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**Recommended Open Educational Resources (OERs) for First-Year Composition Courses**

1. Glynn, Alexandra, Kelli Hallsten Erickson, and Amy Jo Swing. You, Writing! A Guide to College Composition. Opendora

*You, Writing!* serves well as a first-year composition textbook. It structures the chapters around the aspects of the writing process with a solid focus on important elements like purpose and audience; brainstorming topics; writing thesis statement; and the difference between revision, editing, and proofreading.

The text is approachable and easy to read with understandable language, interesting graphics, and links to additional resources. The pdf is accessible and can be downloaded by students to read offline or to review in the future when they have writing projects for other classes.

In my class, I’m assigning chapters and discussing important points from each as we go through the semester, culminating in our Autoethnography research project and the book’s focus on how to conduct research and use information from sources.

1. Additional reading
	1. Geller, Danielle. “Blood; Quantum.” *Brevity*, 2016, <https://brevitymag.com/nonfiction/blood-quantum/>.
	2. Gutkind, Lee. “The 5 Rs of Creative Nonfiction.” *Creativenonfiction.org*, Creative Nonfiction, 20 Apr. 2021, <https://creativenonfiction.org/writing/the-5-rs-of-creative-nonfiction/>.
	3. Kothari, Geeta. “If You Are What You Eat, Then What Am I?” *Kenyon Review*, vol. 21, no. 1, 1999, [https://kenyonreview.org/journal/winter-1999/selections/geeta-kothari-656342/#](https://kenyonreview.org/journal/winter-1999/selections/geeta-kothari-656342/). Accessed 2 Feb. 2022.
	4. Laymon, Kiese. “What I Pledge Allegiance To.” *How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America: Essays*, ‎Scribner, New York, NY, 2020, pp. 21–30.
	5. Nezhukumatathil, Aimee. “Catalpa Tree.” *World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments*, Milkweed, Minneapolis, MN, 2020, pp. 1–6.
	6. Ngozi Adichie, Chimamanda. *The Danger of a Single Story*. *TED Talk*, 2009, <https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en>. Accessed 2 Feb. 2022.

These readings are used throughout the semester to illustrate concepts of creative nonfiction writing and the value of sharing our stories with one another. The TED Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie sets the tone for our class by discussing why sharing stories is important, so I assign it in the first week. We then read “The 5 Rs of Creative Nonfiction” to learn about the genre and how it works. Then we read the excerpt by Aimee Nezhukumatathil to consider Purpose, Audience, and Themes in creative nonfiction and academic writing. The essay by Geeta Kothari shows how many writers focus on a subject outside of themselves in order to share something about their experience on their own terms and with their own level of self-disclosure. Kiese Laymon’s essay helps us see how writers examine their surroundings and interpret symbols. And Danielle Geller’s essay shows us how to subtly express the importance of an experience through scene details and reflection.

1. Tombro, Melissa. *Teaching Autoethnography: Personal Writing in the Classroom*. Open SUNY Textbooks, 2016.

This book is not assigned to students, but it helped me design the materials for the course. It’s an open resource book licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).

There are assignment ideas that I’ve adapted, including examples from students in Tombro’s classes. I often share examples of student essays from previous classes with students as well as examples of student essays from this book.