Project Three: Worknets

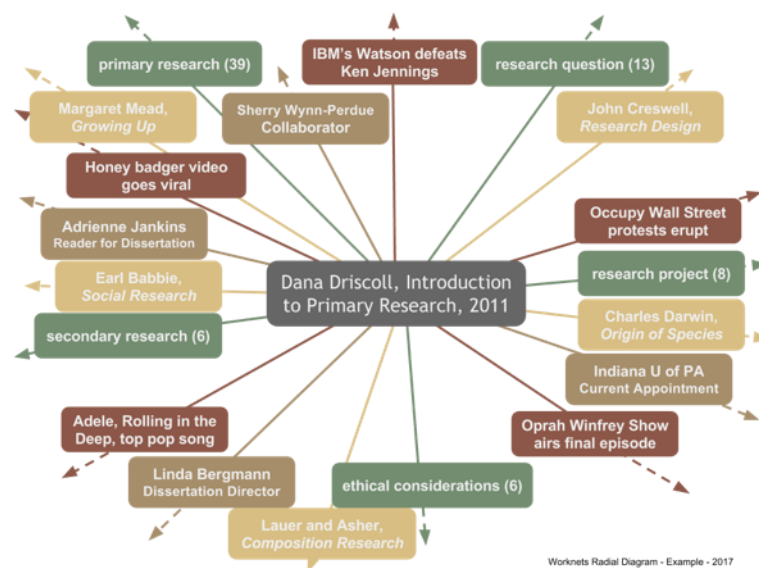ENGL1105: First-year Writing

Overview

Figure 1: A completed worknet reflects four phases of the article: semantic, bibliographic, affinity-based, and choric. Together they present a selection of the article's entanglements.

Researched academic sources—articles and chapters—are a mainstay of *many* academic disciplines. They are the way academics account for research activity, posing difficult questions and detailing studies that seek to inform some research question, to share evidence, or to circulate findings. Without articles, how do ideas circulate? Word of mouth is far less reliable. Ideas, arguments, evidence: to survive in the world, to gain traction, build influence, to really matter, they must materialize. They need to be *written*. Project Three: Worknets introduces you to a method for reading and writing your way across *one* researched academic source carefully and thereby accounting for its generative connections. Worknets

help readers comprehend and remember the important parts of an article, but they also prompt new researchable questions that can lead into emerging research interests for the reader. Importantly, worknets consist of a series of phases—four altogether—each expanding upon the article's discoverable ties to keywords, sources, authorship, and the world (time and place) in which it was written. We should think of worknets as helping us engage sources visually and in writing so that we are better able to use the source toward rhetorical invention (i.e., toward coming up with what we will say). Worknets also help us grasp the rhetorical situation in which the article was produced—who wrote the article, what their purposes were, who was the audience, and how the article has circulated or been taken up.

How To Make A Worknet

Creating a worknet consists of three steps.

1. Choose a researched academic article *relevant* to your area of inquiry published since 1980. I highly recommend that you work with one of the following titles, which you can access online:

   Rewilding, "the Hoop," and Settler Apocalypse by Bruno Seraphin
   https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/trumpeter/2016-v32-n2-trumpeter03384/1042989ar.pdf (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

   Heritage Claims as a Civic Art for Rhetorical Circulation by Jonathan Bradshaw
   http://enculturation.net/heritage_claims (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

   Designing Captions: Disruptive Experiments with Typography, Color, Icons, and Effects by Sean Zdenek
   http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/23.1/topoi/zdenek/index.html (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

   Building Dark Patterns into Platforms: How GamerGate Perturbed Twitter's User Experience by Michael Trice and Liza Potts
   http://www.presenttensejournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Trice_Potts.pdf (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

   Inoculating the Public: Managing Vaccine Rhetoric by Monica Brown
   http://www.presenttensejournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Brown.pdf (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

   That Camera Won't Save You! The Spectacular Consumption of Police Violence by

Armond R. Towns
http://www.presenttensejournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Towns.pdf (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Diversity, Technology, and Composition: Honoring Students' Multimodal Home Places by Christina V. Cedillo
http://www.presenttensejournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Cedillo.pdf (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Wicked Problems in Design Thinking by Richard Buchanan
https://www.jstor.org/stable/1511637 (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

2. Next, open Google Drawing. It might take some time to get familiar with the drawing tools. We will spend time going over this in class. Important: Be sure to save a version of the model *after* each phase so you can easily show its build-up. Using a hub and spoke model, draw links from the central node (the article author, title, and year of publication) to a series of surrounding nodes. Create 3-5 nodes for each of the following four phases: *semantic*, *bibliographic*, *affinity-based*, and *choric*. The drawings should be done with care. Exceptional drawings will reflect precision insofar as legibility, spacing, color choices, and neatness. These phases are each explained below.
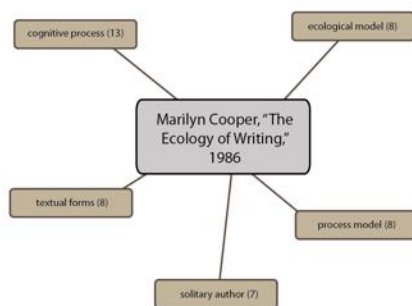

1. *Semantic*: concerns vocabulary—words and phrases that appear in the article itself and whose reference and meaning can be traced to peripheral ideas suited to further exploration. Whether you seek individual words or two-word phrases, include the total count in parentheses. There are online tools to help with this, such as Tagcrowd.com (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. and the Online NGram Analyzer at http://guidetodatamining.com/ngramAnalyzer/ (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.. In the written account that goes with the semantic phase, discuss what the terms mean, generally and in the context of the article. Why are these terms important? How do they advance the rhetorical goals of the piece? That is, how do the keywords favor a particular audience, showing that
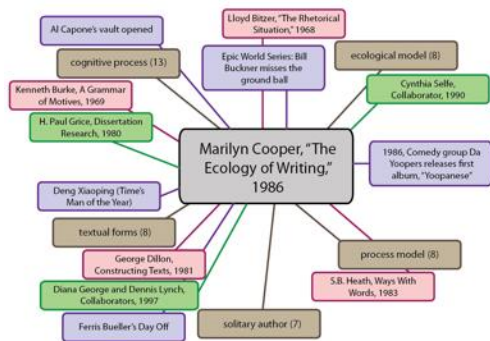
audience regard for forms of knowledge that is important to them?
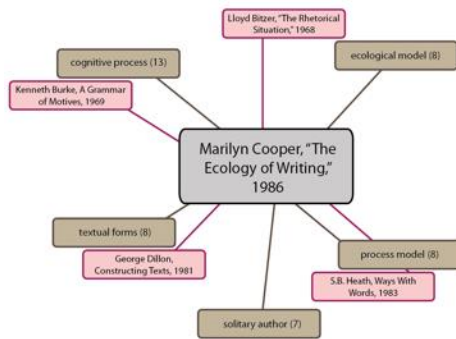
2. *Bibliographic*: traces specific sources cited in the original. For this phase, turn to the works cited or references list at the end of the article. Choose 3-5 sources. Are they available in Newman Library? What are the dates of publication? How do the sources appear in the article? That is, how are they being used? How might tracking down any one source expand your knowledge about the article and its rhetorical context? In what ways do specific sources advance the rhetorical goals of the piece?
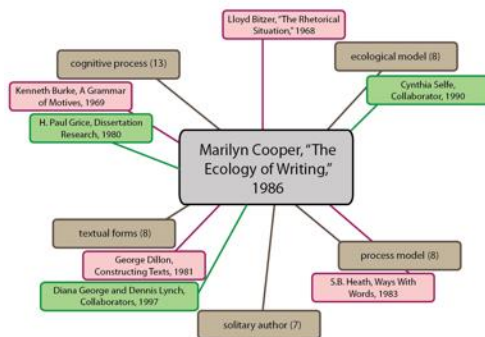
3. *Affinity-based*: attends to functions of authorship, such as graduate training, collaborations, current position, career arc for publishing activity, and relationship to other specializations. For the affinity-based phase, look up the author. What else has the author written? Do they publish by themselves or with others? What other work have they done? Does it seem to you related to the focus of this article? How so? Where does the author work? How long has she worked there? How does this knowledge give you a deeper sense of the author's credibility, qualifications, or *ethos*?

A mind-map diagram centered on "Marilyn Cooper, 'The Ecology of Writing,' 1986" with connected nodes: Al Capone's vault opened; cognitive process (13); Kenneth Burke, A Grammar of Motives, 1969; H. Paul Grice, Dissertation Research, 1980; Deng Xiaoping (Time's Man of the Year); textual forms (8); George Dillon, Constructing Texts, 1981; Diana George and Dennis Lynch, Collaborators, 1997; Ferris Bueller's Day Off; solitary author (7); Lloyd Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," 1968; Epic World Series: Bill Buckner misses the ground ball; ecological model (8); Cynthia Selfe, Collaborator, 1990; 1986, Comedy group Da Yoopers releases first album, "Yoopanese"; process model (8); S.B. Heath, Ways With Words, 1983.

4. *Choric*: This phase examines the world in which the article was written, collecting a handful of popular culture references from the time and place it came from. Like the affinity worknet above, a choric worknet is not explicitly identifiable *in* the text of the article. It sets you up to explore coincident materials and events from popular culture (movies, songs, happenings, local and world news) in the interest of enlarging context and striking juxtaposition. What else, specifically, was happening when the article was written? What was going on in the place where it was written? How do a sample of these time-place associations open up new possibilities for exploring the article or an idea it introduces?