

ENGL 339 DIGITAL WRITING FOUND OBJECT PROJECT (3-PARTS)

Overview: This is a three-part, multi-modal, independent *and* collaborative project based on a found object in our local community that includes the following elements:

- An individually-authored creative (fiction or nonfiction) **visual story**;
- A **group podcast** created with 3 classmates whose found objects have some relevance to each other that discusses the cultural meaning of the connection between the individual objects and stories;
- A **collaborative cultural story**, created with your podcast group. The cultural story will involve the curation of the *revised individual visual essays* and the *group podcast* as well as writing an **introduction page** that synthesizes all of the individual elements of your story to make a meaningful contribution to the community.

Objectives:

- Evaluate cultural texts to communicate how they produce *meaning*.
- Discern and deploy your own strengths and interests while also taking creative risks.
- Work collaboratively to best utilize individual participants' strengths and interests.
- Discern and synthesize relationships between your ideas and those of your peers.
- Deploy carefully drafted, revised, and edited writing stylistically appropriate to its purpose.
- Create cogent, focused content that presents ideas in multiple modes, including written, visual, and oral.
- Curate multiple modes of communication to participate actively, intentionally, and thoughtfully in the public sphere.

PART I: VISUAL STORY

Overview: Find an object in your environment that inspires you. Create or find images of it and related content (creative commons or otherwise legally available). Construct a *story* surrounding that object that uses the visual mode *equally* in conjunction with aural or linguistic modes. In other words, create a video or a digital story. Purpose and genre (creative fiction, creative non-fiction, journalism, documentary, memoir, etc.) are entirely up to you, but the story should be focused and tightly constructed.

Assignment Guidelines and Instructions:

1. Your story can take any form you want but must have a dominant visual element (this can be in any medium, including artistic or performative, but it must be digitized ultimately.)
2. Your project must also have either a linguistic or aural narrative component (it might have both, it might also have a gestural component, but only linguistic or aural is required).

3. Choose a format that you can revise and edit. For example, if you don't feel comfortable shooting video and editing it over and over until you get it right, you will probably want to go with a linguistic/visual tool or content aggregator rather than creating your own film. If you want to make a video, you might want to [sign up for a Digital Media Lab workshop](#).
4. Video digital stories should be about 5 minutes long. Stories with linguistic text should be about 1000 words long. *Note that a 1000-word script translates to about 5 minutes of video.*
5. *A complete draft of your **Individual Visual Story** should be posted to your website (if it's possible to embed, do that; if not, a well contextualized link will suffice) and linked to the course website by **11:30 a.m. on Thursday, 3/16**.* Be sure your post or page is marked for "public" viewing and include a byline or, if you prefer, a pseudonym. Draft and revise offline before you post. Write a brief intro and provide a link to your story on your course website portal.
6. Be prepared to give a 1-2-minute "flash" presentation of your completed story to the class on **Thursday 3/16**.
 - We will reserve about 1-2 minutes for responses to each post/talk. Each student will be allotted 3 minutes total for presentation and feedback.
 - Classmates will provide feedback on your entry via WordPress comments *on the course website*. You are expected to provide a comment for *everyone's* story (yes, I will read them all and count them all AND like the ones I think are especially helpful!). Provide comments that will help your peers as they revise for their final submission. You can go back and add/revise after our flash talks are over and you've had a chance to read or view more carefully and reflect, but get your comments up there by **9:00 am** the day after our workshop, **Friday 3/17**, since everyone has to revise within a week. WordPress will date/time stamp your comments.

Submission Instructions:

Post your story (or a link to it if necessary) on your *own* website. Write a brief introduction and provide a link to your story on the *course* website by **Thursday, 3/16 at 11:30 a.m.** Revise for evaluation by **Thursday, 3/23**. Once your revisions are complete, you will also need to submit the **revised draft or script of your story online to Canvas**. Your work will be checked for plagiarism via Turn It In before I comment and upload the graded entry to Canvas. I will view the story online, but I will comment on your narrative based on the script submitted to Canvas.

Grading:

Stories will be evaluated in terms of:

- how well you develop and communicate a specific, original, insightful, provocative **purpose**;
- how you **organize** your narrative and how well it flows;
- how gracefully and insightfully you make use of plenty of high quality evidence, including **detailed visuals** and supporting **linguistic or aural narrative**;
- your **multimodal** fluency;
- the **grammatical clarity** and **stylistic** finesse of your writing or speech (this includes things like spelling, punctuation, diction, proofreading, etc. appropriate to your purpose, style, and tone OR pronunciation, enunciation, pace, diction, etc. in spoken narrative).

PART II: GROUP PODCAST

Overview: Find 3-4 of your classmates' stories that you think have some meaningful relationship to your own and create a carefully written, edited, and executed podcast discussing that relationship. As a group, formulate one question that synthesizes your objects and reveals their combined potential cultural meaning. Write a script or outline and record a 10 to 12-minute podcast addressing the question and the combined meaning of the objects. Discuss the relevance of asking this cultural question: Who does it impact? Who benefits from this question being asked or, conversely, remaining unanswered or even unacknowledged? How might the objects you've chosen speak to or address this question as well as offer possible answers or solutions?

Assignment Guidelines and Instructions:

1. Write a 1000-1500-word script, outline, or series of questions for a carefully crafted, well organized 10-12-minute podcast. Clarity is key. Keeping your audience in mind, craft a focused discussion rather than a stiff reading or free-for-all conversation. The degree and quality of thought and editing put into the script or outline will be evaluated and will impact the final outcome of your podcast. Include the following elements:
 - introduce your audience to the objects and the questions/issues each *individual's* visual story raised without re-hashing the stories themselves,
 - explain to your audience how those individual stories can be synthesized by considering them as part of a larger cultural narrative,
 - develop a discussion of the implications of the larger question/narrative that emerges from that synthesis,
 - and consider how the found objects might help us answer or address that larger issue.
2. Your final podcast should be as free of editing mistakes and noise as possible (i.e. check out snowball mics from the Digital Media Lab and record in a quiet, carpeted room or reserve the Digital Media lab sound booth).
3. The podcast should last at least 10 and no more than 12 minutes, including audio transitions and sound effects.
4. We will have a very brief introduction to the free, downloadable sound-editing software Audacity in class, but you can use any recording/editing tools you want. If you need help with editing, sign up for a DML consultation session when student workers who are familiar with Audacity will be in the lab.
5. Your discussion should include each group member's viewpoint. That is, every group member's voice and opinion must be heard equally during your podcast. Each member of the group should speak for at least 2 and no more than 3 minutes (not continuously necessarily).

Posting and Submission Instructions:

A *complete draft* of your **Podcast** should be posted to your *final project* page on the *course website* **by the beginning of class on the date your group signed up for on the schedule**. Be sure your page is marked for "public" viewing and include a byline with ALL of your group members' names or pseudonyms. We will listen to the complete podcast in class and

give feedback on the day the draft is due. Also, submit your script to Canvas on *draft workshop day*. This is a group assignment so only one person in the group needs to upload the script. **FINAL revised** podcasts should be **posted** on the *course website* on **Tuesday 4/25** by the beginning of the class period as part of the complete **collaborative cultural story** (see Part III below. You will submit the *revised script* of your podcast to Canvas at that time *in the same document* as the narrative of your introduction page.)

Grading:

Podcasts will be evaluated in terms of:

- how well you develop and communicate a specific, original, insightful, provocative **purpose**;
- how you **organize** your discussion and how well it flows, including the use of transitions;
- how gracefully and insightfully you make use of plenty of high quality (specific, relevant) examples or **evidence** to support your points rather than relying entirely on generalizations;
- the **verbal clarity** and **stylistic** finesse of your discussion (this includes things like pronunciation, enunciation, pace, and diction as well as use of well-planned transitions using music or other sounds. Presenters should speak coherently, not rush or ramble unnecessarily, not simply read text, and all be given equal time).

PART III: COLLABORATIVE CULTURAL STORY

Overview: Your **collaborative cultural story** will be created with your podcast group. The cultural story will involve *curating* the revised individual visual essays and *revising* the group podcast as well as *crafting* an **introduction page** that synthesizes all of the individual elements of your story to make a meaningful contribution to the community.

Assignment Guidelines and Instructions:

1. Write a 1000-1250-word introduction page to your collaborative story for the course website. Genre and structure are up to you, but your introduction should:
 - *Briefly* summarize the individual group members' stories and contain hyperlinks to each.
 - *Briefly* summarize the content and purpose of your revised podcast.
 - You will likely generate ideas for your landing pages as you work on your podcasts, but be sure you create *distinct* linguistic content for this introduction. Clarify what you see as the cultural meaning that emerges from juxtaposing the individual stories and the podcast. For example, this might entail writing an analytical introduction that details the themes of your stories and podcast and explains how they all fit under a larger umbrella theme, or it might mean writing a new story that acknowledges the influence of or otherwise weaves in the individual stories and the podcast.
2. We will workshop the collaborative cultural story introduction pages in class on the dates listed on the schedule. Class members will be expected to respond with constructive comments in the WordPress comments section.

Posting and Submission Instructions:

A *complete draft* of your *introduction page* should be posted to your *final project page* on the *course website* **by the workshop date your group signed up for on the schedule**. Be sure your page is marked for "public" viewing and include a byline with ALL of your group members' names or pseudonyms. The **final** revised version of your introduction page as well as any revisions to the podcast are **due Tuesday, 4/25**. One group member should *submit* the *revised transcript* of your podcast *and, in the same document, the narrative* of your introduction page to Canvas. If one group member could make a combined .pdf of the webpage itself plus the podcast transcript, that would be great (the DML has Adobe software that allows you to manipulate and combine .pdf files if you do not have the full version of Adobe Acrobat on your personal device). I will view the collaborative story and listen to the revised podcast online, but I will comment on your narratives based on the document submitted to Canvas.

Grading:

Collaborative stories will be evaluated in terms of:

- how well you develop and communicate a specific, original, insightful, provocative **purpose**;
- how you **organize** your narrative and how well it flows;
- how gracefully and insightfully you **integrate** specific references to the individual visual stories and the podcast as well as provide specific **examples** for any new content;

- your **multimodal** fluency (visual interest, spatial organization, etc.);
- the **grammatical clarity** and stylistic finesse (this includes things like spelling, punctuation, diction, proofreading, etc.).