

**Group Discussions:** Writing Rhetorically: Fostering Responsive Thinkers and Communicators, Jennifer Fletcher

**Discussion Duration:** 45 minutes

**Directions:** Use the guided questions and instructions to kickstart conversations and as opportunities to raise different questions or introduce new perspectives. Consider both questions and directions as a general framework for further exploration and inquiry into the topics presented in Fletcher's work. Your unique approach to challenging or validating the author's assertions will broaden the scope of your understanding and yield richer and multi-layered conversations.

**Soyinka Group:** *Understanding Writing as Communication and Problem Solving, Cultivating Independent Learning Through Critical Thinking, From Novice to Expert: Writing (and Teaching) Rhetorically.*

1. Is Jennifer Fletcher's Swimming Instructor analogy an accurate description of how many Writing Instructors teach writing? Does her analogy offer an entry point to examine and interrogate our own teaching practices?
2. Discuss three flaws in Fletcher's approach as a less experienced Writing Instructor and her suggestions for developing more independent writers after her growth as a teacher.
3. According to Fletcher, how do we cultivate Independent Learners through rhetorical thinking?
4. Discuss key takeaways from the *Rhetorical Approach* section and how to implement practices that lead to this approach.
5. What, if any, is the value of prescriptivism?

**Ellison Group:** *The Challenge, Empowering Students to Solve Problems and Make Decisions, Teaching for Transfer*

1. Defend, challenge, or qualify Warner's assertion that "formulas replicate the surface features of academic writing, but don't allow writers to engage in real composing.
2. What are the benefits of metacognitive awareness?
3. Discuss the series of questions found in the two paragraphs that precede the **Teaching for Transfer Section**.

4. Discuss the key points in the Teaching for Transfer section and how rhetorically thinking facilitates the transfer of learning.
5. What is the importance of teaching for change, and how is it connected to *Teaching for Transfer*?
6. What, if any, is the value of prescriptivism?

**Marquez Group:** *Consider the Principles Behind Our Writing (and Teaching) Practices, Developing Theoretical Knowledge, Why This Matters, The Rhetorical Approach*

1. Given state mandates for students to achieve proficiency in writing, how do we address current strategies that produce “shortcuts to proficiency?”
- 2.
3. Do you feel that, as a long-time College Professor, Fletcher is somewhat out of touch with the reality of the high school classroom?
4. Revisiting the Developing Theoretical Knowledge section, how do we get students to learn beyond what we have taught them?
5. Discuss the conclusions articulated in the *Why This Matters* section
6. What, if any, is the value of prescriptivism?

**Orwell Group:** *What is Rhetoric? The Trouble With Prescriptivism, Taking a Rhetorical Approach to Argumentation, Teaching Toward Expertise, Teaching for Change*

1. Provide a clear statement that defines rhetoric.
2. According to Fletcher, what is the trouble with prescriptivism?
3. What are the fundamental differences between Prescriptive Rules and Rhetorical Guidelines? (see Figure 1.2 on page 19)
4. Discuss how John Gage presents argumentation and how it should be pursued.
5. How does Fletcher identify the mark of expertise?
6. How does Patricia Benner describe the key difference between a rookie and a veteran?
7. What, if any, is the value of prescriptivism?