirements. It's a true test of all writing skills and helps build a bridge between the disparate writing lessons from their past and writing for the 'real world'. Too often school assignments seem to exist in a vacuum; this lesson plan is designed to dispel that false assumption and show that real writing is diverse, fun, and useful.

The website itself will be developed through a “drag and drop” template website such as wordpress.com or wix.com. The instructor will select a few template designs prior to the unit begins and will manage the actual implementation of text and design choices, ensuring students focus solely on writing content.

The primary readings that have informed this project are *Joy Write*, by Ralph Fletcher. This provided ideas for workshopping and free-write activities. *Teaching to the test...not!* helped me understand how to build lessons that can allow students to succeed at standardized testing without being taught specifically to the test. *The Fantasy of the Seamless Transition* helped me understand that it's not necessary (or always possible) to have kids prepared for a specific university experience because even in college writing opportunities are quite varied. This article was a major insight into creating a final project that covers every type of writing imaginable so that students are familiar with almost every type of writing. *Teaching Writing for the “Real World”* helped me create specific lessons within the website that

will allow students to understand how their class instruction connects to real-world opportunities and does not exist inside an institutional bubble.