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Affective Transfer in Writing: Utilizing Affect in

Teaching for Transfer

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of
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Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

Affective Transfer in Writing: Utilizing Affect in
Teaching for Transfer

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According to current scholarship in writing studies, students with a positive affect toward writing are more likely to transfer writing knowledge and skills. Yet my findings from an IRB-approved longitudinal study suggest that this is not always the case. This study was designed to see what students transfer from their first-year composition course, focusing especially on rhetoric, process, genre, and mindfulness. In annual semi-structured interviews that took place over the course of three years, two study participants described having positive writing affect but did not discuss transfer, even when prompted. These students express caring much more about a writing task when it feels relevant to them, which frequently involves genres outside of academic writing. They also both admit that they have poor writing process habits, such as procrastination. Based on these findings, I suggest one way that writing instructors can purposefully use affect to potentially encourage transfer.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Affective Transfer in Writing: Utilizing Affect in Teaching for Transfer

Within the past few decades, scholars have delved into better understanding the elusive yet enticing phenomena that is affect. This interest has spread across disciplines, including composition studies. Yet, despite affect's theoretical depth in the field, its function in the classroom is much less explored (Taylor 48). While discussions of theory are productive and valuable, as composition instructors, one of our primary concerns rests in how we can implement what we know into our classrooms. Finding ways to incorporate affective knowledge into our teaching is especially important in recent years. In 2021, 1 in 3 youth ages 8-18 in the UK shared that they enjoy writing—the least enjoyment reported in 11 years (Clark et al. 2). Clark et al. note that the COVID-19 pandemic may have negatively affected students' attitudes toward writing (13). If these numbers are reflective of students in the United States, then the majority of the rising generation is experiencing a negative affect toward writing. This negativity may impact how they develop as writers, which will likely carry over into college and beyond.

Alongside affect, a major concern in writing studies is teaching for transfer, which isn't always successful (Nowacek; Salomon and Perkins). To help promote transfer, several scholars have started to examine affect's effect on transfer (Tarabochia and Heddy; Driscoll and Powell; Nelson; Johnson and Krase; Wardle). Despite the useful insights that have stemmed from these studies, we still don't know exactly *how* affect impacts transfer. For instance, current scholarship generally supports the notion that positive affect leads to transfer, yet my findings suggest that positive affect doesn't guarantee that outcome. Thus, better understanding the connection between affect and transfer can lead to more mindful teaching-for-transfer practices that utilize positive affective experiences. After reviewing the current scholarship surrounding transfer and

affect, my methodology, and my findings, I suggest one way that writing instructors can intentionally use affect in the classroom that could encourage transfer.

Review of Literature

Transfer

Transfer theory refers to the study of how students apply knowledge and/or skills from one situation to another. In composition studies, scholars are particularly interested in how students utilize writing knowledge and skills for different writing tasks (DePalma and Ringer; Driscoll and Powell; Nowacek; Salomon and Perkins). In the last decade, scholars have come to understand transfer as a "recontextualization" of genre (Nowacek 18), in which students alter what they know about writing to fit the specific situation they are writing in (DePalma and Ringer). Furthermore, Driscoll and Powell note that transfer not only incorporates "knowledge or skills but dispositions, identities, and social and cognitive processes" (1). That is, transfer extends beyond what students know—it also ties into how they view themselves and how they interact with the world. In this sense then, affect is a part of transfer.

Affect and Emotion

Historically, affect and emotion were used synonymously in writing studies; however, the two terms started to separate at the end of the 20th century. Massumi, a major source for this division, differentiates the two by describing *affect* as an "intensity," and *emotion* as "intensity owned and recognized" (88). That is, affect is something felt but unnamed, and affect becomes an emotion once the feeling is named. Additionally, Alexander et al. note that affect and emotion are similar but not synonymous. They define the two terms as follows: "We use 'affect' to signal the felt conditions in which writers write and 'emotion' to describe the particular types of feeling that writers consciously ascribe to their composing and writing lives" (566). In this regard, affect

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seems to be the precursor to emotion that influences the experience a writer may have during a specific task.

However, recent scholars argue that separating affect and emotion isn't useful. Nelson, for instance, reasons that the distinction between affect and emotion is unhelpful because affect becomes "a dimension we can never access, except very indirectly or after the fact," since naming the affect would then make it an emotion. This makes it difficult to have a constructive conversation regarding student affect. Nelson then defines affect as "turn[ing] toward or against an object, relation, or discourse." She shares that as humans, we like to spend time and attention on things that give us positive feelings and avoid the things that elicit negative feelings. Craig concurs with Nelson, noting that her definition of affect provides a "productive starting place" for joining these terms. Thus, for the ease of discussion and for the purpose of productivity, I lean on Nelson's definition when discussing affect. That is, affect includes students' thoughts or feelings about writing.

Overlap Between Transfer and Affect

In recent years, more scholars have become interested in the connection between affect and transfer—a connection that has been previously underexplored in writing studies (Tarabochia and Heddy; Driscoll and Powell). For instance, Tarabochia and Heddy, in their study of transformative experiences (TE)—moments that shift students' perspectives or feelings about something they learned—note that TEs make low-road transfer (applying writing knowledge and skills to similar genres) more meaningful through the affective element by generating interest and enjoyment. Over time, these positive experiences with writing can help students develop a more positive affect, which may promote transfer. Similarly, Johnson and Krase observe in a case study that students with positive affect have more positive writing

experiences, which in turn motivates them to improve as writers. This drive to improve encourages transfer as students consider the knowledge and skills they have and what tools they can apply to new writing tasks.

Other scholars have investigated how various affective dispositions impact transfer. Nelson says that dispositions develop from "similar affects grow[ing] together," which become a "way of being," prompting students to act in certain ways. For example, a type of disposition that Powell discusses is mindset, that is, how malleable someone perceives their talents and abilities. Two types of mindsets include the fixed and the growth mindset. Students with a fixed mindset often feel unable to develop as writers, while students with a growth mindset are more likely to accept constructive criticism and improve on future writing tasks. He notes that teachers can help students foster certain mindsets by exhibiting that mindset through the types of comments they leave on student writing. Ideally, Powell reasons that teachers and students should develop a growth mindset, which encourages transfer because it is more adaptable.

Likewise, Driscoll and Powell note that mindful students with a stronger handle on their emotions transfer more effectively. Students accomplish this through a process of monitoring and controlling their emotions, which allows them to shift negative emotions such as anxiety into something more "generative," (12). This process is similar to Powell's thoughts on developing a growth mindset—the idea that students should be able to adjust to new circumstances, regardless of what they may initially feel. Driscoll and Powell reason that this process helps students "not let their negative emotions lead to a refusal to transfer" (12).

Additionally, Wardle argues for "problem-exploring" dispositions to facilitate transfer rather than "answer-getting" dispositions. "Problem-exploring" requires more creativity and critical thinking, while "answer-getting" is focused on finding the right answer, and the latter

makes it difficult to enter a new rhetorical situation with a new writing task. That said, Powell finds that teachers who are aware of what type of mindset their students have can tailor their feedback to meet those needs (such as telling a student with a fixed mindset how to improve their paper to earn a higher grade, which then encourages them to work on their writing, even if they don't believe they can improve as a writer).

From these studies, it seems like positive affect leads to dispositions that aid in transfer while negative affect does not. According to Driscoll and Powell, this observation is the trend outside of writing studies, and so it seems like this trend follows within our field as well. As mentioned previously, it is becoming clearer that affect *does* impact transfer; yet, given how few studies exist on the matter, it is still unclear *how* affect impacts transfer. While my findings generally align with the notion that positive affect likely leads to transfer, I was surprised to discover that there are students in my study who have a positive affect but fail to discuss transferring writing knowledge when given plenty of opportunities to do so. In this regard, this study will closely analyze two students who do not discuss transfer despite expressing a positive affect to see what else may be influencing their experience with transfer.

Methods

This study consists of the first three years of data from an IRB approved five-year longitudinal study conducted by two full-time faculty members and a group of graduate students, including myself. The goal of the study is to learn how students apply the knowledge they learn in First Year Composition (FYC)—rhetoric, genre, writing processes, and writing with sources— to the writing they do in other classes, the workplace, and the public sphere. The research site is a private four-year university in the western United States, which is attended by 34,737 daytime students in 186 undergraduate majors. The student population is 49% male and 51% female, with

81% of students identifying as Caucasian, 7% as Hispanic, 4% as two or more races, 3% as Asian/Pacific Islander, less than 1% as Black, less than as 1% Native American, and 4% as other.

Participants

Research participants were recruited via email during the fall semester of 2018 and the winter semester of 2019. Each was enrolled in FYC in fall of 2018. 274 students expressed interest, and 54 students joined the study. Reflective of the university population, only 15% of participants identified as non-White. At the start of the study, participants' ages were between 17-27 years old, with the average at 20 years. Like any study, we experienced attrition: Of the 54 students that joined the study, 51 were interviewed in 2019, 39 in 2020, and 42 in 2021. Some of the gaps relate to the university's sponsor, which encourages young adults to spend 1.5 to 2 years in missionary service, while the other gaps are likely a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which hit at the start of our second round of interviews. For each year of interviews, students were offered $25 campus vouchers for each interview and $25 Amazon gift cards after graduating for compensation.

Regarding the participants, there are a few predispositions to consider that may influence the data. The first few may lend students to have more favorable outlooks toward writing: they volunteered, many are driven by grades, and each researcher was a FYC instructor within the university's writing program. Because those conducting the interviews were teachers of FYC and were affiliated with University Writing, the participants may have felt like they needed to share more positive thoughts as they considered their audience. Also, participants may have been predisposed to responding favorably about an academic course because they are good students. The average high school GPA of incoming undergraduate students is 3.86, and 46 out of 54 participants expected an A or A- in FYC. Those who expect a high score in FYC may feel more

adept at writing and/or have positive feelings toward it because of the university's cultural focus on grades, which stems from the university's selectivity for admission. The last predisposition to consider may have also altered responses: we shared our research goals during recruitment—to see how students are applying what they learn in FYC to other areas of their lives. Because we shared our research goals, students may have felt more inclined to draw connections to what they learned in FYC or what they think they learned in FYC to gratify the interviewers.

Interview Protocol

Annual discourse-based interviews were conducted in March and April. These interviews were semi-structured and took between 30 and 45 minutes each. This format allowed the research team to hear students describe in detail their unique experiences with writing—how they felt and how they transferred knowledge and various strategies—while diving deeper into their responses with follow-up questions. This gave the research team greater insight into these experiences through background information and other comments from the students. In 2019, the researchers interviewed participants on campus in private offices. With the pandemic, interviews were held over Zoom in 2020, and there was an option for either face-to-face or Zoom interviews in 2021. For these interviews, students brought two writing samples they had written within the last year—one from school and one outside of school. Some questions were specifically geared for these samples, such as regarding the genre, process, and audience. Other questions were more general, asking about writing development, transfer, and affect. The purpose was to learn about students' experiences with writing generally and the composing decisions they make through these specific texts. Appendix A contains the complete protocol (page 21).

Data Analysis

After the interviews, graduate students, including myself, transcribed and open coded the audio recordings. To begin coding, the research team met to set some preliminary categories based on our research questions, including genre, writing process, and audience. We added more codes as we noticed patterns in the data throughout the first-year transcripts. After coding the first year, we re-coded the old interviews with the new codes to ensure consistency. For example, we noted that a handful of students discussed using writing for good in their communities, such as to elicit change, so we created a code for "civic engagement" to see how this motivation influenced the way they approached their process, audience, and other areas of writing. Essentially, if we saw a pattern in student responses and thought it would be interesting to consider in relation to our initial goals, we created a new code. Each transcript was coded by at least two people to ensure consistency and reliability in our findings. For this specific article, I went through the codes again and added magnitude codes relating to affect for this study to specify positive, negative, or mixed feelings about writing or writing identity (Saldaña 153). I also created subcodes for specific types of transfer that students were engaging in based on Donahue's notes from the conversation on transfer globally. (The code book for these codes is in Appendix B on page 23.)

In a more focused round of coding for affect and transfer specifically, I coded for mostly positive, mostly negative, or mixed feelings by reading through each of the segments that the research team had coded as affect. I marked segments as positive when students expressed confidence, enjoyment, or a general appreciation toward writing. Negative segments included insecurity, lack of confidence, and general disdain toward writing. I coded segments as mixed when students expressed both positive and negative affect or had neutral feelings toward writing. I ultimately categorized students' affect based on the whole of each year's segments. For

instance, if a student mentioned positive feelings five times in an interview and negative or neutral feelings one time, I would still consider that student to have positive feelings overall. Mixed feelings came when the number of positive and negative sentiments were more equal, such as three positive comments and four negative comments. The findings that follow elaborate on more of the details that students share regarding these sentiments.

The research team coded for transfer whenever a student discussed taking something they learned from a course or prior experience about writing and applying it to a new, different context. I reviewed each of the transfer codes from the team and broke them down into the specific ways students were demonstrating transfer based on Donahue's distinctions regarding transfer. For example, there were 14 instances where students discussed applying/adjusting writing practices for a new situation, 41 instances where students shared that certain writing practices had become integral to how they write, 20 instances where students deconstructed ideas (such as audience awareness) from one context to another, and 14 instances of students who compared and contrasted genres before deciding what strategies they could apply from one to the other. I use these specific distinctions to classify students' discussions of transfer.

After combing through the codes again during this more focused round, I was able to draw connections between specific student attitudes and patterns of transfer. I mapped out each student's yearly affect and discussions of transfer, and I looked to see where there was overlap between specific attitudes and types of transfer (see Appendices C and D on pages 33 and 35). I ended up simplifying my analysis to just looking at discussion of transfer generally compared to specific student attitudes, which is what led me to find that not all students with positive affect discuss transfer, even when they are asked specifically about transfer. From there, I analyzed

specific segments to see what students were saying regarding affect to see if there were any specific attitudes that seem to contribute more to transfer.

To narrow my focus further, I decided to analyze Dory and Ellie more closely because they regularly experience positive affect, yet they don't discuss transfer (see table 1). I reread each of the transcripts for their interviews and examined each affective experience throughout the three years. My findings reflect two common experiences from Dory and Ellie that I also noticed in other students who do not discuss transfer.

Table 1

Affective Orientation of Students Who Do Not Discuss Transfer

P = Positive
N = Negative
M = Mixed

Pseudonym	2019	2020	2021
Avery	P	-	-
Caiden	M	-	M
Chandler	M	-	M
Chloe	N	-	P
Dory	P	P	M
Ellie	P	P	P
Evelyn	M	M	-
Gideon	M	P	-
Grover	M	-	-
Jim	M	-	-
Kaleigh	P	P	-
Kelly	P	-	-
Liam	M	P	-
Zoe	M	M	M

Connections Between Affect and Transfer

Similar to other research, many of the students in our study who experience positive affect describe transferring writing knowledge and skills to new tasks and contexts. Yet, not all

of them do. Dory and Ellie are two that are especially perplexing because they express positive affect consistently, yet they rarely discuss transfer, if at all. Dory has positive affect toward writing for the first two years of interviewing and mixed feelings during the third year, while Ellie conveys positive affect all three years. For instance, Dory shares, "I really love writing," and Ellie says, "Writing is fun." Despite this positive affect, Dory doesn't discuss transfer in any of the interviews. Ellie does discuss transfer in 2019, but the knowledge she transfers is a rhetorical device she says she learned in junior high. Specifically, she says:

> I would say the line towards the end versus here 'where we work together, where we smiled together, where we laugh together, where we serve together,' just because it has that aspect to it […] Anaphora? […] It's a rhetorical device, so I just think it makes it fun to read and interesting and drives the point home.

While it's clear that Ellie is applying a writing skill to a new situation, it is surprising that in an interview about what she transferred from FYC, Ellie doesn't discuss transferring knowledge and skills from university writing courses. Perhaps students associate the skills they learn in FYC to skills they learned in grade school, and so they attribute their learning to the earliest experience they can recall. Or, perhaps the skills they learn in FYC become ingrained, so they don't consciously consider the connection. Regardless, despite her discussion of transfer in one interview, Ellie is still a valuable lens for understanding why students may not be transferring when they have a positive affect because she doesn't discuss transfer from university writing courses.

Together, Dory and Ellie exemplify two major trends that also appeared among the other students that didn't discuss transfer: (1) The genre feels irrelevant, and (2) the students exhibit poor writing process habits. Regarding the first trend, Dory especially discusses how she cares

more about writing when it feels more meaningful, and she oftentimes doesn't find academic writing meaningful. This meaningfulness seems to stem from the perceived relevancy of the task. With the second trend, both share ineffective writing process habits, particularly during the drafting and revising stages. The following sections delve more deeply into these two trends.

The Genre Feels Irrelevant

While students who discuss transfer also express confidence in writing, those who do not mention transfer express feeling confident only when writing in relevant genres—genres that tend to exist outside of the classroom. For example, in 2021, Dory discusses that she loves writing in professional and academic contexts, but she feels more confident with professional writing because she has more recent experience with that context. In this regard, she distinguishes different affective experiences between these two writing contexts instead of conveying an overall confidence in writing. This confidence stems from how frequently she needs to write in these genres, which suggests that these professional tasks are more relevant to her than academic tasks at this stage of her life. Even though she has written in academic genres, she suggests that she is out of practice or that she is more used to professional writing now, so transitioning back to academic writing would be challenging. This may be because she might find it unpleasant to have to shift her focus to what an academic context expects when she is comfortable writing for professional audiences, which would require more effort to transfer.

Beyond falling out of practice with academic genres, Dory shares that she doesn't seem to care as much for certain writing assignments because they don't seem relevant. When asked about what she would change in an essay she wrote for a class, she says:

> I don't really think I did much drafting at all. And […] I kind of think it all goes back to
> how much […] it's worth within a school setting […] I didn't really see this [essay] being

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something I was going to have to do in the future for my career, and so I cared less about

it, and I think that's just because I'm in more of these beginning classes, and […] I think

as I progress and we have to do more things that […] I will probably do in the future, I

will probably try harder.

The textbook used in FYC emphasizes the writing process, which is one of the main points of

knowledge we hoped to see students transfer going into this study. It seems then that what is

holding her back isn't the lack of knowledge about the writing process since she references one

of the stages, but the failure to connect to the task affectively. This aligns well with Eodice et

al.'s study, which found that students consider writing experiences to be meaningful when the

genres mirror what these students imagine they will write in the future. So, while the task may

not be relevant yet, these students have a "personal connection" to the task (Eodice et al. 82).

Thus, writing tasks may produce greater meaning for students if the genre seems relevant to their

own goals and interests, but if the task lacks that personal connection, then it seems that students

prefer relevant genres. They may feel more connected to genres they have written in before

because those tasks connect to something important to them in the past, or they simply feel more

confident in their ability to perform the task well because they have been successful previously.

This then adds to Eodice et al.'s study, suggesting that when students do not find writing to be

meaningful, they are less likely to transfer.

Because Dory's school writing doesn't align with many of her real-life circumstances,

she doesn't seem to write in academic genres very much, making them less relevant. Behizadeh,

who cites Purcell-Gates et al., argues that for writing to be authentic, "genre and purpose need to

have real-world relevance and be valued outside of school" (411). This doesn't mean that school

writing cannot be authentic; it means that the task's purpose and value needs to extend beyond

the classroom to the student. The students in Eodice et al.'s study are interested in their new writing tasks because they anticipate writing in similar genres in their futures, meaning those genres will eventually become more relevant. In this regard, Dory doesn't seem to value academic writing as much because she doesn't see how it connects to writing she will do outside of school, which suggests that she may not know how to engage in high-road transfer or that she doesn't want to put in that effort. Perhaps she prefers working within similar genres because it is easier to apply skills from one task to the next than having to consider the similarities and differences between different contexts.

Relevance seems to generate a higher level of investment in writing, which seems to promote a more positive affect and may foster transfer. For Dory, having a greater investment may encourage working within different contexts with greater attention and care. Tarabochia and Heddy support this notion, sharing that meaningful writing helps students to have more interest and enjoyment in writing, which in turn makes transferring between similar genres more meaningful. Academic genres may not be interesting to students or may not feel relevant, which may make it difficult to have positive feelings toward the writing. If the writing task feels meaningless, students might not engage in transfer because they don't feel the need to take the task seriously, as Dory mentions. Alternatively, if the task does feel meaningful, students may be more likely to spend more time applying writing knowledge and skills to make a piece stronger.

The Students Exhibit Poor Writing Process Habits

Dory and Ellie both acknowledged that they didn't have the best writing habits. One of the most common habits students reported was procrastination, which often caused them to draft all at once. This also hindered them from revising effectively. For example, Dory shares on multiple occasions that she wrote a draft of a piece in one sitting. A couple of times, Dory

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mentions that she "read over it" once or twice before submission, but didn't have anyone else look over it. Other times, she had her mom check over her writing, but because she sent it to her mom close to the deadline, she admits, "I don't know how much I changed personally from that because I didn't have a lot of time." Even though she sought out feedback, she didn't give herself the time to implement any suggestions, rendering the effort futile.

Despite acknowledging that their rushed writing wasn't their best work, Dory and Ellie expressed that they still were proud of aspects of the product. Dory, for example, shares, "I actually wrote this like overnight, so maybe that […] says a lot, but I actually […] did like the piece and the […] ideas behind it." Ellie similarly shares, "I was writing this [paper] very quickly, so I wouldn't necessarily say it's my best work, but […] there's still things that I do enjoy about it as well." Ellie does express that she's "not a fan of redrafting," so for her, procrastinating doesn't seem to hinder her writing preferences, even though she does seem to acknowledge that it isn't the best practice. Because students are experiencing positive feelings toward the writing they produce within a short period of time, it doesn't seem like it's encouraging to them to spend more time writing, discouraging transfer of more productive writing practices and writing knowledge in general.

Even taking time to redraft and revise doesn't guarantee transfer. For instance, Ellie shares that with a resignation letter she wrote, she worked on it over the span of a few days and had her dad look over it because he was familiar with the genre. When asked about the feedback she received from her father, Ellie says, "If he did offer anything, it would have been something small like grammar or a word or something that I'd missed. But as far as the actual content, no." Despite giving herself ample time to write this letter and seeking out feedback, Ellie ultimately didn't seem to make many adjustments to the draft she composed. If anything, it seems like she

wanted validation that her writing was okay, and that's what she seemed to receive. She says, "He is a businessman himself, so he's very familiar with hiring processes and as well as like resignation and things like that, so I felt like […] he would be able to tell me if it was a good reflection of what I wanted to say […] He thought it was very good." This seems to suggest that she wanted her father to transfer his writing knowledge for her rather than putting in the effort herself. So, even going through the motions of the writing process doesn't seem to be enough to foster transfer because Ellie wasn't taking the time to really think through the choices she was making as she revised. This notion suggests that students who engage in constructive practices that encourage real change in their writing may be more likely to apply writing knowledge and skills to new writing tasks.

Implications and Suggestions

These findings suggest a couple ways we as teachers can encourage affect that supports transfer. We can create more opportunities for relevant writing in the classroom, or at least, discussions of it. We can also help students develop healthier writing habits by modeling the writing process in class. These suggestions are practices that we may already implement in our classes. To tie these together succinctly, I will propose an assignment that could also help us cultivate affective experiences that lead to transfer in the classroom: assigning students to write in a relevant genre for a real purpose and audience. This genre could be a letter to a favorite online content creator, an email expressing a complaint, or even a resume for a specific job posting. To create a more authentic experience, it may be helpful to offer multiple genres/situations that students can choose from so that students can pick a task that feels more meaningful to them. This type of assignment would be particularly useful at the beginning of the semester because it can ease students into writing and generate valuable discussions about

writing. The knowledge and skills that develop from this assignment can then carry over into later assignments as we intentionally connect the material.

One way that this assignment can help ease students into writing and generate discussion is to demonstrate the writing process—which doesn't just apply to academic papers—helping them develop better writing habits across genres. Once students decide on the genre and situation they want to write in, we can have them outline the rhetorical situation of their writing task, including their purpose, audience, and constraints, or whatever aligns well with the curriculum of the course. From there, students can plan on how they can best meet the needs of the situation. Class instruction can offer tools they can use to write effectively.

Then, the students could write a draft and bring it to class for peer review among classmates writing in similar situations and genres. Ideally, the peer review would be structured in a way that encourages students to discuss what they have learned in class and how they can apply those principles into their writing. This feedback can aid students as they revise to make their pieces stronger instead of just receiving approval from their classmates. Once the draft is ready, students can submit the writing to both the instructor and the intended audience.

A potential pitfall with this assignment is that having students submit to both the instructor and the intended audience may stress out students as they attempt to appeal to multiple audiences. Thus, it seems like an effective approach would be to grade students based on how well the writing meets the intended audience's needs. This de-emphasizes the instructor's role as audience, allowing students to focus more on the more authentic situation. That said, this doesn't completely eliminate the instructor as audience. To better reduce the stress of considering multiple audiences, it may be more useful to grade this assignment for participation and use it as a thinking tool.

As a thinking tool, this assignment can be a consistent discussion point throughout the semester, creating an opportunity for students to transfer knowledge from this experience to the rest of their assignments. If their experience with this assignment aligns with the findings of this study, then it's likely that they will feel positively toward the writing they did for this more relevant writing task. Instructors can then build on this experience with each student throughout the semester with the other various writing tasks they assign by helping students draw connections between the current task and this initial task. Students may then be able to understand how to make academic writing more enjoyable, or at least, more meaningful, by applying skills and knowledge from the more relevant writing to more academic genres. Applying skills and knowledge can make the task seem more doable because students can see that they already have the ability and experience to complete certain aspects of the writing task, which then reduces stress and increases confidence.

We can help students draw individual connections by asking them to reflect on how their experience approaching this more relevant genre and situation in the classroom compares to how they would have otherwise approached it. For example, if the student wrote a complaint email, they could write about how the process of outlining the rhetorical situation and peer reviewing shaped the email. They could then consider what they would have done if they weren't writing it in class and how they imagine what the outcome would have been. This can help them to be more mindful of how the approaches we teach in class can apply to genres that exist outside of the classroom. In a sense, this assignment mirrors what many of us do in our classrooms: we model the writing process in the hopes that students will carry those practices with them in other writing tasks—in whatever ways best serve them. This assignment, if successful, models that writing can be fun and meaningful. Thus, not only does this assignment help students draw more

explicit connections between writing tasks, it also helps students draw greater meaning from classroom instruction and practice.

To encourage using affect to promote transfer, instructors can help students transition to subsequent writing tasks with various questions, such as:

- How did I feel at the start of the first writing assignment? How do I feel starting this next writing assignment? Why?

- How is this new task similar to the first writing assignment? How is it different? How do I feel after considering the relationship between these two tasks?

- What can I take from the first writing assignment that can help make this new task feel more enjoyable? What skills did I learn and/or use that may help make this a good experience?

Questions such as these steer students toward transfer through how they feel. Framing transfer in this way emphasizes the student's experience while writing rather than the writing itself. Given the data, it seems that students are more likely to transfer if they have a personal investment in the task. Students can then consider how their writing skills and knowledge benefit *them* over how it benefits their writing. This approach still requires students to make connections between writing tasks and apply what they know, but it does so in a way that may feel more relevant or interesting because it allows them to express themselves in the process. If this assignment is successful, then the emotions students feel during this initial writing task can help them develop a more positive affect by creating more enjoyable, meaningful experiences with writing. Students can then learn how to create more meaningful writing experiences, regardless of the task, through the skills and knowledge they develop in our courses.

Suggestions for Future Research

There is much more research that needs to be done regarding the connection between affect and transfer. Moving forward, it would be useful to look more closely at each of the findings of when positive affect leads and doesn't lead to transfer. A more focused study would allow us to better understand the implications of each finding, which can in turn offer further insight into how we can improve our teaching practices through intentionally utilizing affect. Here are a few questions that can guide further research:

- How do students' views of their role in writing impact how they feel about writing and whether they transfer?

- What types of writing tasks seem more meaningful to students? What about these tasks may lend themselves to encouraging transfer?

- How do students feel when approaching genres that feel more relevant to them compared to academic genres? Does this seem to impact transfer?

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Demographic Questions
- How do you feel about writing? Tell us about how you see yourself as a writer. How has that identity evolved or changed over time?
- What online communities are you a part of?
- What kind of writing do you do outside of school?
- Do you work? What kind of job do you have? Do you have to write for that job? If so, what kinds of things do you write?
- What's your major? What are your career plans?
- [To be asked only in the first year] How accurately did your final grade in Writing 150 reflect your perceptions of yourself as a writer?
- [To be asked in later years] Have you served as a teaching assistant, research assistant, or tutor in some capacity?
- [To be asked in later years] Have you completed an internship, study abroad, or mentored learning experience?

Semi-Structured Writing Questions
Questions based on the school-related writing sample that you brought today.
- Tell us about why you chose to bring in this writing sample. What do you like about this piece?
- What strengths do you see in this sample, if any?
- What weaknesses do you see in this sample, if any?
- How did you use the assignment sheet as part of preparing this sample?
- What did your instructor say about the writing sample?
- How did you feel about that response?

Questions based on the non-school-related writing sample that you brought today.
- Tell us about why you chose to bring in this writing sample. What do you like about this piece?
- What weaknesses do you see in this piece, if any?
- What prompted you to write this sample in this way?
- How did you know how to write in this way?
- What type of response did you receive to this writing?
- How did you feel about that response?

Follow-up or Probing Questions (if students do not address rhetorical awareness, genre, writing process, or incorporating sources in answering the above questions)
- What process did you use to prepare this sample?
- What did you do first, second, and so on?
- When did you write this sample?
- Did you have anyone else read it before you submitted it?
- Did you use library resources?
- Whom did you envision as your audience for this sample?
- What purpose(s) did you envision this sample fulfilling?
- What genre did you use to address this audience?

- Why did you choose that genre?
- What might your audience need or expect from you as a writer?
- How did you know this?
- What type of evidence did you rely upon to support these arguments?
- Why did you choose this evidence?

Additional Questions for Second through Fifth Year Interviews
- As a recap, last year we focused our interview on _____. [Take a few minutes to check interpretations from the previous year's data analysis.] What impact has this subsequent year had on those views?
- Questions from the first year can be adapted to conform to the new writing samples the students bring.

Appendix B: Code Book for Affect and Transfer

Code Name	Description	Example	Number of Codes
Affect	Student's thoughts and feelings about writing and possibly how those shaped behavior.	Interviewer: What prompted you to [write this piece]? Kelly: So, I was just mainly tired of 'me' procrastinating. I feel like I could've been, I could be so much better if I would take my time and actually think things through. So, I just decided I would put some real effort into this, and I found out that I actually really loved to write, and it made me panic less, and just, yeah, I felt like this paper was my child. I loved it so much. (Kelly 2019 lines 436-438)	446
- Positive	Student relays positive feelings/attitudes toward writing or a writing task, such as confidence or enjoyment.	Ellie: Um, well last year when I was in [FYC] I found that I actually enjoyed writing, which I guess you could say is different from my high school experience because I started off like not doing well in the classes and I just couldn't get a grasp of how to do better. And then about halfway through my junior year, really, is when I started to get it and I was like, oh okay, this is how...Yeah, so then I took Writing 150 and I really enjoyed it. And I was like, "Yeah, writing is fun." (Ellie 2020 line 34)	57
- Negative	Student relays negative feelings/attitudes toward writing, such as a lack of confidence	Kevin: I've always thought of myself as a really bad writer, to be honest, I just, I feel like in my skills. I feel like I'm a lot better in math comparatively.	9

		in ability or a lack of enjoyment.	And some of those other things and you know, in history even just because I think I'm good at memorizing things that I am at writing, so I've never thought of myself as that good or nor have I thought of myself as very creative. And I always associate creativity and writing really closely. Which is also interesting because writing can oftentimes not be very creative, you know historical writing, maybe that kind of thing. But yeah, I don't think I'm a necessarily a good writer. And I don't think I've ever tried to put in effort really to be a good writer. (Kevin 2021 line 357)	
-	Mixed	Student relays a mixture of positive and negative feelings/attitudes toward writing.	Interviewer: How do you feel right now about writing and about yourself as a writer? Dory: Um, I probably—I feel a lot more confident from years past, as far as this—you know, talking about professional like, I feel a little more confident. As far as like doing that, it, I do. I mean, still, I'm still like crafting my first attempt, I like do lots of revisions to like, make sure I'm not making some error and embarrass myself. Um, I'm actually I just haven't written an essay like an English essay that's just like, an analysis or something like that, you know, in a while. I just haven't really, I'm actually, like, in a philosophy class right now. And so I'm going to write some more of these essays. And I'm, it's just been so long that I'm not very	55

		confident with that right now, just because I feel like it's been like over a year since I've written one. Um, but as far as, like, professional type of emails or lab reports, um, I'm like, fairly I feel pretty good about that in my writing, but, um, yeah, it's just been a while since I've written other academics. Um, as far as, I mean, humanitary, humanities type of essays. And so I love that type of writing as well. But like, I just, it's been a while. So, I don't know how confident I feel in that right now. But, um, that's probably where I'm at. (Dory 2021 lines 165-166)	
Transfer	Student talks about taking something from a course (or something learned from experience) and using it in a new, different context.	Interviewer: How would you describe what you learned in [FYC] now that it's been a couple of years, since you've took [FYC]? Carter: I'd say it was practice. Um, it was versatile. Because now that I'm getting more into my major classes, I noticed that a lot of my writing is kind of fitting in the same style. I didn't get, I mean, I got to experiment a lot more in [FYC] than I do now. The different genres, the different styles and objectives. And it helps that I can pull from those instead of just specializing. I can, I like to be a jack of all trades, master of none, and have experiences from other—interdisciplinary learning is like, amazing. I'm all for it. And I think [FYC] helped out a lot with that kind of idea. That kind of basis, that	123

		foundation of diversity in writing. Interviewer: Okay, perfect. Are there particular concepts that you feel like you learn there that you're pulling on now in that sort of interdisciplinary way? Carter: For the public speaking class, I specifically remember my multimedia project for [FYC] was a podcast, but I didn't know how to make a podcast without images. So, I made a YouTube video, where it was just a couple images. So, I learned to incorporate images and think outside the box when it comes to a presentation. (Carter 2021 lines 191-196)	
- Acculturation	Student discusses applying writing knowledge/adjusting writing practices to meet the needs of a new situation. This can relate to writing in different genres or for different audiences. Acculturation is about assimilating to a different culture (typically dominant). As far as writing goes, acculturation requires students to be aware of what the writing "culture" they're entering (genre/audience awareness). They can reflect on how they addressed writing	Interviewer: And is [emailing at work] a different context for you to or tell me how that writing and that communicating compares to what you're doing with in classes for school? Brandon: Um, okay. Yeah, that writing and communicating, I always take a much less formal approach. I know a lot of people like to be very formal in the emails they send on but I just want to get my point across in the quickest way possible as long as it's not, it doesn't come across as rude. So sometimes you know, an extra sentence or two is necessary just so that I don't sound like I'm being bossy or something. But I will even throw in frequently, I'll throw in like a smiley face or something in my emails. LOL or something	14

	situations in the past as they approach this new situation, analyze the factors of a new situation, express awareness of conventions/needs in the situation, and/or intentional (mindful) decisions regarding approaching the situation.	just because I want people to know that I'm not super serious. I'm not strict. I'm, I'm pretty laid back. And I want them to enjoy working with me. Interviewer: That's interesting. Do you feel like? Do you feel like people? How do they respond to that kind of writing? The dean and others? Brandon: They've actually responded very positively. They said, that's actually one of the things that they like about me most, especially as they're looking to hiring someone full time. And I don't know if they're gonna hire me full time necessarily, because I am still student. And they say there's a lot of restrictions that they can't really go around with that. But I was talking with the associate dean the other day, and just about potentially taking over for my boss. And he says that he's gotten a lot of positive reports of people just saying, "Yeah, Brandon, and super easy to work with. He always gets things done, and very on time." (Brandon 2021 lines 90-96)	
- Appropriation	Student mentions how writing knowledge has become integral to the way they approach other writing tasks. Often connected to process.	Interviewer: And you mentioned that you kind of started this outlining process in [FYC]. Did you outline before [FYC] at all? Grace: I did. But honestly, I didn't—so I learned about that a long, long time ago in junior high, and I would use it, but I feel like I became a lot more aggressive once, after [FYC], or	41

		I guess during [FYC] and then after. So, like I really made sure that, so usually when I'm writing papers, a lot of my time is spent on my outline and I would say most of it has been on my outline. And then once I have that, it doesn't take me quite as long to do the actual essay. (Grace 2021 lines 33-34)	
- Autonomisation	Student discusses deconstructing ideas (like audience awareness) from one context to another. (What do I know about this, and how can I use that here?)	Thomas: If I care about the writing piece and if it's like, something that is interesting to me, like a topic that I care about, then I put a lot more thought into the pre-writing aspect is probably more like, probably like 60-40, if that makes sense, like 60% of the time goes into prewriting and thinking about what I'm going to say and like, my arguments and my rhetorical devices. And then I'll just like, quickly write it all once. I like to just do it, sit down once and just get it all out. And then I'll go over it again another time when I have fresh eyes, and read it over and then start doing the grammar and stuff once all of the main things are out of the way. Interviewer: Wow, that's a that's a great process. When did you start doing things like that? Or how do you know how to do that? Thomas: I think I've always— that's a good question. I think that writing 150 helps a lot with making my writing more interesting. I think that I've pretty much started doing that	20

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since high school. I took a AP research and seminar class, which was basically like, a two-year-long research project class. And it was really cool, because it taught us how to organize our information in that, that kind of that way. I've had a lot of practice with writing. But I definitely think it was more fun. After going through writing 150 like, I think that I added more rhetorical devices that made it more of an engaging piece of writing and not so bland, which was fun for me to write it as well, if that makes sense.

Interviewer: And tell me, what do you mean by rhetorical devices?

Thomas: Oh, you know, like, oftentimes, you can, I mean, I think that a lot of rhetorical devices is like, you know, like your repetition. And then you have your alliteration, which is only useful sometimes. But it's usually in a subtle way, like if you use alliteration too much, it just sounds corny, you know, but like, in a subtle way, it can make it so that it sounds interesting or it sounds fluid, you know. But I think repetition is a big one in structure as well as in cot—, in concepts. I love asking good questions, I think is a really good one. I really I like asking, or I try to, I really like introducing, like a personal story to not an extent, if that makes sense. Just a very, like, brief draw, if that makes sense. Instead of like writing out this

		long story, it's just like a quick, you know, maybe one or two sentence discussion about personal application. And enough, those are strict, strictly like rhetorical devices. I know that I remembered what they were a lot better when I was when I was closer to [FYC]. But I've forgotten a lot of them over time. But I think that I do tend to use them just naturally. Even if I forget the actual name of the rhetorical device. (Thomas 2021 lines 68-72)	
- Mobilization of Cognitive Resources	Student discusses how the situation impacts how they are applying writing knowledge in a new context cognitively, affectively, and relationally. (I know these situations are different, so I have to think about this differently, I feel differently, create different relationships.)	Jannett: And so I feel like now I'm learning to take all these skills and put them into action and, in different scenarios that maybe we didn't get to discuss much in [FYC], and so I'm able to write for biology now and use the lingo that they want me to use versus the lingo that I'm going to use in my linguistics class for an essay versus what I'm going to use in my [religion] class in a couple weeks. And I feel like that has been really good for me this semester, just knowing how to change my voice for the genre I'm in. So, I think that's been really good. Interviewer: Okay, good, and tell me, I have these skills that I can now move to different tasks or different contexts, what are those—if you had to name those skills, what would you name them? Jannett: Of course, audience. Like, my biology audience is so different than my [religion]	7

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		audience. Like, in my [religion class] I'm probably not going to talk about evolution, but in my biology [class] I am. Um, so, that, and I think the type of paper I'm writing. So my, I have like a linguistics class where I'm writing an opinion editorial, and my [religion] class is a research paper, and so I've been able to take the skills of like differentiating between those types of writings that I learned in this class and now apply them into like real grades that I'm like getting for important classes. (Jannett 2019 lines 155-157)	
- Translation	Student acknowledges the similarities/differences of two genres/pieces of writing and how they apply previous knowledge into a new context.	Interviewer: As you're [writing that research article for a study], is there anything about that work that reminds you of something you've done before in—writing wise? Jackson: Um, I mean, I've done research papers before. Uh, and I've......Yeah, I mean it's similar to just writing a research paper because there is a lot of background research that you have to do. Um, it's a little bit different because there's a lot of, uh, instead of like trying to just write about what other people have written, you're, I mean, it's more coming up with your own kind of discussion, coming up with your own, uh—I mean, you're the authority figure here, you know? Obviously, you're referring to other people, but instead of only referring to other people, you're also saying, "I know this because I did this research. I am the person that,	14

| | | that can be talking about this," which is a little bit different, um, than I've done in the past. But, um, it's similar to—I mean, since we're talking about [FYC], it's similar to the conference paper kind of, um, because there is the element of going and reading other people's works and, and, uh, studying their, their journals and stuff like that.

(Jackson 2020 lines 50-52) | |

Appendix C: Comprehensive List of Students' Reported Affect and Discussion of Transfer

Key:
P – Positive toward writing/ability to write
N – Negative toward writing/ability to write
M – Mixed affect toward writing/ability to write

	Pseudonym	2019	2020	2021	Discuss Transfer?
1	Alice	M	N	M	Yes
2	Angela	P	P	P	Yes
3	Anna	N	P	P	Yes
4	Avery	P	-	-	No
5	Benjamin	M	M	M	Yes
6	Brandon	P	P	M	Yes
7	Caiden	M	-	M	No
8	Carter	M	M	P	Yes
9	Casey	M	P	P	Yes
10	Chandler	M	-	M	No
11	Chase	P	M	P	Yes
12	Chloe	N	-	P	No
13	Christian	M	-	-	Yes
14	Claudia	-	-	M	Yes
15	Dory	P	P	M	No
16	Ellie	P	P	P	No
17	Emily	M	-	P	Yes
18	Ethan	P	-	P	Yes
19	Evelyn	M	M	-	No
20	Florence	P	P	-	Yes
21	Fredrick	M	P	-	Yes
22	Gideon	M	P	-	No
23	Glen	M	M	-	Yes
24	Grace	P	-	P	Yes
25	Grover	M	-	-	No
26	Jackson	P	P	P	Yes
27	Janette	P	-	P	Yes
28	Jean	M	M	M	Yes
29	Jeffrey	M	-	-	Yes
30	Jim	M	-	-	No
31	Kaleigh	P	P	-	No
32	Kelly	P	-	-	No
33	Kevin	M	M	N	Yes

34	Layne	M	-	-	Yes
35	Liam	M	P	-	No
36	Lisa	P	P	P	Yes
37	Logan	M	M	M	Yes
38	Mason	P	P	P	Yes
39	Michael	P	M	M	Yes
40	Morgan	-	P	M	Yes
41	Neil	N	M	-	Yes
42	Noah	N	N	N	Yes
43	Olivia	-	N	P	Yes
44	Pam	P	P	-	Yes
45	Piper	M	M	M	Yes
46	Raegan	M	M	P	Yes
47	Riley	M	P	-	Yes
48	Rowan	P	M	-	Yes
49	Ryan	P	P	P	Yes
50	Stetson	P	P	P	Yes
51	Thomas	P	M	M	Yes
52	Wyatt	M	P	P	Yes
53	Zoe	M	M	M	No

Appendix D: Years Students Discuss Transfer

Key:
Y – Yes
N – No

	Pseudonym	2019	2020	2021
1	Alice	N	Y	N
2	Angela	N	Y	Y
3	Anna	N	Y	Y
4	Avery	N	N	N
5	Benjamin	N	Y	N
6	Brandon	N	Y	N
7	Caiden	N	N	N
8	Carter	Y	Y	N
9	Casey	Y	Y	N
10	Chandler	N	N	N
11	Chase	Y	Y	Y
12	Chloe	N	N	N
13	Christian	Y	N	N
14	Claudia	N	Y	N
15	Dory	N	N	N
16	Ellie	N	N	N
17	Emily	N	Y	N
18	Ethan	Y	Y	Y
19	Evelyn	N	N	N
20	Florence	Y	N	N
21	Fredrick	Y	N	N
22	Gideon	N	N	N
23	Glen	Y	Y	N
24	Grace	Y	Y	Y
25	Grover	N	N	N
26	Jackson	Y	N	N
27	Janette	Y	Y	N
28	Jean	N	Y	N
29	Jeffrey	Y	N	N
30	Jim	N	N	N
31	Kaleigh	N	N	N
32	Kelly	N	N	N
33	Kevin	N	N	N
34	Layne	Y	N	N

35	Liam	N	N	N
36	Lisa	N	Y	N
37	Logan	N	N	N
38	Mason	Y	N	N
39	Michael	Y	Y	Y
40	Morgan	N	Y	N
41	Neil	N	N	N
42	Noah	N	Y	N
43	Olivia	Y	N	N
44	Pam	Y	N	N
45	Piper	N	Y	Y
46	Raegan	N	Y	N
47	Riley	Y	N	N
48	Rowan	Y	N	N
49	Ryan	N	Y	Y
50	Stetson	Y	Y	N
51	Thomas	N	Y	N
52	Wyatt	N	Y	Y
53	Zoe	N	N	N

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