

Recommended Open Educational Resources for an Undergraduate Course in Composition by Amy Fladeboe

Reading & Writing Strategies:

I recommend two OER for developing reading and writing strategies.

1. “Active Reading Strategies//Study Smart Study Less” by Ana Mascara

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oj6TF4We0UM>

This 13-minute video is perfect for getting students to diagnose their reading techniques as passive or active and give them some strategies for critical reading. I will use this early in the semester to promote deep reading. In the future, I would like to adapt this lecture and record my own, integrating examples from the first article reading assignments I give to students.

2. *Writing, Reading, and College Success: A First-Year Composition Course for All Learners* by Athena Kashyap and Erika Dyquisto

URL:[https://human.libretexts.org/Courses/City_College_of_San_Francisco/Writing_Reading_and_College_Success%3A_A_FirstYear_Composition_Course_for_All_Learners_\(Kashyap_and_Dyquisto\)](https://human.libretexts.org/Courses/City_College_of_San_Francisco/Writing_Reading_and_College_Success%3A_A_FirstYear_Composition_Course_for_All_Learners_(Kashyap_and_Dyquisto))

This is an open source textbook that I intend to use several chapters from including: 5.1 Thesis Statements, Chapter 11.1 Academic Style, Chapter 12 Grammar—12.3 Word Order and Sentence Structure, 12.21 Grammatical Parallelism, 12.13 Subject-Verb Agreement, 12.16 Commas, 12.20 Run-On Sentences and Fragments. I chose this book because it is compiled by instructors at San Francisco General College, where Century’s former colleague and the founder of our English Express programming, Cullen Bailey-Burns now teaches. While this is what drew me to the text, it proved to be a valuable resource with brief grammar chapters and writing advice that is practical and accessible. In first year composition, I often assign a group presentation on some key grammar concepts to host a grammar boot camp day. I prefer not to belabor grammar topics at this level and stress the importance of learning to navigate grammar tools to answer the orders of lesser concern to writing than the argument’s content and structural sophistication.

Trend Analysis:

There’s an excellent chapter in *Writing in the Works* by Susan Blau and Kathryn Burak, but it is not an OER textbook, and I did not find an alternative text that teaches trend analysis so well. If accessible, I recommend scanning this chapter for students or at least using it to adapt your lectures. I recommend just one of the following articles on trend analysis, but I’ve included an annotation of a second piece that I reviewed and do not recommend for reference.

1. “The Tipping Point: Why Is the City Suddenly so Much Safer - Could It Be That Crime Really Is an Epidemic?” by Malcolm Gladwell

URL: *The New Yorker*, vol. 72, no. 14, Conde Nast Publications, Inc, June 1996, p. 32–

This article is perhaps too timely, falling on the heels of a pandemic and major social unrest over police brutality. Thinking on crime as an epidemic might not have changed but the metaphor seems insensitive to the moment even if the concept of tipping points in trends has changed very little since 1996 when this article was published. I prefer to use a chapter in Gladwell's book that illustrates the tipping point through the less controversial example of hush puppy shoe sales. I do like Gladwell's ability to tackle challenging subjects without minimizing the sophistication of his voice. His work is both challenging and accessible for students to practice critical reading because he resists simple conclusions and takes pains to illustrate complex thinking on complex issues. That said, this particular article doesn't feel appropriate for 2020-2021.

2. "How To Write About a Trend" by Without Bullshit

URL: <https://withoutbullshit.com/blog/how-to-write-about-a-trend>

This brief blog entry has an excellent chart of trend stages that I plan to share with students. It's a bit more business-oriented than I'm aiming for, so I would suggest tweaks to the tone to meet my research requirements and be appropriate for an academic audience. Adapting this chart might be a better approach than just pointing students to it, but I think this is a useful resource to start with.

Articles on Language Trends:

I recommend a compilation of online accessible articles on language trends for students to practice critical reading skills on low-stakes assignments and to illustrate common features of trends that are topical in English studies. These could be compiled in a pressbook, but the links help students grow comfortable with navigating the web.

1. "3 Internet Language Trends from 019, Explained" by The Conversation US, Inc.

URL: <https://theconversation.com/3-internet-language-trends-from-2019-explained-128588>

2. "Dictionary.com Adds Coronavirus Words To The Dictionary" by Dictionary.com

URL: <https://www.dictionary.com/e/new-coronavirus-words-added-to-dictionary/>

3. "Bilingual Kids: Foreign Languages are an emerging trend in day care" by Andrea Guthman

URL: <https://www.chicagotribune.com/lifestyles/sc-fam-bilingual-kids-day-care-trend-0702-20190618-573qfte5ovcmphnyalnhfv2bzy-story.html>

4. "Leisure Reading in The US Is At An All-Time Low" by Christopher Ingraham

URL: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2018/06/29/leisure-reading-in-the-u-s-is-at-an-all-time-low/>

5. "Actually, Gender Neutral Pronouns Can Change a Culture" by Adam Rogers

URL: <https://www.wired.com/story/actually-gender-neutral-pronouns-can-change-a-culture/>

These five articles on current language trends introduce the theme of my composition course. Because I like to teach this course thematically, I would change these articles if my theme changes as it often does. There is nothing particularly special about each of these articles other than their currency, variety, and range of publication venue. I want brief, quickly-consumable articles about current interesting and engaging social trends that students can experience early success in applying the reading strategies they're learning before we move on to more complex reading. This selection of articles references many demographics, assuring that my students will

find at least one of them that they can relate to or have experience with. I wouldn't recommend using these articles unless they match with the theme of the course.

Trend Researching Resources:

I recommend compiling the following marketing trend research database websites.

1. Euromonitor International: Market Research by Euromonitor

URL: <https://blog.euromonitor.com/>

2. Gartner Insights by Gartner, Inc.

URL: <https://www.gartner.com/en/marketing/insights>

3. Kantar by Kantar Group and Affiliates

URL: <https://www.kantar.com/>

4. Mintel Blog by Mintel Group Ltd.

URL: <https://www.mintel.com/blog>

5. NPD by The NPD Group, Inc.

URL: <https://www.npd.com/wps/portal/npd/us/home/>

6. Trend Hunter: Create The Future by Trend Hunter Inc.

URL: <https://www.trendhunter.com/>

7. Trend Watching by TrendWatching BV

URL: <https://trendwatching.com/>

I'm developing a widget of these website databases available for students who might be struggling to select their research topic. I wouldn't belabor their use or recommend them for Composition courses that are not exploring trends, but these are some online tools for consumer trend research.