

Writing Across the Curriculum Program

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WAC Glossary of Terms Writing-Related Terminology

The Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Program at Appalachian State University holds regular conversations with Writing in the Discipline (WID) faculty through its WID consultant program, workshops, class visits, and consultations. We also host conversations between Rhetoric and Writing Studies faculty and WID faculty to help build a common vocabulary for writing pedagogy that strengthens the [VERTICAL WRITING CURRICULUM](#) and encourages transfer of skills and genre knowledge. In order to facilitate conversations about writing and to have a common vocabulary when we talk about writing, we have created the **WAC Glossary of Terms**.

"Thank you for developing a resource we didn't know we needed until we had it." --Terry Myers Zawacki, co-author of *Writing in the Disciplines: Advice and Models*

An **ABSTRACT** is a synopsis or summary (also called a *precis* in some fields), often used in scientific reports. An abstract can also be a preface, introduction, or summary explaining the author's focus in a journal article, book, or thesis/dissertation. *Abstracts* are the annotations in [ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES](#), which are organized in alphabetical order with the work cited as a heading, followed by the annotation. A less formal annotated bibliography for the sciences is a **LITERATURE REVIEW**, written in paragraph form with summaries of books, articles, studies, and their authors.

ACADEMIC DISCOURSE is the term for communication with an academic audience for the purpose of furthering knowledge, interpretation, and understanding in the field; the genre of writing that college students and professors use to learn, share, and challenge knowledge, and to expand their understanding of fields of study. Examples include expository, persuasive, and argumentative essays, critical reviews, or monographs such as theses and dissertations.

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ANALYSIS is the identification or separation of the essential elements of a reading or issue. Analysis often makes abstract texts or concepts clearer by allowing the analyst to break down and examine their elements. Analysis can also show the relationship between smaller particles within a larger, more complex thing. In argument, analysis means taking a piece of work apart to see the connections between claim, grounds, warrants, support, qualifiers, and rebuttals (Toulmin); identifying the ethos, pathos, and logos of a work (Aristotle). (Contrast with [SUMMARY](#).) See also University Writing Center handout [SUMMARY VS. ANALYSIS](#)

Further definitions of **ANALYSIS** across the disciplines are as follows:

- A detailed examination of something complex to find out
 - what it is
 - how it is made
 - how it works
- An explanation of the nature and meaning of something (such as analysis of the news)
- A detailed examination of the elements or structure of something, typically as a basis for discussion or interpretation
- The process of separating something into its constituent elements

In **business**, analysis is a systematic examination and evaluation of data or information, by breaking it into its component parts to discover interrelationships, the opposite of synthesis. Analysis is also an examination of data and facts to uncover and understand cause-and-effect relationships.

Statistical analysis is a component of data analytics. In the context of business intelligence, statistical analysis involves collecting and scrutinizing every data sample in a set of items from which samples can be drawn. A sample in statistics is a representative selection drawn from a total population.

In **linguistics**, analysis is the use of separate, short words and word order rather than inflection to express grammatical structure.

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Literary analysis studies, evaluates and interprets literature. It examines the elements of a novel, play, short story, or poem (such as character, setting, tone, theme, imagery), what the author wishes to achieve using those elements, and how well he/she does it. (See the University Writing Center handout on [LITERARY ANALYSIS](#).)

In **mathematics**, analysis is concerned with the theory of functions and the use of limits, continuity, and the operations of calculus. Analysis is a proof of a mathematical proposition by assuming the result and deducing a valid statement by a series of reversible steps.

In **philosophy**, analysis is a method of resolving complex expressions into simpler or more basic ones.

In **psychological theory and therapy**, analysis is short for **psychoanalysis**: a system that aims to treat mental disorders by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind and bringing repressed fears and conflicts into the conscious mind by techniques such as dream interpretation and free association.

Rhetorical analysis examines a rhetorical situation for these elements:

- the interaction of the elements of the rhetorical triangle:
 - speaker (and/or sponsor), audience, and purpose
 - the exigence (or need)
- social, historical, cultural contexts
- the appeals
 - to ethos (the credibility of the speaker/sponsor)
 - to pathos (emotion)
 - to logos (logic and reason)
- appearance/packaging (word choice/page layout/figurative language/style/tone/color/images/punctuation)
- Facts/logic/evidence

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(See **RHETORICAL ANALYSIS** below and/or the University Writing Center handout: [RHETORICAL ANALYSIS](#))

In science, analysis is the identification and measurement or separation of the chemical constituents or ingredients of a substance or specimen (a chemical *analysis* of the soil).

An **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY** may vary between disciplines, but in general, it is a list of research sources to inform readers of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited--books, articles, web sites, and other documents. Typically the specific source is cited in the style of the field being studied (MLA, APA, ASA, CMS, etc.) and is then followed by a brief descriptive summary of the source, followed by a paragraph that evaluates the source for its credibility and relevance to the topic and how the writer might use the source in a specific paper. (See the University Writing Center handout, [ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY](#). See also the Belk Library video, [ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY: AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE](#).) (Compare to **LITERATURE REVIEW**.)

An **ARGUMENT** is an explanation or support of a position or point of view on an issue. It can also be a text crafted to persuade an audience. (See **ANALYSIS** for Toulmin and Aristotelian terms.)

An **ARTIFACT** is a piece of evidence used to represent findings. Artifacts may include a novel or poem in an English class; a piece of pottery in Anthropology; a portfolio in Assessment or Education; or a sculpture or painting in an Art class. (Compare to **TEXT**.) In assessment, an **artifact** is any work which may be evaluated to determine the extent a student has achieved a learning outcome. In composition, artifacts are selections of writing which may be compiled into a portfolio of a semester's work. Collective artifacts may be evaluated to assess an entire course or program.

AUDIENCE refers to the readers whose opinions and actions the writer hopes to influence or change. Students need to keep in mind that the audience of a piece of academic writing is not necessarily only themselves and their instructor.

COLLABORATIVE WRITING involves writing a paper as a group or team where the learning and writing processes are emphasized along with the final product.

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A **COMPARISON/CONTRAST** essay explores similarities and differences or perspectives between two or more texts or issues, usually on the basis of a particular theme or idea. Summary is usually a part of comparison, while summary and comparison/contrast often provide a basis for argument.

CRITICAL THINKING/CRITICAL READING is the ability to question rigorously, to synthesize what is known with what is new, and to draw new understanding from the process. (See [THE FOUNDATION FOR CRITICAL THINKING](#).)

CRITICISM can be the weighing of strengths and weaknesses or the judging of an issue according to the issue's merits and faults. Criticism in academic writing should not be seen only as negative and adversarial as novice writers may think. Criticism, both positive and negative, is imperative to the act of evaluating a text or issue. Criticism is also a helpful tool when writing so that the writer will know what the audience sees and hears. (See [TYPES OF FEEDBACK](#).)

A **DISCIPLINE** is a branch of learning or area of scholarly inquiry. An academic **DISCIPLINE** also refers to an academic or major field of study or branch of knowledge taught at a university or college.

DISCOURSE is the common language of a specific discipline that includes similar ways that scholars communicate within that field of study.

A **DISCOURSE COMMUNITY** (similar to a “community of practice” or “community of inquiry”) is a term often used in rhetorical studies to refer to a group that uses communication to work toward a common goal. Specifically, in “Intertextuality and the Discourse Community,” James Porter defined a discourse community as “a group of individuals bound by a common interest who communicate through approved channels and whose discourse is regulated” (38-39). Following him, John Swales identified 6 characteristics of discourse communities. According to Swales, a discourse community shares common (1) goals, (2) methods of communication, (3) participation among members, (4) genres, and (5) terminology. In addition, (6) they have “a critical mass” of members with shared discursive and content expertise (31-32). (A major field or discipline could be seen as an example of a discourse community, as could some club, hobbyist, or sporting communities.) Dan Melzer's [UNDERSTANDING DISCOURSE](#)

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COMMUNITIES provides a clear introduction to the concept for people who are new to the study of discourse.

DOCUMENTATION identifies sources referred to and cited as evidence in a document.

APA: Documentation style of the American Psychological Association which is widely used in the social sciences. Major sections of the APA documented essay include title page, abstract, main body, and references. While footnotes and endnotes are sometimes used, in-text citations (author, year) are the primary mode of documentation. (See [APA FORMATTING AND DOCUMENTATION](#).)

MLA: Documentation style of the Modern Language Association which is widely used in the liberal arts and the humanities. In-text citations (author and page number) are used along with limited footnotes and endnotes. A works cited page includes the list of references used for the essay. (See [MLA FORMAT AND DOCUMENTATION](#). For a comparison of MLA and APA, click [MLA and APA](#).)

Chicago Manual of Style: Documentation style from the University of Chicago Press, which is used both in the humanities and the social sciences, most often in history. A bit more complex than MLA or APA, the two modes of documentation include the in-text author/date system and the notes system along with footnotes or endnotes and a bibliography. (See the [CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE/TURABIAN](#) handout from the University Writing Center.)

Turabian: Documentation style which is much like the Chicago Manual of Style with slight modifications. There are two modes of documentation: notes/bibliography style and in-text citations/reference list style. The first is used in literature, history and the arts. The latter is used in physical, natural, and social sciences.

Some disciplines use the documentation style of the publications or associations in their field. Chemistry, for example, uses American Chemical Society (ACS) documentation, and Sociology uses American Sociological Association (ASA).

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DRAFTS are texts that are not in a final form and need to be revised and/or edited. Multiple drafts are often accepted as part of the development of students' writing in process-writing classes. The first draft of the written paper is often used to discover the writer's ideas and direction while later drafts provide opportunities for development. The final draft is generally turned in for a grade or other evaluation. Most composition classes at Appalachian State are process-oriented and require multiple drafts of papers.

EDITING is used to correct standard conventions such as spelling, punctuation, and usage. Often this is the final part of the writing process of revising a paper to improve clarity, correctness, and consistency. The editing process also may include critiquing the content of a piece in addition to mechanics or language usage. (See the WAC handout, [PUT DOWN THAT RED PEN! HOW PROCESS WRITING DEALS WITH ERROR.](#))

EMPIRICAL DATA or **EVIDENCE** is proof for an outcome that withstands challenge, data that can be verified or disproved. It is based on testing, experience, and observation. In the sciences and mathematics, empirical data follows a hypothesis through stages of inquiry, whether in a laboratory or physical testing or a logical train of thought, to a conclusion that confirms the hypothesis or rejects it in order to develop a new hypothesis. Empirical evidence (direct observations or experiences) can be analyzed **quantitatively** or **qualitatively**:

QUALITATIVE DATA is data that can be observed but not measured (by smell, taste, color, appearance, and/or quality). (Compare to **QUANTITATIVE DATA**.)

QUANTITATIVE DATA is data that can be measured or counted (such as length, height, cost, temperature, area, sound levels, etc.) (Compare to **QUALITATIVE DATA**.)

EVALUATION is the process of determining the worth or value of something and is often the analysis and comparison of actual progress vs. prior plans, oriented toward improving plans for future implementation. There are numerous ways to evaluate student writing that include portfolios, journals, check sheets, rubrics, peer feedback, or teacher-focused feedback. (For more information on evaluating student writing, see the WAC Program's [WRITING TO LEARN \[and sample assignment\]](#), **WRITING TO COMMUNICATE**, and **LOW STAKES** and **HIGH STAKES** handouts.)

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EVIDENCE/SUPPORT/DETAIL are terms for supporting the claims of a piece of writing. Some examples of support or evidence are the following: reasons, facts, examples, explanations, statistics, expert testimony, lab experiments, interviews, observations, surveys, quotations, and personal experiences.

FEEDBACK entails objective comments given to or received from others that writers can use in revising their writing. A teacher may provide feedback, but students also might provide feedback in peer-to-peer sessions. The writer should direct the type of feedback he/she wants from readers and should take control of the process. Here is a handout on different kinds of [FEEDBACK](#).

FIELD RESEARCH is research conducted outside the classroom, which may include observations, surveys, and/or interviews. (See **PRIMARY RESEARCH**.)

FORMATIVE EVALUATION is a way to evaluate students' writing that leaves room for revision. A grade is not immediately given since the assignment develops with each draft. These types of assignments are often called low-stakes, as they leave much room for revision and are done to spark more involvement in the writing process. Often they can be referred to as writing-to-learn assignments as well, because they help students learn what they are writing about and the best way to approach their topic. An example of this assignment could be journal entries used to develop a paper. (Compare to **SUMMATIVE EVALUATION** below.)

EXPOSITORY WRITING (the course title of RC 1000) relates to explanatory, informative, or scientific speech or writing and is often nonfiction prose focused on a single topic and developed through example, incident, etc. Its purpose might be to inform, persuade, provoke, or entertain a reader. Some examples include the narrative, a how-to process, cause-and-effect, classification, comparison/contrast, or definition essays.

A **GENRE** is a mode of discourse suitable for a specific purpose or field. Each academic discipline has its own manner of expression, vocabulary, formats, and habits of thought. Anyone intending to communicate in that field must be familiar with and be able to join in its expression. Michael Carter of North Carolina State says in "Ways of Knowing, Doing, and Writing in the Disciplines," that "Miller, Bazerman, and Russell ... define

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genre as social action, ways of doing and writing by which individual linguistic acts on the microlevel constitute social formations on the macrolevel.... [T]hey establish the concept of genre set as a collection of related genres [and] use the genre set to indicate the role that related genres play in constituting complex social formations” (393). (Compare to **METAGENRE**.)

GRAMMAR is the term for the rules of a language or the study of how words and their component parts combine to form sentences. Grammar needs to be distinguished from **usage**, which is the way the language is conventionally used within the culture. The debate about how to teach what students need to know is a cultural, political, and historical debate of paramount importance that rages throughout the English-speaking world. Most composition teachers feel that correct, standard grammar is the last step of the editing process and should be de-emphasized on **initial drafts**. (See **PROOFREADING** for more information. See also [PUT DOWN THAT RED PEN! HOW PROCESS WRITING DEALS WITH ERROR.](#))

HIGH-STAKES WRITING assignments are expected to be completed according to formal academic and disciplinary conventions and often count for a significant part of a student’s grade. Examples include essays, research papers, lab reports, essay exams, and critical response papers. This term is generally paired with the term **low-stakes writing** and is distinguished from informal writing that is often exploratory and non-graded. (See also **SUMMATIVE EVALUATION** and **LOW-STAKES WRITING**.)

A **HYPOTHESIS** is a tentative assumption based on theory that is to be tested logically with empirical consequences. It is typically an unproven idea or theory that leads to further examination or discussion. (See also **SYNTHESIS** and **THESIS**.)

INFORMATION LITERACY refers to the ability to navigate the rapidly growing environment of information and technology to recognize, find, select, locate, and evaluate the information researchers need and to incorporate what they discover competently and responsibly in any field. Information-literate students should be able to demonstrate competencies in formulating research questions and in their ability to use information.

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INTERPRETATION is an explanation or presentation of the meaning of something in understandable terms and a way to give the reader some new, deeper way of understanding a text, performance, event, or issue.

INVENTION (often called prewriting) is the first step in the writing process. A writer generates ideas to write about, to avoid staring at a blank page. This will vary from person to person, depending on how a person creates. Reading and researching are invention techniques, as is talking about a topic.

JOURNALS (sometimes referred to as Writers' Notebooks) are tools used by writing teachers in a variety of ways, often as **INVENTION** techniques or to generate ideas for class discussion. Individual teachers will use journals in different ways and have different "rules" governing them. One usual component is that journals are **LOW-STAKES WRITING** and a form of writing to discover or writing to learn. Some teachers use them as a means of exploring what a writer thinks. A writer improves by writing, and journals are practice at writing, trying out ideas, exploring possibilities, etc.

A **LANDMARK TEXT** is a text or piece of writing that marks an important period or turning point in the history of a field.

LITERACY is defined as the ability to read and write, but also to be fluent in a certain area or field. This fluency entails understanding a certain area of knowledge and using that knowledge for a specific purpose, generally involving some sort of "reading," which includes gathering information. Literate persons often have sponsors who help them become literate in a certain topic. (For more information on this intricate process, see Deborah Brandt's "Sponsors of Literacy.") Recently, this definition has also entailed sociological studies of certain populations and their understanding of not only oral and written language, but also technology, mathematics, and economics, among other topics. (See **INFORMATION LITERACY**.)

LITERATURE REVIEWS are written by scholars to demonstrate their understanding of the current knowledge as well as the theoretical perspectives that guide the thinking about a particular topic. The function of the literature review is to demonstrate that the writer/researcher is familiar with the existing body of knowledge or *literature* that exists on any given topic. Reviews can include scholarly articles, government pamphlets, court

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cases, news articles, etc. focused on sources or findings within a particular time frame. This type of writing only provides summary and synthesis of the research relevant to the subject matter, which allows the researcher/writer to enter a scholarly conversation from an informed perspective, not to argue an opinion. (See the University Writing Center handout, [LITERATURE REVIEW](#).) (Compare to **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**.)

LOW-STAKES WRITING activities provide students with opportunities to experiment with ideas, form, and style without the pressure associated with correctness. The term “low-stakes” represents the level of expectation that a student and instructor bring to a particular assignment, meaning that low-stakes writing should count very little (if at all) toward the student’s final grade, while high-stakes writing is presumably graded. Examples of low-stakes writing include journals, reflective responses, creative drafting, and free-writing. Some scholars argue that the more frequently students engage in low-stakes writing, the more confidence and expertise they will apply to formal, high-stakes assignments. (Compare to **HIGH-STAKES WRITING**.)

MEMOIR is a form of autobiography that generally recounts writers’ personal experiences, including specifics about writers’ personal and professional lives.

METACOGNITION can be defined as “knowing about knowing.” In composition the term refers to the self-awareness of how one writes. Some composition teachers ask students to contemplate how they write and to be aware of the steps they go through in their writing process from idea to final product. (Compare to **REFLECTIVE WRITING**.)

METAGENRE is defined by Michael Carter in “Ways of Knowing, Doing, and Writing in the Disciplines,” as “a higher category, a genre of genres.” He adds, “[A] metagenre indicates a structure of similar ways of doing that point to similar ways of writing and knowing” (393). Carter’s four metagenres (or ways of doing) are (1) **Problem Solving** (defining a problem and creating a solution, such as in business, marketing and management plans, project reports or proposals, and technical and feasibility reports); (2) **Empirical Inquiry** (drawing conclusions based on investigation of empirical data as in laboratory or research reports, research proposals, scientific articles and presentations); (3) **Research from Sources** (data from sources intrinsic to a discipline such as History or English); and (4) **Performance** (knowing as doing, performance and its artifacts such as drawings, sculptures, paintings, films, news stories and editorials,

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websites, PowerPoint presentations, technical reports, and theatre and dance exhibitions). (Compare to **GENRE**.)

MULTIMODAL WRITING: Multimodal texts are pieces of writing that include but are not limited to traditional print alphabetic writing. Multimodal composition uses more than just words and letters to communicate, including audio, visual (photographs, drawings, paintings, etc.), and moving images like videos. These additional elements support text in a meaningful way. Some examples of multimodal composition include podcasts, blogs, collages, video or audio essays, comic strips, storyboards, and electronic portfolios. (See also **TEXT** below for more information.)

DIGITAL MEDIA is any media that are encoded in a machine-readable (binary) format instead of traditional alphabetic text. Digital media are created, viewed, distributed, modified, and preserved exclusively on computers.

SOCIAL MEDIA is a machine-readable (digital) tool that allows writers to communicate through the creation, sharing, and exchange of text in virtual spaces. This digital technology creates interactive platforms that differ from traditional alphabetic textual transmission because of the interactive component of composition that stems from many sources and many receivers instead of from one source to many receivers.

PARAPHRASE is the restating of someone else's ideas in your own words and using your own sentence structure. Often, writers paraphrase in order to represent complex ideas with greater clarity or simplicity, include others' ideas within their own arguments in ways that suit their writing style, or string together points from multiple sources in order to prepare to synthesize multiple ideas into one coherent thought or argument. (Compare to **ANALYSIS**, **SUMMARY**, AND **SYNTHESIS**.)

PEDAGOGY is the study, method, and practice of teaching.

PEER REVIEW is the practice of reading a peer's work to provide feedback. Many composition teachers use some version of **PEER REVIEW** in their classes. Students can learn from each other and can teach themselves by looking at each other's work. Peer review workshops are designed so that students provide feedback to their group.

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members about drafts of their papers. (See the WAC handout on [GROUP WORK](#) for more information.)

Some teachers prefer that students read their work aloud to their groups; some require students to bring copies of their papers for all of their group members; some have group members exchange papers and offer feedback. The latter is probably the quickest method, but reading aloud helps in at least two ways: students hear how their papers sound and how well the writing flows, and students can often catch some simple errors.

Peer review should be taught to some extent; otherwise students may feel it is simply “busy work.” The writer should be in charge of directing the feedback he/she wants, but the teacher can instruct students in what to look for. This requires students to be reflective and to employ meta-cognitive skills: They must think about their writing and how they write. Peer review could focus on two basic ideas: (1) What is good about the draft? and (2) What could be better? (See also [TYPES OF FEEDBACK](#).)

PERSONAL NARRATIVE is an autobiographical document that is often written in [RC 1000 COURSES](#) that revolves around a writer's personal experience, often about a significant life event. Some of the most successful examples of this document involve seeing instead of telling about the experience. (See the handout about [SEEING THE MOMENT](#) for an exercise in creating good detail.)

PERSUASION is the act of seeking to change someone else's point of view.

PLAGIARISM is presenting the words or ideas of another as one's own work or ideas. In academia, all material borrowed from a source, whether paraphrased, summarized or directly quoted, must be properly cited, using the documentation style preferred by the discipline. Plagiarism "includes but is not limited to borrowing, downloading, cutting and pasting, and paraphrasing **without acknowledgment**, including from online sources, or allowing a person's academic work to be submitted as another's work" (from Appalachian State University's [ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE](#)).

A **PORTFOLIO** is a collection of student artifacts on various topics. These pieces are revised and polished throughout the semester, and the portfolio is collected at the end

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of the semester. (A portfolio is not simply a collection of products amassed during a semester or year.) An [ePORTFOLIO](#) is a portfolio that is collected electronically. ([APORTFOLIO](#) is the name of the proprietary portfolio system supported on Appalachian State University's campus.)

A **PRECIS** is a concise summary written in one's own words. The term is often used in history courses. (See also **ABSTRACT** and **SUMMARY**. Contrast to **ANALYSIS**.) See also University Writing Center handout on [SUMMARY VS. ANALYSIS](#)

PRIMARY RESEARCH (often called **FIELD RESEARCH**) refers to research that writers conduct themselves. Primary sources may include letters, speeches, diaries, audio recordings, videos, photographs, newspaper accounts, historical artifacts, maps, debates, public records, and official government documents. Whether a source is considered a primary or secondary source depends on how the source is used. In History and other fields, the same source can be considered a primary or secondary source depending on the focus of what is being written. If a historian is writing about war in Afghanistan, an article may be seen as a secondary source if it is used to support or illustrate an argument; but if the same article were used to examine the writing about the war, it would be considered a primary source. (See also **SOURCES**. Compare to **SECONDARY RESEARCH**.)

PROOFREADING is the final stage of the writing process. While correctness is important in writing, it should be de-emphasized in a portfolio-writing class and in low-stakes writing or writing to discover assignments. Error is the easiest thing for teachers to find and the easiest to quantify, but too often it is the sole criteria for evaluating writing and what students have been penalized for throughout their writing careers. This often causes them to feel inadequate as writers, and they grow to hate writing when the problem is simply that they do not know basic grammar rules. Some suggestions for helping correct error in students' papers are the following: (1) Peer editing and peer review; (2) reading papers aloud; (3) individual tutoring; (4) group conferences; (5) a visit (or several visits) to the writing center. Grammar lessons for the whole class are usually not effective because students who have no problems with comma splices (for example) will lose interest in a lesson about comma splices, and students who need the lesson need to be shown their problems directly in one-to-one

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sessions. (See the WAC handout, [PUT DOWN THAT RED PEN! HOW PROCESS WRITING DEALS WITH ERROR.](#))

PROCESS WRITING is an approach to writing that teaches **invention**, **drafting**, **revising**, and **editing** as steps in producing a text. These steps don't always occur in order, and writers often repeat steps in creating final drafts. Process writing allows writers to be authorities on the subjects they choose and to think about invention through a variety of methods, including free-writing, brainstorming, reading, researching, talking, cubing, and mapping. In writing and revising a draft, writers may get feedback from other writers and provide ideas for those whose drafts they read. During revision, writers may make decisions to expand or cut portions of the draft, and they may reconsider the assignment, the purpose, and the audience. Editing and proofreading, the last steps in preparing a draft for evaluation, ask writers and readers to examine the grammar and punctuation of the draft to make the draft as clear as possible for readers.

REFLECTION/REFLECTIVE WRITING is a form of verbal or written expression (often **low-stakes**) in which writers explore their emotional and cognitive responses to a given academic task or subject. This type of writing is heavily emphasized in Rhetoric and Composition classes, as well as General Education and WAC curriculums. Reflection occurs in many disciplines and in many forms, including educational settings, the sciences, social work, artistic fields, and even athletic endeavors. Many fields use formal and informal observations along with notebooks and field research as reflective activities. (See also **METACOGNITION**.)

Reflection can also include assessing oneself for strengths, weaknesses, and areas of improvement; introspective critical thinking and analysis; examination of one's experiences in order to facilitate growth or change; self-interrogation that can lead to more learning; contemplation that can formulate (or re-formulate) goals; deliberation about what occurs between thinking and learning; personal responses to experiences, situations, events and new information; and processing information for thinking and learning.

RESEARCH is a studious examination or investigation, especially an exploration or experimentation that establishes, discovers, and/or interprets facts, or that revisits accepted theories or laws in order to establish new conclusions. Research is also the

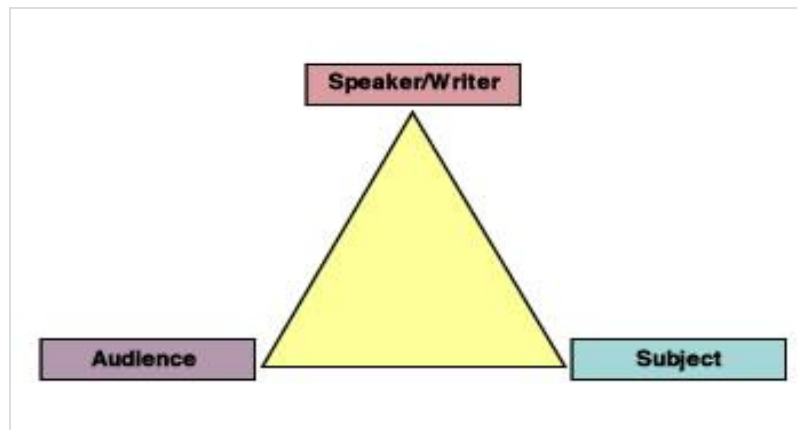
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term for the process of collecting information about a particular subject. (See also **PRIMARY RESEARCH**, **SECONDARY RESEARCH**, and **SOURCES**.)

REVISION literally means “re-seeing.” Too often it is seen as “fixing” a paper, but it can be more than that. Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff (in *A Community of Writers*) focus on three main areas of revision: (1) the skin (surface error), (2) muscles (the meat of the paper, the ideas, details, support, etc.), or (3) the bones (the framework, the structure, organization). Some teachers require extensive revision as a way of re-seeing the paper and require multiple drafts of each paper. Toby Fulwiler (in “Provocative Revision”) categorizes revisions in four categories: (1) **limiting** (the time, place, action, scope, or focus so that writing can be more detailed and less general); (2) **adding** (dialogue, interviews, specifics); (3) **switching** (point of view or voice); and (4) **transforming**, creating a new form for the piece (for example, turning a research paper into a speculative or familiar essay or a personal experience essay into a letter or diary).

RHETORIC is defined as the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, used as a tool by writers to appeal to their readers. There are three appeals writers can employ to persuade an audience: *logos* (logical, rational appeal), *pathos* (emotional appeal), and *ethos* (appeals based on the credibility or character of the speaker or writer). When approaching rhetoric, perhaps the easiest way to explain how it works is to use the rhetorical triangle.



When communicating, it is important to consider how each corner of the triangle influences the other. For example, when writing a lab report, a writer considers the subject of the report as well as the audience reading it. The report will be objective to present the information; thus, the speaker/writer of the report may

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not have his/her voice in it (meaning, no “I”). In contrast, in an English class, where a writer may try to persuade their readers to support a particular point of view, they try to connect their audience to their subject via selectively chosen details and creative expressions. In this case, a writer’s voice may be more present (meaning “I” is appropriate). (For further information, see **VOICE**.)

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS examines a rhetorical situation, addressing one or more of the following elements:

- the interaction of the elements of the rhetorical triangle:
 - speaker (and/or sponsor), audience, and purpose
 - the exigence (or need)
- social, historical, cultural contexts
- the appeals
 - to ethos (the credibility of the speaker/ sponsor)
 - to pathos (emotion)
 - to logos (logic and reason)
- appearance/ packaging (word choice/ page layout/ figurative language/ style/ tone/ color/ images/ punctuation)
- facts/ logic/ evidence

(See the University Writing Center handout: **RHETORICAL ANALYSIS**)

A **RHETORICAL SITUATION** occurs when a speaker, audience, medium (such as a text or speech), and a context converge to create a rhetorical act, such as an act of writing or speaking. Rhetorical discourse often occurs in a rhetorical situation.

AUDAL RHETORIC: Traditionally digital writing, though live performances can also be considered audal rhetoric, that is composed or communicated through an audal medium like a podcast, a song, or audio essay.

VISUAL RHETORIC: The term used to describe visual composition that demonstrates thinking and learning in a visual medium. Visual rhetoric focuses on art, media, and aesthetics. (This definition was based on Sandra Moriarty's diagram in her essay, "A Conceptual Map of Visual Communication.")

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A **RUBRIC** is a scoring tool that lays out the specific expectations for an assignment, course or program (from Dannelle D. Stevens and Antonia J. Levi). (See sample rubrics for **Documentation** and **REFLECTION** in RC 2001).

SCHOLARSHIP is the character, qualities, activities, or attainments of a scholar; also, academic study or achievement or learning at a high level. It also refers to a fund of knowledge and learning drawing on the research and publication of other scholars in a field of study or discipline.

SECONDARY RESEARCH involves the summary, collation and/or synthesis of existing research. Secondary research is contrasted with primary research in that primary research involves the generation of data, whereas secondary research uses primary research sources as sources of data for analysis. (See **PRIMARY RESEARCH** and **SOURCES**.)

SOURCES

PRIMARY SOURCES are original materials that are contemporary to the time period being studied (originals from that time) which give first-hand knowledge of the topic. Primary sources are also any sources retrieved through **FIELD RESEARCH** or experimentation, including interviews, surveys, observations, and ethnographies, which address the research topic from an original perspective. (See **PRIMARY RESEARCH**.)

SECONDARY SOURCES are sources that address, discuss, analyze, or comment on information previously presented elsewhere (primary sources). Secondary sources are not necessarily evidence, but commentary on and discussion of evidence. These are often referred to as “print sources” and can include online sources as well as books, magazines, newspapers, journals, databases, biographies, reviews, commentary, and journal articles.

TERTIARY sources consist of information which is a distillation and collection of primary and secondary sources. Examples include almanacs, bibliographies, dictionaries, encyclopedias, manuals, guidebooks, textbooks, and indexes.

The context and the way a source is used determines whether it is a primary, secondary, or tertiary source. (Here is a Belk Library video on **PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES**.)

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POPULAR SOURCES are typically written by journalists for the general public. They are written in a conversational style and are meant to entertain or persuade.

SCHOLARLY SOURCES are written by and for academic audiences and researchers. They usually are researched articles that are more technical in style and tone and are peer-reviewed. Their purpose is to educate, and they contain a bibliography or list of references. (Here is a Belk Library video on [POPULAR AND SCHOLARLY SOURCES](#).)

A **SUMMARY** is a short restatement of the major points of an argument or study, often with a focus on the particular aspects that contribute to a writer's intended purpose. Writers summarize or paraphrase ideas from scholarly articles, book chapters, and essays when conducting or preparing to conduct research. When summarizing or paraphrasing, all source material (i.e., places where the summarized or paraphrased ideas came from) must be identified and cited correctly according to the style the writer is following (MLA, APA, etc.) In history classes, the term **PRÉCIS** may be used to mean summary; other disciplines may refer to an **ABSTRACT** to mean the same concept. (Contrast with **ANALYSIS** and **PARAPHRASE**. See also University Writing Center handout on [SUMMARY VS. ANALYSIS](#).)

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION is often writing that is done under time constraints. There is no time for revision, and evaluation is done immediately after the text is written. The SAT and GRE written exams are good examples of this type of writing. Summative evaluation also refers to the scoring of final drafts or portfolios, when opportunity for further revision has ended. (Compare to **FORMATIVE EVALUATION** above.)

SYNTHESIS is the combination of separate parts to create a whole. Synthesis could be an identification of common, connecting themes among different texts. Synthesis can also be the creation of a substance by combining smaller, simpler, sometimes diverse elements into more complex, unified ones. (Compare to **THESIS** and **HYPOTHESIS**.)

TEXT commonly refers to written, printed words, such as literary texts, textbooks, or even text messages. The term is growing in use as any material studied in a discipline such as a painting or sculpture in an Art class; a movie in Film Studies; or a brochure in

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a Computer Graphics class. (Compare with **ARTIFACT**. Also see **MULTIMODAL WRITING** above.)

A **THESIS** can be synonymous with a dissertation (as a Ph.D. thesis). More often in composition classes a thesis refers to the main point, purpose, or theme of a piece of writing and is often referred to as a thesis statement as a proposition to be argued.

The concept of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis specifically refers to the work of German philosopher Friedrich Hegel. The thesis presents a proposition; the antithesis is the opposite of the thesis, a reaction to the proposition; and the synthesis resolves the conflict between the two by recognizing their common properties and forming a new proposition.

TONE can be defined as the author's attitude about the subject. Often this is not easily determined nor is it essential. (See **VOICE** below.) A writer's tone can be serious, comical, satirical, and so on. In literature, tone is often vital, as in Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal." If readers are unaware of Swift's satirical tone, they would be outraged and appalled at Swift's "less-than-modest" proposal that the Irish fatten up their babies and sell them for food.

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS is the term for the adaptation of one skill set in a particular context to a new, different context. "Soft transfers" entail contexts which are similar while "hard transfers" depend on deliberate abstraction from one context to another. An example of a soft transfer would occur when a student new to Social Work creates a References page in APA format, using the skills previously learned for creating a Works Cited page in MLA format; a hard transfer occurs when a student uses the skills learned when writing a literacy narrative to write a historiography essay.

The **VERTICAL WRITING CURRICULUM** at Appalachian State refers to a coordinated and progressive ladder of skills in which early writing attempts build to emerging or advanced mastery to expert and professional mastery.

In the Vertical Writing Model, students take a writing course in each of the traditional four years of their college experience with increasing introduction and specialization in their chosen fields:

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- **RC 1000** is a freshman-level course which explores expository writing, research, and critical thinking designed to introduce students to college level writing.
- **RC 2001, Introduction to Writing Across the Curriculum**, is a sophomore-level course in which students are introduced to the many genres of writing expected in different fields of study and work.
 - When the course was developed by Beth Carroll working with the NTT faculty in RC, they created four main approaches to a WAC curriculum:
 1. **Argument model** (reading and writing academic arguments, analyzing and writing arguments across disciplines and rhetorical situations);
 2. **Rhetoric model** (studying academic discourse as a rhetoric, practicing persuasive techniques in rhetorical situations);
 3. **Writing Studies model** (writing about writing, investigating issues related to writing in different contexts and for different audiences);
 4. **Traditional WAC model** (reading and writing conventional genres in different fields).
- **The 3rd Year Writing in the Discipline** class is a junior-level writing course for majors, which focuses on the discourse of that particular discipline.
- **Capstone course** is a senior level writing in the major course where students are writing at an advanced level. This course is designed by majors, with an information literacy component.

An author's **VOICE** is important in many disciplines and less important in others. Voice is specific to individual writers, and in humanities, voice is often vital. In scientific writing, voice may not be as important since a paper may be expressing factual data that should not be clouded by an author's opinion. In journalism, voice would be essential in an opinion piece but not needed (or even desired) in a news article. (See **RHETORIC**. Compare to **tone** above.)

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM (WAC) is a writing instruction program that supports faculty and pervades the entire college curriculum where interdisciplinary approaches use writing to learn and to communicate in general education as well as in major courses of study.

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A **WAC CONSULTANT** is a professional writing instructor with special interests and training to support and encourage instructors in the academic fields in which the junior WID and senior capstone courses are offered.

WICKED PROBLEM: A wicked problem is a problem that is difficult or impossible to solve because of incomplete, contradictory, and changing requirements that are often difficult to recognize. The use of term "wicked" here has come to denote resistance to resolution, rather than evil (Wikipedia). (Here is a link to an article on [WICKED PROBLEMS](#).)

Wickedness isn't a degree of difficulty. Wicked issues are different because traditional processes can't resolve them, according to Horst W.J. Rittel and Melvin M. Webber, professors of design and urban planning at the University of California at Berkeley, who described them in a 1973 article in *Policy Sciences* magazine. A wicked problem has innumerable causes, is tough to describe, and doesn't have a right answer.... Environmental degradation, terrorism, and poverty... are classic examples of wicked problems.... Not only do conventional processes fail to tackle wicked problems, but they may exacerbate situations by generating undesirable consequences **Conklin? (the link above "WICKED PROBLEMS" does not lead to a work that contains this passage.)**

WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES (WID) refers to the writing done in a student's chosen field of study.

WRITING TO COMMUNICATE assignments focus on communicating learning to others in the most effective way the circumstances allow. The primary goal of writing to communicate is to please the reader in providing new discoveries, information, or perspectives. Ways to do this are through emphasizing audience, discourse forms, clarity, and precision in thought and style, sincerity and authority, and constructing texts that increase the chances that what the writer has to say will be heard. Some examples of writing to communicate are writing essays, reports, and business letters.

WRITING TO LEARN [including SAMPLE ASSIGNMENT] assignments involve students in their own learning by teaching them to become active learners and class participants, helping them discover what they already know and what they still have to

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learn, and allowing them to relate subjects to their lives and values and build a sense of community in the classroom.

The WAC program offers workshops and individual consultations for strategies in responding to student writing. E-mail WAC Director Dr. Elizabeth Carroll (carrolel@appstate.edu) for more information or to set up a consultation. (Also see the WAC handout, [RESPONDING TO STUDENT WRITING](#) for more information.)

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Resources

Appalachian State University Writing Programs

RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION PROGRAM

<http://www.compositionprogram.appstate.edu/>

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER (UWC)

<http://www.writingcenter.appstate.edu/>

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM PROGRAM (WAC)

<http://www.wac.appstate.edu/>

Other Campus Resources

FIRST YEAR SEMINAR PROGRAM

<http://firstyearseminar.appstate.edu/>

BELK LIBRARY AND INFORMATION COMMONS

<http://library.appstate.edu/about/personnel/subject-specialists>

Online Resources

The WAC CLEARINGHOUSE

<http://wac.colostate.edu/>

Deborah Brandt's "Sponsors of Literacy."