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English 235

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* Describe your own initial understandings and assumptions about "technical writing" as you start the course. How do your initial understandings/assumptions align (or not) with the work we have done so far?
  + Initially, I thought technical writing was just a way to communicate better within a working environment. I imagined in office memos, emails and letter correspondences. Once we started into our assignments, I quickly learned that my interpretation of technical writing was not accurate.
* Reflect on your experience in composing these instruction sets -- attempt to describe all of the choices you made in the process of realizing your composition. In light of our usability testing -- what, if anything, would you revise or change about your instruction set in order to improve it?
  + I had read the assigned reading for that week prior to our Lego instruction sets. One of the main points in the reading was to have visual appeal to lure readers in otherwise your work could be overlooked. That being said, I wanted to put a lot of effort in the appearance of my instruction set. I took multiple pictures for each step making sure the image wasn’t clouded with background images to cause distraction. Specifically making sure the computer and my personal belongings were not seen. When writing the steps, I gave just as much care in making sure my wording was precise and direct. Another feature I wanted to make sure I had present was a parts list. The first step to building any project is to make sure all the components are accounted for. I included a step that stopped the building of my Lego Clapboard halfway through. I included an image of what all should be assembled and how it should look. A notation was placed that if the assembly didn’t resemble the images to go back to previous steps.
  + I shared my Lego instruction set with Matt, Ryan and Ghad. Matt stated everything was perfect and no need to make changes. Ryan’s only critique recommended I add page numbers even though I had numbered steps. He felt by doing this it would lessen any potential confusion. Both Ghad and Ryan said they were able to build my Lego Clapboard without reading the instructions given.
  + The first thing I would do to improve my design would be to have at least 2 different pictures per step showing different views. I valued Ryan’s critique and would include page numbers.
* Technical Writing -- like any field or category of writing -- is rhetorically situated. That means that questions of audience are essential considerations to what's produced. Even though this is a classroom exercise -- what sense of audience for these instructions do you have? How, if at all, has this sense of audience -- that you are designing this text for a reader – informed the choices you made in producing the composition?
  + I question the academia level in which I wrote the instructions. For intents and purpose of our class, I believe it was adequate. Though, if this went out for production, I am not sure every person at every educational level would understand what I wrote. If hired to design this instruction I would focus more on the photos telling the instruction instead of words, just like Lego Corporation has done.
* I have left it up to you as to how you deliver your instructional text to your audience. You could choose Word, PowerPoint, HTML or any number of mediums or platforms. How did you decide to deliver your composition and what factors motivated that choice? Ultimately, what do you think your choice of delivery medium/platform get you as a writer?
  + When given the choice, I immediately went to PowerPoint as my platform. I felt this media offered the best of both worlds in regard to imagery and written text. I would not change the platform I used if given an opportunity to do this project again.
* Describe and reflect on your work in setting up an account and repository on GitHub. The "Hello World" tutorial/guide on GitHub is an example of tech writing. What did you notice about it? Perhaps more importantly, what might you learn from it? What's at least one thing you might take away from the GitHub "Hello World" tutorial that you could apply to your own instructional set in order to improve it?
  + This is a tough question to answer since I’ve barely used GitHub. I was able to make a repository as per the “Hello-World” instructions, but I still don’t understand how it works or if I even did it right. I’m beginning to feel comfortable with Zotero, but GitHub has me cringing when I hear the name. I just need more time to practice and I learn best by doing it myself after being shown. Right now, for this class, GitHub is my Achelous heel. I personally don’t feel the tutorial worked well for me. I was able to do the steps and get the repository built but it left me unsure what and why I was doing what was asked.
  + Because I didn’t fully like and understand the tutorial, I would not want to apply their techniques to my instructional set. Maybe it was the verbiage they used that left me with questions and makes me think I’m not their average user.
* Finally, what do you think you learned this week? Keep in mind that your learning might resonate with particular course outcomes or personal outcomes or even something unexpected or not entirely anticipated by either articulated course or personal outcomes.
  + First and foremost, I learned how inadequate my computer skills are. I’ve always considered myself above average when it came to Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Everything I’ve ever needed I’ve been able to tackle using one of those platforms, until now. I will admit this has created an insecurity for me. I am just going to have to work harder and do outside of class research to understand what to do with GitHub.
  + One aspect that keeps resonating with me is that we make split decision based on esthetics. In the reading, the reader was victim to a bait and switch technique. The author knew the readers wouldn’t like what he had to say so they were lured in. Well this appeared in class twice for me. Once was with our Lego instruction sets and again with the zines. With the Lego instruction set I was quickly turned off by chaotic images. The enjoyment of putting the object together left me and all I wanted to do was to be done so I can try another design. When given the box of zines and told to pick two out, I immediately went for what was appealing to my eye regardless of the subject matter.
  + Another aspect that has resonated with me is to be cautious of who your audience is. I experienced this personally with GitHub and how it made me feel. That is not how you want your audience to feel. I have to admit that my Lego instruction set, if given to a 3rd grader, I doubt that child would be able to fully understand what I had written.