

February – April 2021: Deena Larsen & Jules Chatelain (elo.nonsuch@gmail.com) are organizing

WRITEPODs
aka
Writer-Reader Interaction to Engage Platforms
Opening Destinations

Goals:

- Offer creators high quality user / player reactions to new / in progress work
- Foster relationships across institutions, backgrounds, and platforms
- Improve tools / skills for obtaining actionable reactions [0]

This prototype is open to 12 creators willing to commit 8-10 hours each (details below) in February and March 2021.

Do you have a work-in-progress that you'd like to obtain reader/user/player reactions to?

Express interest by emailing the project email above. Provide your contact details and a short or code name of your work in progress. You can ask questions or jump right in and express agreement and fill one of the 12 slots. Four spaces will be reserved for ELO newcomers. Overall, the first 12 to express interest & agreement will be the participants. Jules and Deena will moderate.

Four meetings will be scheduled via Doodle poll and occur on Zoom. During the ELO conference an additional “virtual engagement” event will offer opportunities for creators to celebrate / reflect / and share work (if interested) with all conference attendees.

Launch Meeting (one hour): mutual introductions, ground rules, planning

- Each creator agrees to prepare an excerpt from their work that will take up to 30 minutes to engage with
- Discuss strategies / tech parameters for sharing work
- Discuss ground rules for *reacting* to work [0]
- What we call the reactors: users, players, readers, other?
- Divide into two pods of 6 creators each
 - We might group TikTok & Twine & Twitch pieces, but we remember also the goal of feedback across platforms
 - One way to divide pods might be “best meeting times for people”

Work Sessions (two hours x two sessions): focused reaction spaces

- Each session will focus on half of the pod's works-in-progress (three of the six)
- *Before each session, participants agree to review the three works on the schedule and record some “reactions”*
- For each work, we'll spend 30 minutes this way:
 - first 10 minutes is collecting the reactions people had individually w/ creator listening
 - for 20 minutes, creator can ask any questions they like
e.g. “what did you think of the humor?”

Wrap-Up Meeting (60-90 minutes): Pods reunite; each creator reports back on what was useful for them and what wasn't. Ideas for improvement. Reflection & Celebration.

ELO 2021 tie-in: Ideal for new attendees; activities in Feb-April ensure that by the time of the conference in May, participants will know the six others in their WRITEPOD ... or at least *one* of their works, and reality is fractal ...

[0] Note from Deena: “Electronic literature has had its share of writing workshops, and we’d like to revitalize that tradition. Yet electronic literature opens up dimensions of meaning—and just as reading electronic literature becomes convoluted and complex, so too does critiquing works in progress. Can a small, dedicated group of people be brought together to surmount these challenges? Are there people willing to commit 5 hours of their lives to yet more meetings, as well as homework? Probably. After all, we are crazy enough to write and deep read this stuff, so we may well be crazy enough to share our addictions.

At the conference, a virtual engagement session with all participants will discuss what went well, what could be improved, and how this preliminary pod approach could be extended to provide an outlet for electronic literature creators to explore each other’s works. All ELO conference participants would discuss ways that reacting critique techniques, user experience and interface testing, and plain old writing workshops could help electronic literature creations. WritePODS will be ideal for newcomers to electronic literature as this would ensure that participants will know at least the 6 others in their pod before the conference. WRITEPODS can also spark new collaborations and creations.”

Note from Jules: I will be updating Julianne’s 2000-era [Usability Techniques for Creators of e-Literature](#) and sharing the definition of “what is a reaction?” from Peter Elbow’s *Writing Without Teachers* ... the opposite of, “If this were *my* work here’s what *I* would do with it.”