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Additional Materials Needed

Students: Source(s) obtained for a specific research project

Learning Goals

At the close of the workshop, students will be able to:

- Describe how effective researchers summarize and respond to sources in process writing.
- Effectively distill and summarize a passage from a provided source.
- Respond independently to a provided source’s argument.

Overview

This workshop is designed for students who have begun identifying a research topic and asks them to bring at least one source toward that project. Students are first introduced to a “Source says/I say” model to allow for both summary of and response to researched sources. Following this introduction, three primary activities take place:

- To extract principles of best practice, students observe and discuss model notes that follow the “Source says/I say” structure.
- Students read a related source together in order to select passages relevant to the provided research question.
- Students draft and share their own note-taking.

Lesson Plan

Introduction

Begin by asking students why researchers (or writers of all kinds) summarize the sources they cite. Frame the workshop as an opportunity to learn strategies for summarizing effectively *in order to* respond, or say something of your own.

Part One: Exploring “They Say/I Say” Models

1. **Introduce the core template of the workshop: “They Say...I Say.”**
 - Write the template on the whiteboard, introducing the “They” as a source, and the “I” as the student writer.
 - Explain that a *two-part note-taking process* that begins with *summary* and ends with *response* will ensure that from the very start, a writer is developing ideas of her own.
2. **Distribute Handout 1, ““They say/I say’ Model 1.”**
 - Introduce the chart as a writer’s notes about her first source: an episode of *The King of Queens* she wants to analyze in a research paper.
 - Guide students through the structure of the chart, prompting them to observe the essential distinction between summarizing and responding.
3. **Distribute Handout 2, ““They say/I say’ Model 2.”**
 - Introduce the chart as the same writer’s notes after a bit more research.
 - Overview the two sources from Handout 2—*So our model writer now has a scholarly source about women and situation comedy (Mellencamp) and an industry source about The King of Queens (from the Hollywood Reporter)*—before framing the next activity:
 - *Now we’re going to read both pages of model notes a little more carefully, in order to identify strategies for effective summary and response.*
4. **As the group reads the models, facilitate discussion and extraction of strategies, recording takeaways on the whiteboard.** Consider prompts such as *Can we identify how the writer decided between a true summary and a direct quote in the “They say...” column? How does the writer connect her ideas or draft to a source? Exactly how is the writer responding to the source—with agreement, disagreement, confusion? What do you notice about the verbs in her notes?*

Elicit principles for **summary** such as:

- **From Handout 1:** Take the time to summarize the entire narrative or argument of a source, but do so as briefly as possible in order to practice keeping summary contained
- **From Handout 1:** Distill telling details or short quotes from a primary source/exhibit to facilitate analysis later (“112 hours of TV,” “had powdered sugar”)
- **From Handout 2:** Extract a direct quote when a scholarly source’s language captures your attention or piques your interest (“contain women”)
- **From Handout 2:** Embed quotes in descriptive summary to facilitate drafting later (“Still, she argues ‘shifts...,’” “She theorizes humor...”)

- **From Handout 2:** Strive for precise verbs (“claim,” “analyze,” “concede,” “theorize”) over ones like “say,” “think,” or “believe”
- **From Handout 2:** Make lists when extracting background facts (“Co-creators...”)

Elicit principles for **response** such as:

- **From Handout 1:** Ask follow-up questions of yourself (“What’s going on here?”)
- **From Handout 1:** Test counter-arguments (“So maybe...But I still”)
- **From Handout 2:** Draw relationships between a source’s exhibits/examples/primary texts and your own (“These TV shows are a lot older than mine...”)
- **From Handout 2:** Use precise verbs to facilitate later drafting (“Mellencamp also distinguishes,” “This explicates”)
- **From Handout 2:** Focus on how a source might serve the needs of your thesis or readers (“readers will need to know...”)

Part Two: Practicing Summary and Response

1. **Distribute Handout 3, excerpts from “Class and Gender in Four Decades of Television Situation Comedy.”** Inform students that after the passage is read aloud, they will complete one line of “They say...I say...”
2. **Read the passage aloud and provide time for independent writing.**
3. **Ask students to share out their summaries and responses;** thereby ensure understanding of best practices.
4. **For the remainder of the workshop, make yourself available for one-to-one assistance as students continue summarizing and responding.** If they have their own sources, all the better; if they don’t, encourage them to continue working with Handout 3.

“They say/I say” Model 1

	They say... (Summary)	I say... (Response)
<p>“Bun Dummy.” By Chris Downey and Tony Sheehan. Dir. Rob Schiller. <i>The King of Queens</i>. CBS. 29 April 2002.</p>	<p>In this episode of <i>The King of Queens</i>, the wife (Carrie) wears her hair in a bun. She repeatedly tells her husband Doug how much she likes her new hairstyle. Doug, however, hates it.</p> <p>At the end of the episode, Carrie agrees the bun wasn't a good look for her and changes her hair back to its original style.</p>	<p>This just seems really weird to me. Carrie is sassy, and makes fun of Doug all the time. But why does she change her mind? Is she just trying to please her husband? What's going on here?</p>
	<p>Carrie makes a number of jokes in this episode about Doug's laziness. She says she must not have seen a movie he's talking about because she doesn't watch “112 hours of TV a week.”</p>	<p>Carrie's sarcastic and maybe even smarter than Doug here. So maybe it's an example of Carrie being in charge. But I still don't think Carrie's ultimately in charge...</p>
	<p>Doug mocks Carrie's hair, and says he'd like her bun better if it “had powdered sugar on it.”</p>	<p>This scene really emphasizes Doug as a typical lazy husband: fat, focused on TV and donuts.</p>

“They say/I say” Model 2

	They say... (Summary)	I say... (Response)
<p>Mellencamp, Patricia. “Situation Comedy, Feminism, and Freud: Discourses of Gracie and Lucy.” <i>Feminist Television Criticism: A Reader</i>. Ed. Charlotte Brunsdon, Julie D’Acci, and Lynn Spigel. New York: Oxford UP, 1997. 60–73.</p>	<p>Mellencamp claims the entire sitcom genre has always had an objective to “contain women.”</p>	<p>Nicely put—might want to borrow these exact words.</p>
	<p>She analyzes <i>The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show</i> and <i>I Love Lucy</i>, and concedes the women sometimes win. Still, she argues “shifts between narrative and comic spectacle” downplay “repressive conditions of the 1950s.”</p>	<p>These TV shows are a lot older than mine and so show some history. Mellencamp also distinguishes between laughing at the wives’ comedy and acknowledging the reality of their marriages.</p>
	<p>She theorizes that humor in these shows replaces “anger, if not rage, with pleasure.”</p>	<p>This explicates one important function of humor in situation comedies.</p>
<p>“With Blue Collar Charm, ‘The King of Queens’ Works.” <i>Hollywood Reporter</i> 25 Aug. 2003: 8.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-creators were Michael Weithorn and David Litt • They had difficulty selling the show to TV execs who once thought if Doug’s job was working-class, “people [would] find him a loser.” • Weithorn’s reply: “for a couple to have their own house, for him to have a union job, he’s living the American dream.” 	<p>Important background; to be convinced of my thesis, my readers will need to know the terms on which the show was conceived and how the creators view Doug, Carrie, their relationship, and their class status.</p>

Critical Studies in Mass Communication, Vol. 9, Issue 4 (1992)

“Class and Gender in Four Decades of Television Situation Comedy”

by Richard Butsch

...Despite their overall scarcity, some working-class men portrayed on television, such as Ralph Kramden and Archie Bunker, have become sedimented as embodiments of a broad character type in American culture. In fact, many blue-collar series became television classics (*The Honeymooners*, *The Flintstones*, *All in the Family*), providing a vivid cultural type of the working-class male as an inept bumbler and even a buffoon.

Situation comedy is built around a humorous situation that is resolved during the half hour. In working-class series the character typically caught in the situation (usually of his own making) is the man, and he usually has to be helped out of the situation by his wife. Humor is built around some variant of the working-class man's stereotypic ineptitude, immaturity, stupidity, lack of good sense, or emotional outburst, traits that have been culturally defined as feminine or childlike. While television did not invent this type, it certainly has cemented its position and has helped it supplant the country bumpkin in our panoply of cultural types.

The characterization is accentuated by contrasts with the wives and children in these working-class series, as well as with the middle-class men in other series. Working-class wives and often their children are typically portrayed as more intelligent, rational, sensible, responsible, and mature than their husbands or fathers. Mother, not father, typically knows best. The children are often smarter than their fathers and their successes contrasted with their fathers' failures. Father was at best benign but inferior, at worst an embarrassment. The working-class man cannot fulfill his “superior” status as adult male....