



June 2022

Editors' Introduction

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Recommended Citation

Gilliland, Betsy and O'Meara, Kat (2022) "Editors' Introduction," *Journal of Response to Writing*. Vol. 8: Iss. 1, Article 1.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/journalrw/vol8/iss1/1>

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JOURNAL OF RESPONSE TO WRITING

Editors' Introduction

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Welcome to the spring 2022 issue of *Journal of Response to Writing*, which starts the journal's 8th year of continuous publication. In this new issue, we introduce two feature articles that add to the breadth of response-related topics covered by the journal, as well as three pieces in a brand-new section we are calling "Teaching Tips."

Both feature articles provide insight into ways that writing instruction can better incorporate aspects of peer- and self-response, with the goal of developing student writers' metacognitive abilities throughout their writing processes. The authors' research studies analyzed classroom interventions that improved students' abilities to read their own and their peers' texts and to think critically about how to improve those texts.

The first article, Leanne Havis's "Improving First- and Second-Year Student Writing Using a Metacognitive and Integrated-Assessment Approach," focuses on university-level writing across the curriculum. Using a quasi-experimental approach, Havis compares student achievement on essay exams and research papers. Students engaged in *exam*

autopsy, a multistep process meant to help students reflect on their written performance and make plans for improving in the future. Havis's analysis shows that the exam autopsy process significantly helped lower division students (first- and second-year students) improve their grades on the next exam or draft of their papers. The process was not as helpful for upper division learners, a finding that Havis attributes in part to these students' previously developed metacognitive skills for approaching college writing.

Developing metacognitive abilities for self-response is also the focus of the second feature article, Katherine E. Batchelor's "Using the 'CARD' Technique to Assist Middle School Students in the Revision Process." In collaboration with a middle school teacher, Batchelor taught a class of seventh-grade students how to use the heuristic "CARD" (a mnemonic for "change, add, rearrange, or delete") while revising the flash fiction stories they were writing. Batchelor observed how the students employed the heuristic both in talking about their own writing processes and in giving feedback to their peers. Young writers used this simple mnemonic to remind themselves of areas in which they could improve their writing.

In addition to these feature articles, we are excited to debut a new "Teaching Tips" section of the journal intended to provide practical advice to writing teachers, teacher educators, writing program administrators, writing center coordinators, writing tutors, and graduate students. These teaching tips are designed for quick reference and modification for a variety of writing and response contexts. Following a brief rationale for the approach, the bulk of the text provides step-by-step guidelines for putting the tip into practice. These brief overviews of activities and lesson plans can be used in writing instruction or for the professional development of writing instructors and tutors.

In this issue, the editors of *JRW* offer teaching tips they have implemented in their own work. The first, co-editor Katherine Daily O'Meara's "Building Response Into Labor-Based Grading Contracts," outlines a beginning-of-term process to give students more equitable

opportunities to meet course expectations. While labor-based grading contracts have been popular for a while in writing courses, they do not always consider how response fits in the process. O'Meara's contribution provides helpful suggestions for writing teachers wishing to implement labor-based contracts in their syllabi. The second teaching tip, associate editor Grant Eckstein's "Preparing Students to Engage With Teacher Feedback," offers suggestions for helping writing students make sense of instructor commentary. Eckstein's recommendations align with the process described in Havis's feature article in this issue. Finally, in "Online Teacher-Student Group Conferences," co-editor Betsy Gilliland, writing with Michelle Kunkel and Mitsuko Suzuki, describes a process for conducting small-group conferences in an online format. These conferences blend the benefits of one-to-one teacher-student conferences with those of peer response, socializing novice writers into the practices of feedback provision.

We hope the new "Teaching Tips" section will allow readers to share quick and easy-to-adapt response-related activities and lessons that they have used in their teaching. Because they will not go through the peer-review process, teaching tips are intended for a quicker turnaround time and more rapid publication. As always, we also encourage readers to share their research and response practices through peer-reviewed feature articles and teaching articles as well. Please continue to think about the myriad ways that response appears in discussions of writing, both in first- and second-language writing in any language, and in contexts ranging from primary school to professional work.

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