Secondary Students' Proficiency with and Knowledge of

Process and Genre Approaches to Writing

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

School of Education in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

University of Pittsburgh

2022

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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March 1, 2022

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University of Pittsburgh, 2022

The ongoing conversation around why secondary students struggle with writing through and after high school is wide-ranging; however, students who are successful with writing in high school are more likely to be successful with writing after high school. Writing skills are necessary in both academic and professional contexts because many problems of the world involve complex solutions that require written communications. The writing-as-process movement of the 20th Century moved writing instruction toward a paradigm shift away from the product approach to writing, a focus on the written product rather than on how the learner should approach the process of writing, to more student-centered approaches that place greater value on reflections on the process of writing and the social context in which student writing happens. Process approaches to writing are a combination of dynamic, cyclical strategies that develop students' proficiency with and mastery of stages of writing. Genre approaches to writing instruction can provide resources that help students develop stronger social and cultural connections to their academic writing, such as devices for categorizing and arranging information, opportunities for purposeful interactions among peers, and understandings about how language is used to make meaning in various context. Simply stated, a process/genre approach to instruction blends teaching a process for creating texts with recognizing the way language functions in specific social contexts for specific goals and for specific audiences. This study used interview questions and argumentative essays to examine 6th

thru 12th grade students' proficiency with and knowledge of stages of the writing process and argumentative essay genre features.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Preface

1.0 Overview

I start from the premise that in order to understand what is involved in students' writing,
it is important to have a sense of who the student-writers are
and the representational resources they are potentially drawing on,
that is, the language resources they draw on for their meaning making.

—Theresa M. Lillis

1.1 Writing Instruction

Most secondary school students are expected to complete a variety of academic writing tasks. Although some of these tasks are commonly practiced academic writing tasks, such as writing to organize and remember information, to reflect on concepts or skills learned, and to analyze texts and ideas, many of these tasks remain written products teachers use as a primary means to assess students' proficiency with and mastery of course content. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, 75% of both 12th and 8th graders lack proficiency in writing; and 40% of students who took the ACT writing exam in the high school class of 2016 lacked the writing skills necessary to successfully complete a college-level English composition class (Goldstein, 2017). The ongoing conversation around why secondary students struggle with writing through and after high school is wide-ranging; however, students who are successful with writing in high school are more likely to be successful with writing after high school.

Writing skills are necessary in both academic and professional contexts because many problems of the world involve complex solutions that require written communications. For example, writing skills are often associated with employment because written documentation, such

as emails, presentations, reports, and memos, are common in an ever-increasing number of jobs, regardless of organization type or job title (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013). Moreover, many employers report taking applicants' writing skills into consideration for hiring and promoting salaried employees (National Commission on Writing).

To better understand how to teach writing, researchers have studied the process of writing informed by cognitive models of expert writers who draw on (1) knowledge about writing topics, (2) knowledge about the needs of the audience, and (3) knowledge about text structure, organization, and language needed to complete specific writing tasks (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013). Current scholarship on process and genre approaches to writing (e.g., Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Graham, & Perin, 2011; Graham, & Sandmel, 2011) suggests that, to create well-written texts, students need to understand both the process of writing and the differences between genres (discussed in 2.0 Literature Review) so that they demonstrate proficiency with and mastery of (1) stages involved in producing a piece of writing instead of the characteristics of a final piece of writing and (2) writing for specific audiences and identifying how their readers' prior knowledge and assumptions can influence their interpretation of a piece of writing (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Liang, 2015).

1.2 My Stakeholders

The setting for my Scholarly Inquiry Project was Fusion Academy Tysons (Tysons), an alternative one-to-one college preparatory private school for 6th thru 12th grade students. Fusion Academy (Fusion) was founded as Fusion Learning, in 1989, by Michelle Rose Gilman, a teacher and educational therapist, with eight students in San Diego, California to be a supplemental

tutoring and educational facility (Fusion Education Group, 2018). Today, Fusion has multiple locations, including my place of practice, Tysons that provide a personalized education by addressing the social, emotional, and academic needs of each student with a one-to-one instruction and a mentoring approach. The Fusion learning model primarily consist of courses with twenty-five 50-munute sessions that meet twice a week—Monday and Wednesday, Tuesday and Thursday, or twice on Friday—with the Fusion mission promise of "a personalized education experience:" one teacher and one student in each session (Fusion Academy, 2019, p. 4). Note: at Fusion, the term *session* does not refer to a traditional classroom learning experience of 20-40 students and a single teacher; instead, *session* refers to a one-to-one classroom learning experience of one student and a single teacher where the teacher can guide a student's learning within the student's zone of proximal development by nurturing and challenging the distinctive developmental needs of the student.

For the 2020-2021 spring semester, I taught eleven courses of English, ranging from English 6 to English 12, to nine different students. Many of my students were not successful in traditional, teacher-centered learning environments where the focus for writing is on students' written products rather than on how students should approach the process of writing (Graham & Perin, 2011). While most of my students' academic skills are at or above grade level, many of my students struggle with their proficiency with and mastery of stages of the writing process and differences between genres in their academic writing.

1.3 My Problem of Practice

I explored how my students' proficiency with, and knowledge of, stages of the writing process and argumentative essay genre features shaped their academic writing. I studied which stages of the writing process and which argumentative essay genre features my students struggle with and which they excel at and made a professional development presentation suggesting changes in writing pedagogy for my school. By stages of the writing process, I mean commonly recognized stages of writing: (1) pre-writing, (2) drafting, (3) revising, (4) editing, and (5) publishing. By argumentative essay genre features, I mean awareness of purpose, awareness of structure, and awareness of how readers' prior knowledge and assumptions can influence their interpretation of a piece of writing (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Liang, 2015). By academic writing, I mean students' written products used by teachers as a primary means to assess students' proficiency with and knowledge of course content.

Process writing approaches are student-centered and focus on the nature of writing and the way writing is taught by emphasizing the importance of the dynamic nature of writing processes by viewing writing as a recursive, iterative process (Hyland, 2003). Another important area of research in academic writing is genres of communication. Every genre or kind of communication establishes interpersonal relationships, conveys meaning (content), and is organized in particular ways (Paltridge, 2001). Genre theory posits that the spoken or written language that is expected in a particular context depends on its sociocultural context, in particular, its audience and its purpose. As a high school teacher, I often differentiate instruction for students who have trouble clearly organizing and expressing their ideas in writing. This study examined my students' awareness of stages of writing process for, and differences between genre features of, argumentative essays (discussed in 2.0 Literature Review).

Fusion uses an Understanding by Design framework for curriculum planning that aligns student abilities to course content, assignments, and assessments. Nine themes within Fusion student abilities are related to the process/genre scope of this study: (1) Argument, in student abilities for English 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12; (2) Audience, in student abilities for English 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11; (3) Process, in student abilities for English 6, 7, 8, 11, and 12; (4) Purpose, in student abilities for English 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12; (5) Organization, in student abilities for English 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12; (6) Word choice, in student abilities for English 7, 9, 10, and 12; (7) Language, in student abilities for English 6, 8, 9, 10, and 12; (8) Revise, in student abilities for English 6, 8, 9, 10, and 12; and (9) Edit, in student abilities for English 8, 9, 10, and 12 (Fusion Fusionology, 2019). The problem I encounter in my daily practice is 6th-12th grade students who have an uncertainty about how to approach writing assignments because they struggle with, or have uncertainties about, either/both writing processes or/and awareness of purpose, structure, and social context.

2.0 Literature Review

Teachers and scholars of writing generally agree that no one course can teach students all they need to know about writing, that writing in a new discipline nearly always requires adjustment— frequently messy, and even that learning to write well is a lifelong project.

—Alfred E Guy Jr

Much of the literature about student writing instruction discusses how the writing-as-process movement of the 20th Century moved writing instruction toward a paradigm shift away from the product approach to writing, a focus on the written product rather than on how the learner should approach the process of writing, to more student-centered approaches that place greater value on reflections on the process of writing and the social context in which student writing happens. Some supporters of the product approach to writing argue that it enhances students' writing precisely because the product approach to writing is teacher-centered, which suggest that knowledge about language structure and writing development are results of the imitation of input provided by teachers (Badger & White, 2000). Teachers and researchers who advocate for product approaches to writing, have found that increasing students' knowledge about the writing process through student-centered instruction, such as process and genre approaches, enhances students' writing (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013). Writing has been proven to be an essential tool for developing learning—as a foundational skill that can boost students' comprehension and achievement across subject areas; as a method for assessing students' learning; and as a way for students to gather, explore, refine, organize, and demonstrate their understandings (Graham, Hebert, Sandbank, & Harris, 2016). My literature review was guided by three review questions: (1) what are process approaches to writing instruction; (2) what are genre approaches to writing instruction; and (3) what is a process/genre approach to writing instruction?

2.1 What are Process Approaches to Writing Instruction?

Simply put, process approaches to writing instruction teaches processes for creating texts. Process approaches helps students conceptualize writing, not as single strategy but, as a dynamic collection of strategies within a cyclical process that develops and adapts over time as students learn to place more emphasis on the organization, language, and text structure of their writing (Hayes. 1996). In their meta-analysis, Graham & Sandmel (2011) point out that "although there is no universally agreed-on definition for the process approach to writing, there are a number of underlying principles that are common to it…cycles of planning (setting goals, generating ideas, organizing ideas), translating (putting a writing plan into action), and reviewing (evaluating, editing, revising)" similarly, much of the literature on process approaches to writing (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Graham & Perin, 2011; Badger & White, 2000; Barnhisel Stoddard & Gorman, 2012; Lipson, Mosenthal, Daniels, & Woodside-Jiron, 2000; Guy Jr., 2009) view writing as a nonlinear, recursive procedure of (1) prewriting, (2) drafting, (3) revising, (4) editing, and (5) publishing, which will serve as stages of the process approach to writing instruction examined in this study (p. 396).

Process approaches to writing are a combination of dynamic, cyclical strategies that develop students' proficiency with and mastery of stages of writing. Stages of writing are dynamic, cyclical strategies because they can occur at any point during the writing process as writers move back and forth between several stages while creating texts. Pre-writing involves introducing techniques that help students explore and engage with topics, such as outlines, storyboards, group discussions, graphic organizers, and the like, to develop a writing plan (Graham & Perin, 2011; Badger & White, 2000; Guy Jr., 2009). Then, rather than asking students to compete a finished product right away, students are asked for multiple drafts of their text. Drafting is focused on

getting students ideas on paper and organizing their information, details, and genres (discussed later in this literature review) logically (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Barnhisel Stoddard & Gorman, 2012; Guy Jr., 2009). With each draft, students are asked to refer to their previous draft(s) and pre-writing plan(s) to make revisions as needed (Graham & Perin, 2011; Lipson, Mosenthal, Daniels, & Woodside-Jiron, 2000; Guy Jr., 2009). Revising gives students a chance to think about their reader by considering how a reader might perceive their text (Lipson, Mosenthal, Daniels, & Woodside-Jiron, 2000; Lillis, 2001). My experience has been that revising works best when students have time during the writing process to let their texts sit, for a day or two, to be better able to return to their texts later and reevaluate their texts with a fresh perspective.

While revising is focused on making texts clear and concise, editing is focused on making texts reflect current conventions by checking texts for format, grammar, sentence structure, word choice, and the like (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Hayes, 1996). Publishing is when students release their texts to share their ideas with others. While publishing can include the Internet, essays, talk backs, personal narratives, and the like, most students publish their texts by submitting them to their teacher (Guy, Jr., 2009; Lillis, 2001). In their meta-analysis, Graham & Perin (2011) discuss how "explicitly teaching adolescents strategies for planning, revising, and/or editing had a strong impact on the quality of their writing," which can have a major impact on students' understandings the process of writing as they move back and forth between stages of writing while creating texts (p. 463). Moreover, process approaches support additional revisions and edits of additional drafts, in response to feedback obtained from readers, which functions as recommendations for additional revision and edits of multiple drafts; this way, feedback pushes students through the writing process and onto the eventual end-product (Badger & White, 2000; Graham & Sandmel, 2011).

My experience has been that most teachers of writing have some experience with process approaches to writing instruction from either/both (1) classroom experiences, such as leading students in writing exercises, having students trade early drafts of writing assignments with classmates, guiding students' revisions from feedback, and the like, or/and (2) personal experiences, such as engaging in writing activities, trading early drafts of writing with peers, revising writing after meeting with colleagues, and the like, that involved various stages of the writing process. Moreover. most teachers are aware that both proficiency with and mastery of stages of the writing process are critical for developing student writers because teachers use writing tasks, such as essays, talk backs, personal narratives, and the like, as a primary means to asses students' proficiency with and mastery of course content (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Hayes, 1996). Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013), examined fifth-grade students' knowledge of writing processes, which differed from previous research (Barbiero, 2011; Graham et al., 1993; Wong et al., 1989) by focusing exclusively on fifth-grade students because prior studies either did not include or did not separate fifth-grade students' data (p.568-569). Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013) used a writing knowledge interview to assess students' general knowledge of writing processes by asking students questions "to identify good writers (Item 1: What do good writers do when they write?), identify why writing can be difficult (Item 2: Why do you think some kids have trouble writing?), and identify how to plan and write a paper (Item 3: When asked to write a paper for class or homework, what kinds of things can you do to help plan and write your paper?)" (p. 572).

Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013) found that what students know about writing processes can vary depending on (1) students' familiarity and proficiency with individual stages of the writing process and (2) students' ability to navigate between all, and conceptualize the

complimentary nature of, stages of the writing process. Findings from the Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013) study show a need for teachers to help students develop writing processes that do not rely solely on "gathering information, organizing it, and writing text" but also "include goal setting/planning as well as reviewing and revising…multiple strategies for carrying out the basic processes involved in writing and how these strategies and processes work together" (p. 586).

It should be noted that opponents of process approaches to writing argue that process approaches are too narrowly focused on the skills and processes of writing without considering the impact of social and cultural influences on different texts (Badger & White, 2000; Barnhisel, Stoddard, & Gorman, 2012). In addition, opponents of a process approach to writing argue that a process approach sees writing as involving the same process regardless of audience and content of the text (Badger & White, 2000). Graham & Sandmel (2011) support the idea that "the process approach to writing instruction is an effective, but not particularly powerful approach for teaching writing to students in general education classrooms;" but, for students who struggle with the writing process, much of the literature on process approaches to writing "does not support the claim that the process writing approach is an effective method" for developing students' proficiency with and mastery of the writing process (p. 404). At the same time, as Graham, & Sandmel (2011) point out, "the answer to our question about the effectiveness of the process writing approach depends on who is assessed and on what outcome" (p. 404). With these arguments in mind, this study will explore 6th-12th grade students' proficiency with and understanding of writing processes to make recommendations for changes in writing pedagogy and curriculum in my school.

2.2 What are Genre Approaches to Writing Instruction?

Simply stated, genre approaches to writing instruction recognize the way language functions in specific social contexts for specific goals and for specific audiences. Although genres might be expected to be predictable and relatively stable, genres evolve and adapt in response to changes in the context, goals, and audiences for which they are used, and most genre theorist agree that "genre is a category that describes the relation of the social purpose of text to language structure" although discussions about genre are dynamic (Paltridge, 2001; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993, p. 2). This focus on language function helps students respond to recurring communicative situations by providing a framework to orient and interpret audience, context, and the impact of the social and cultural on different texts (Paltridge, 2001; Badger & White, 2000; Barnhisel, Stoddard, & Gorman, 2012). In other words, students' academic writing, like all writing, is a social act that takes place within a learning environment, which has a history, a culture, values, and practices (Lillis 2001).

Often, students struggle with their academic writing when their understandings about the specific social, cultural values and practices of the contexts they are learning within are juxtaposed with their understandings about the specific social, cultural values and practices of the contexts they are living within (McCann, 2014; Lillis, 2001). Beck & Jeffrey (2009) explored high school students' understandings of the requirements and difficulties of academic writing in the subject areas of History and English through the genre lens of two questions: (1) what kinds of understanding do high school students studying History and English associate with writing in the genres appropriate to each subject; and (2) what difficulties do these students experience when attempting to achieve such understanding? In their study of approximately 400 9–12 grade students at the College Academy High School, Beck & Jeffrey (2009) found that students struggle with

expressing their opinions as "abstract generalizations" because students struggle with transferring their understandings from content, process, to purpose, genre (p. 260). Genre approaches to writing instruction provide ways for responding to specific contexts by providing a frame to orient and to interpret communicative events, which can provide students access to socially powerful forms of language with the knowledge and academic writing skills needed to communicate successfully within particular academic subjects (Kress, 1993; Paltridge, 2001).

Genre approaches to writing instruction (1) build from genre theory by helping students analyze language use in a specific context or text type, such as a science lab report, and (2) have the social justice goal of providing access for all students to the privileged genres required for educational success by teaching explicitly about the ways purpose and meaning are constructed in a specific genre or text type. As Hyland (2003) points out, genre approaches to writing instruction address the limitations of process approaches—not addressing the ways meanings are socially constructed because they fail to consider the forces outside an individual which help guide purposes, establish relationships, and ultimately shape writing—by offering students explicit and systematic explanations of how language functions in social contexts. Genre approaches to writing instruction also help students on a more meta level to understand how genres relate to one another and their social and cultural purposes and meanings for communicating (Hyland, 2003; Rose, 2010). One approach to genre pedagogy was designed in the late 20th century at the Sydney School through a series of large-scale action research projects about how teachers should put more focus on what language does, how language is used to structure students' cultural and social experiences and learning, and how genre theory approaches to thinking about language focus on cultural and social dimensions used to create language and text (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993).

Genre approaches to writing instruction can provide resources that help students develop stronger social and cultural connections to their academic writing, such as devices for categorizing and arranging information, opportunities for purposeful interactions among peers, and understandings about how language is used to make meaning in various context. As Hyland (2003) points out, traditional pedagogy gives little consideration to "the ways meanings are socially constructed [because] they fail to consider the forces outside the individual which help guide purposes, establish relationships, and ultimately shape writing" (p.18). Unescapably, assessment of students' intelligence and scholastic achievement are too often accomplished from judgements about students' genre use because society and, as part of society, schools place value on genre use that is characteristic of professional, technical, and bureaucratic institutions (Schleppegrell, 2004; Kress, 1993). The Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013) study, which examined fifth-grade students' knowledge about different genres, was the first to examine students' knowledge of three genres, stories, argumentative texts, and informational reports, by asking students interview questions to assess their knowledge of each genre: "Suppose you had a friend who had to write a _____ for a class. If your friend asked you what kinds of things are included in a _____, what would you tell him/her the parts of a _____ are?" (p. 572). Interviewers replaced each blank with story, argumentative argument, and informational report and found that students provided few details about purpose, function nor "how specific aspects of a particular type of text were connected" (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013, p. 584). Findings from the Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013) study show a need for teachers to help students think about how genres "are alike and different" (p. 586).

The teacher's role in genre approaches to writing instruction is to support the student in learning through an awareness of target genres and explicit and conscious language choices. In

"Curriculum Genres: Planning for Effective Teaching," Christie (1993) discusses how, to better guide student learning, teachers should put more focus on what language does and how language is used to structure students' cultural and social experiences and learning, which relates to the scope of my problem of practice because, while most of my students' in my place of practice have academic skills that are at or above grade level, many of my students struggle with their proficiency with and understanding of stages of the writing process and genres in their academic writing. Ramos (2015), in a study of the effect of genre-based Reading to Learn instructional approaches on adolescent English language learners' argumentative essays, found "that an improvement occurred from pretest to posttest for almost every participant," which suggest that genre approaches to writing instruction help students develop "control over the linguistic resources that function to write an academic-style argumentative essay" (p. 29; p. 30). Genres are often related to each other, such as in an academic essay, which may draw from and cite many other genres— academic lectures, journal articles, and the like (Paltridge, 2001). Often, the teacher's role in genre-based instructional approaches is to help students recognize the complementary nature of genres.

2.3 What is a Process/Genre Approach to Writing Instruction?

Simply stated, a process/genre approach to instruction blends teaching a process for creating texts with recognizing the way language functions in specific social contexts for specific goals and for specific audiences. A process/genre approach to writing instruction posits that students have an aptitude for witting, but students need social interaction with an audience to help develop the processes of and the skills for writing (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Liang, 2015). Within a process/genre approach to writing, writing is characterized as (1) ongoing, as a

text needs several recursive steps to complete; (2) focused, as a text always develops towards its purpose; and (3) social, as a text is a shared experience (Rose, 2010; Cope & Kalantzis, 2004; Hyland, 2003).

Badger & White (2000) point out four advantages of a process/genre approach to writing instruction are that: (1) it gives "importance to the kind of texts writers produce and why such texts are produced;" (2) it nurtures the myriad of ways "what learners bring to the writing classroom contributes to the development of writing ability;" (3) it recognizes "that writing takes place in a social situation, and is a reflection of a particular purpose;" and (4) it acknowledges "that learning can happen consciously through imitation and analysis" (p. 157). Ferretti & Lewis (2019) found "considerable evidence that explicit instruction grounded in genre expectations can support the strategic self-regulation of the writing process" because writing is a method of discovery: process helps writers to discover who, what, when, where, and how while genre helps writers to discover why (p. 1426).

Because knowledge about process and genre inform each other, a process/genre approach to writing allows writers to see how texts are written differently according to purpose—the social function for which a text is created, audience—the members of social groups for which a text is created, and meaning—the implicit, inferred, and embedded social constructs shared when a text is created (Rose, 2010; Hyland, 2003; Cope & Kalantzis, 2004). One example of how knowledge about process and genre inform each other within a process/genre approach to writing is writing a resumé cover letter for a job with a nonprofit organization. To persuade the reader(s) of the cover letter to give the writer an interview, the writer must work through a process of planning, to go from the initial purpose for the cover letter, a presentation of qualifications and experience; drafting and revising, to work through content, tone, organization, text structure, and language

choice adjustments for audience; and editing, to get to the final purpose for the cover letter, determined by the purpose and audience appropriate for the social context, a job with a nonprofit organization (Graham & Sandmel, 2011). Because drafting, revising, editing, and writing for specific audience are critical parts of a process/genre approach to writing, students make multiple drafts after identifying the initial purpose of the text instead of turning in a preliminary product straight away (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Liang, 2015). Teachers offer their students multiple opportunities for feedback—input from an audience to the writer—such as written or oral feedback from teachers and peers that can be used for additional drafting, revising, and editing (Badger & White, 2000).

In one study of a process/genre approach, Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013), examined "whether knowledge about the process of writing predicted knowledge of each of the writing genres studied" and relationships between writing processes and genre knowledge (p. 569). Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013) found that "students who possessed greater substantive knowledge about [the writing process] knew more about story, persuasive, and informational texts" and how process and genre inform each other (p. 585). Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013) noted that "nearly two-thirds" of students focused on three aspect of the writing process" gaining information to write about, organizing ideas for writing, and drafting the composition" that, according to Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013), may be a result of how students learned about the writing process during their elementary school years depending on (1) which stages of the writing process teachers focused on and (2) which stages of the writing process students struggle with and which they excel at (p. 583). Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013) argue that the best way to help students develop knowledge about how process and genre inform each other "involves teacher-directed reading of multiple examples of specific types of text, with

the teacher and students identifying, naming, and discussing specific features within and across text, followed by writing and sharing text that contains those features" (p. 586).

Within a process/genre approach to writing, teachers support student writers in three ways: (1) as audience by providing authentic responses for the ideas, feelings, and meanings student writers express, (2) as assistants by providing guidance to help students' make effective process and genre decisions, and (3) as evaluators by providing comprehensive assessments and feedback that helps student writers develop their writing skills (Swanson, Wanzek, McCulley, Stillman-Spisak, Vaughn, Simmons, Fogerty, & Hairrell, 2015; Paltridge, 2001). My experience has been to provide all three ways of support for students, who are often fearful of repeating stages in their writing process—if they are drafting but find gaps in their pre-writing notes, they try to fill in gaps while drafting rather than return to pre-writing to fill in gaps—most often because (1) they are stuck in a linear perception of stages of the writing process or (2) they are concerned with the perception of others if they return to a previously completed stage of the writing process. Moreover, a process/genre approach to writing instruction allows teachers to focus on students' diversity of learning needs instead of students' conformity to learning expectations by allowing students who are proficient in the writing process and genres to develop with less teacher support and from more peer interaction, peer coaching, peer reviews, peer discussions, and the like; and, students who struggle with the writing process and genres to develop with more teacher support and from less peer interaction, peer coaching, peer reviews, peer discussions, and the like (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013). In my experience, my students are more engaged when learning from each other rather than learning from only me because each student has their own unique perspective to share, while I have only one perspective to share.

3.0 Methods

One obvious means of determining what developing writers know is to interview them.
—Amy Gillespie, Natalie G. Olinghouse, & Steve Graham

3.1 My Place of Practice

This study was incorporated into my teaching practice at Fusion, an alternative one-to-one college preparatory private school for 6th thru 12th grade students, where my students participated as part of their daily school routine in 50 minute course sessions. Through examining students' perceptions related to their understandings of stages of the writing process and genre features, this study contributes to previous research on secondary students' academic writing (Hyland, 1990; Badger & White, 2000; Beck & Jeffrey, 2009; Graham & Sandmel, 2011; Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Ramos, 2015; Ferretti & Lewis, 2019). For this study, I taught six courses of English to six students ranging from 6th thru 12th grade during the 2020-2021 spring and summer semesters. Drawing on studies by Hyland (1990), Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham (2013), Ramos (2015), and Ferretti & Lewis (2019), this study investigated students' understanding of stages of the writing process and genre features by analyzing students' argumentative essays and responses to interview questions. This study investigated two research questions. The primary research question for this study was: How do my students' proficiency with and knowledge of stages of the writing process and argumentative essay genre features shape their academic writing? The secondary research question for this study was: Which stages of the writing process and which argumentative essay genre features do my students struggle with and which do they excel at?

3.2 Research Design

As previously mentioned, the problem I encounter in my daily practice is 6th-12th grade students who have an uncertainty about how to approach writing assignments because they struggle with or have uncertainties about either/both writing processes or/and awareness of purpose, structure, and social context. As previously stated, this study investigated two research questions to shed light on these topics. Because this study was incorporated into my teaching practice, participants were students enrolled in English 7, English 8, English, 9, English, 10, English 11, and English 12 courses I taught during the 2020-2021 spring and summer semesters. To maintain students' anonymity and for clarity, pseudonyms were used for all six students who participated in this study. Since all six students had sessions at different times of day and on different days of the week, each student was assigned a number from one to six based on what time of day they had their session—the earliest session of the day became session number one, the next session of the day became number two, and so forth. Six pseudonyms were selected that were neither names of any of my current students nor names of any of my previous students. All six pseudonyms were alphabetized and assigned to students alphabetically by their number in ascending order—the first alphabetical name became the name for student number one, the second alphabetical name became the name for student number two, and so forth. This process resulted in the pseudonyms—Ashok; Bodhi; Haskell; Kyaw; Quinn; and Xen—that were used for this study.

3.3 Data Sources

Guided by previous research (Hyland, 1990; Badger & White, 2000; Beck & Jeffrey, 2009; Graham & Sandmel, 2011; Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Ramos, 2015; Ferretti & Lewis, 2019), I examined data from two sources: students' argumentative essays and students' interview responses. I focused on argumentative essays because Fusion leaning goals focus on argumentative writing. I also gave student interviews because open-ended question responses helped me better understand my students' knowledge and choices (Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013).

Identification and recruitment of students who participated in this study resulted from the number of students assigned to my courses, which is not under my control. Because identification of potential subjects was not under my control, this study did not have any exclusion criteria; as a result, each student who attended a session as part of their school routine was included in this study. Each session had only one student. As previously mentioned, students enrolled in my English 7, English 8, English, 9, English, 10, English 11, and English 12 courses participated in this study. Sudents' personal information was not collected, no student key nor student roster was used, nor were any codes that indirectly linked any personal/demographic information to students. Students' risk of breach of confidentiality was minimized by collecting data anonymously. Demographic information (grade/year level and course/session) were coded for data analysis and interpretation context, and direct quotes of a students' responses to interview questions were attributed using psudonyms. After data analysis and interpretations were completed, conclusions and recommendation were shared with Fusion Academy Tysons administration team during a professional development presentation.

The procedure for the data collection and analysis included seven steps over a period of 33 weeks (see Table 3), culminating in a professional development presentation. For step one, a final draft of an argumentative essay was collected from each student; I also attempted to collect all prewriting and drafts for each student in case a student was not able to complete a final draft before the end of the data collection period. For step two, students were asked interview questions about their perceptions related to their understandings of stages of process and genre features in their writing. For step three, argumentative essay pdfs and interview WAVs (discussed later in this section) were transcribed and analyzed using genre features and codes.

To ensure accuracy of data collection, (1) students' argumentative essays were collected and saved in portable document format (pdf) on a laptop computer, and (2) sesion interview questions and discussions were recorded, voice only, on an Evistr Digital Voice Recorder and saved in waveform audio file format (WAV) on a laptop computer. Data was collected from students' responses to interview questions using an interview protocol (see appendix A) for data consistancy and organization.

3.4 Data Analysis

Each student's assignment required the same elements: 1) an argumentative essay and 2) an argument about how a literary term was used to convey a specific message. Ashok's assignment was to submit an argumentative essay that develops an argument about how the author uses image/imagery in the text ("The Story of an Hour" by Kate Chopin) to convey a specific message about freedom, Bodhi's assignment was to submit an argumentative essay that develops an

argument about how the author uses characterization in the text ("Thank You, Ma'am" by Langston Hughes) to convey a specific message about good versus evil, Haskell's assignment was to submit an argumentative essay that develops an argument about how each author uses image/imagery in each text ("Scars" by David Owen and "Scars" by Lukas Graham) to convey a specific message about identity, Kyaw's assignment was to submit an argumentative essay that develops an argument about how each author uses characterization in each text ("The School" by Donald Barthelme and *Schoolhouse Rock* by Jason Martin) to convey a specific message about teaching, Quinn's assignment was to submit an argumentative essay that develops an argument about how each author uses characterization in each text ("Lunch with Carmella" by Harvey Pekar and Robert Crumb, and *Traces of Memory* by Ann Wuehler) to convey a specific message about identity, and Xen's assignment was to submit an argumentative essay that develops an argument about how the author uses image/imagery in the text ("A Good Man is Hard to Find" by Flannery O'Connor) to convey a specific message about cultures.

I analyzed students' essays before I conduct students' interviews so that I could ask students specific questions about their understandings of genre features. I modeled my argumentative essay genre features and codes (see Table 3.1) on the coding scheme presented in Hyland's (1990) study of argumentative essays because it focuses on the presence or absence of each of these genre features in, rather than the content of, essays (p. 68). I have reserved investigations of content for a future study. Students' argumentative essays were analyzed using 4 genre features—thesis, argument, context, and resolution—and 14 codes—position, applying literary terminology, consistency, grounds, restatement, topic sentences, transitions, clarity, explanation of grounds, format, organization, conclusion, and closing (Hyland, 1990; Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013; Griffith, 2011; Beck & Jeffrey, 2009; Ferretti & Lewis, 2019). I

ananlyzed argumentative essays by looking for patterns that indicated which genre features my students exceled at or struggled with based on the presence or absence of codes for each genre feature. I remained open to any emergent themes and new codes that might develop during my data analysis.

I analyzed interview responses for students' knowledge of both genre features of and process approaches to argumentative witing. I modeled my interview response themes and codes (see Table 2) on (1) response types presented by Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham's (2013) study of writing processes and writing genres, (2) Ferretti & Lewis' (2019) study of persuasive writing, and (3) the coding scheme presented in Ramos' (2015) study of genre pedagogy and academic persuasive essays because all three studies use genre-based approaches to examine adolescent learners academic writing. However, I remained open to any emergent themes and codes that develop during my data analysis.

For step four and to respond to my research questions, initial codes from students' essays and interviews were refined and organized to (1) identify emergent themes and codes, (2) identify which genre features students excel at or struggle with, and (3) identify commonalities and disimilarities between student's essays and interview responses that shed light on how students' proficiency with and knowledge of stages of the writing process and argumentative essay genre features shape their academic writing.

For step five, I looked for patterns in students' knowledge or writing practices. I considered factors that might explain those patterns or variabilities in my results, such as the writing practices of students who excel at or struggle with writing argumentative essays. I considered changes in my pedagogy that address how my students' proficiency with and knowledge of stages of the

writing process and argumentative essay genre features shaped their academic writing (Williams & Moser, 2019).

For step six, I developed conclusions and recommendations for changes in writing pedagogy for my school based on findings from this study (Williams & Moser, 2019).

For step seven, a professional development presentation of the findings from this study was given to the Fusion Tysons administration team.

Table 1 Argumentative Essay Coding

Genre Feature	Code	Definition	Feedback
Thesis	Position	A specific claim or statements that summarize the main idea of the essay in response to the assignment prompt.	Your thesis makes a clear claim that responds to the assignment prompt. Your thesis does not respond to the assignment prompt. Your thesis summarizes an issue without making a claim.

Argument	Applying Literary Terminology	Using literary terms to identify and describe texts features.	Your essay correctly and consistently uses literary terms to identify and describe texts features. Your essay does not use literary terms to identify and describe texts features.
Argument	Consistency	Using statements, language, and terms that support the same claim.	You have made a clear, consistent, and well-supported argument. Some of your material is relevant to your general topic, but you do not make clear connections to your argument.

Argument	Grounds	Providing reasons why a claim or a statement is true or evidence that supports a claim or a statement.	You use evidence clearly and consistently to support your argument. Your argument needs to be more developed and supported.
	Restatement	Using repetition or paraphrase of points for clarity and emphasis.	You effectively restate points for clarity and emphasis throughout your essay. You do not effectively restate points for clarity nor emphasis throughout your essay.

Argument	Topic Sentences	Using main points for supporting paragraphs that match the position of the essay.	You have structured your argument in a way that allows for a logical progression of ideas matched to the position of the essay. Your argument is not structured in a way that allows for a logical progression of ideas matched to the position of the essay.
	Transitions	Using rhetorical devices that create relationships between elements of the essay and the position of the essay.	Your transitions between paragraphs effectively connect your ideas. Your transitions between paragraphs do not effectively connect your ideas.

Context			
	Clarity	Using language and tone to appropriately communicate meaning.	Your argument is a clear position in relation to the assignment prompt and you support your argument throughout your essay. Your evidence is not clearly connected to your argument.
	Definitions	Providing clear explanations of uncommon and technical terms.	Your essay provides clear explanations of uncommon and technical terms. Your essay does not provide clear explanations of uncommon nor technical terms.

Context	Explanation of Grounds	Using appropriate terms and examples to clearly describe evidence.	Your writing is fluent, clear and uses appropriate tone to communicate meaning. Your writing does not clearly use appropriate tone to communicate meaning.
	Format	Arranging argumentative essay components appropriately.	Your essay correctly uses MLA formatting. Please be sure to use correct MLA formatting. Your writing follows prescriptive rules of grammar, language, and mechanics. Please be sure to follow prescriptive rules of grammar, language, and mechanics.

Context	Organization	Essay is a structured progression of ideas in response to an assignment prompt.	Your use of language and terms is consistent throughout your essay. Your use of language and terms is not consistent throughout your essay.
Resolution	Conclusion	Paraphrasing the position of the essay.	Your conclusion clearly restates your position. Your conclusion does not clearly restate your position.
	Closing	Using statements that summarize and questions that broaden the position presented in the essay.	Your conclusion effectively closes your argument. Your conclusion does not effectively close your argument.

Table 2 Interview Response Coding

Theme	Code	Definition	Example
Prewriting	Student gives a clear description of prewriting. Student does not give a clear description of prewriting.	A planning stage in writing processes when goals are set and ideas are generated (Graham & Sandmel, 2011; Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013).	Student describes when they start prewriting. Student describes how they plan their writing.
Drafting	Student gives a clear description of drafting. Student does not give a clear description of drafting.	An organizational stage in writing processes when prewriting plans are put into action (Graham & Sandmel, 2011; Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013).	Student describes what they do to start drafting.

Revising	Student gives a clear description of revising. Student does not give a clear description of revising.	An evaluating stage in writing processes when changes to prewriting plans are made for audience, purpose, and format (Graham & Sandmel, 2011; Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013).	Student describes who they get feedback from. Student describes how they use feedback.
Editing	Student gives a clear description of editing. Student does not give a clear description of editing.	A reviewing stage of writing processes when changes to prewriting plans are made for grammar, language, and content (Graham & Sandmel, 2011; Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013).	Student describes how they choose which changes to make from feedback.

Publishing	Student gives a clear description of publishing. Student does not give a clear description of publishing.	A communicative stage of writing processes when results of prewriting plans are shared with an audience (Graham & Sandmel, 2011; Gillespie, Olinghouse, & Graham, 2013).	Student describes how they know when their writing is ready for publishing.
Purpose	Student gives a clear description of purpose. Student does not give a clear description of purpose.	What students expect readers to learn from their writing.	Student describes a purpose they have written for.
Structure	Student gives a clear description of structure. Student does not give a clear description of structure.	How students organize their writing.	Student describes how organized their writing to support an argument.

Audience	Student gives a clear description of audience. Student does not give a clear description audience.	Who students are writing for.	Student describes writing for someone other than a teacher.

Table 3 Timeline

Step	Week Number	Date (s)	Research Activities
Step #1	Week 1-9	9 March 2021 – 3 May 2021	A final draft of an argumentative essay was collected from each student.
Step #2	Week 9-16	3 May 2021 – 24 June 2021	Students were asked interview questions about their perceptions related to their understandings of stages of process and genre features in their writing.
Step #3	Week 16-26	25 June 2021 – 3 September 2021	Argumentative essay pdfs and interview WAVs were transcribed and analyzed for emergent themes.

Step #4	Week 26-30	3 September 2021 – 1 October 2021	Initial codes from students' essays and student interview responses were refined and organized to identify the relationships between both sets of codes.
Step #5	Week 30-48	1 October 2021 – 5 February 2022	I looked for patterns in the knowledge or writing practices of all students who participated in this study.
Step #6	Week 49-50	6-17 February 2022	I developed conclusions and recommendations for changes in writing pedagogy for my school.
Step #7	Week 51	18 February 2022	A professional development presentation of the findings from this study was given during a professional development meeting for the Fusion Tysons administration team.

4.0 Findings

There are things known and there are things unknown,
and in between are the doors of perception.

—Aldous Huxley

As previously mentioned, the primary research question for this study was: How do my students' proficiency with and knowledge of stages of the writing process and argumentative essay genre features shape their academic writing? The secondary research question for this study was: Which stages of the writing process and which argumentative essay genre features do my students struggle with and which do they excel at?

Three salient patterns emerged from my data analysis of students' essays and interviews: (1) students' incorporation or absence of genre features in their argumentative writing, (2) students' perceptions of purpose for their argumentative writing, (3) students' perceptions of stages of the writing process, and (4) students' perceptions of audience for their argumentative writing. By students' incorporation or absence of genre features in their argumentative writing, I mean their knowledge and use of rhetorical techniques appropriate for the genre. By students' perceptions of purpose for their argumentative writing, I mean students' descriptions of the goal, technique, and audience for their argumentative writing. By students' perceptions of stages of the writing process, I mean students' knowledge and use of commonly recognized stages of writing. By perceptions of audience for their argumentative writing, I mean students' appropriate use of argumentative writing features and writing process stages for an audience other than just a teacher.

4.1 Argumentative Writing Genre Feature Codes

Students' argumentative essays were coded and analyzed using the argumentative writing genre features shown in Table 1. As each student's assignment was to write an argumentative essay, although texts and criteria (discussed in 3.0 Methods) were different for each student's assignment, my analysis focused on the incorporation or absence of argumentative writing genre feature codes in, rather than the content of, students' essays (see Table 4).

Overall, students' essays incorporated several argumentative writing genre features, but some genre features were missing. Among those genre features incorporated in students' essays, eleven out of fourteen features were incorporated in some students' essays, with five out of fourteen incorporated in two of the six students' essays and six out of fourteen incorporated in at least one of the six students' essays (see Table 4.2). Among those genre features absent from students' essays, there was no genre feature that appeared in all students' essays, with six out of fourteen features absent from at least five of the six students' essays, five out of fourteen features absent from at least four of the six students' essays, and three out of fourteen features absent from all six students' essays.

The genre features that were most often incorporated in students' essays were Position, Applying Literary Terminology, Grounds (reasons why a claim or a statement is true or evidence that supports a claim or a statement), Explanation of Grounds, and Format. Although these were the genre features that appeared most often in students' essays, each genre feature only appeared in two out of six students' essays.

For example, Position and Applying Literary Terminology were incorporated in two out of six students' thesis statements. Ashok's thesis statement states a position about identity and characterization in response to their assignment prompt: "In Kate Chopin's story, *The Story of an*

Hour, she argues, through the direct and indirect characterization of Louise Mallard, that individual identity is found in freedom." Ashok's incorporation of more than one genre feature in their thesis statement suggest that they know how to use each genre feature and know how to blend genre features to strengthen their argument. Bodhi's thesis statement states a position about conflict and characterization in response to their assignment prompt: "The author uses indirect characterization to show the changes in good versus evil in the woman and the boy throughout the story." Bodhi's incorporation of more than one genre feature in their thesis statement also suggest that they know how to blend genre features to strengthen their argument. Xen incorporated the literary term antagonist in their position statement but did not mention that literary term in any other part of their essay. Quinn also incorporated Applying Literary Terminology in their essay to identify and describe image/imagery, "*Lunch with Carmella* uses images to convey the message that these two guys value gossip." While neither Ashok nor Quinn consistently used literary terminology throughout their essays, both examples demonstrate the use of literary terms to identify and describe texts features. Additionally, Quinn's incorporation of only one genre feature in their thesis statement suggest that they may not know how to blend genre features to strengthen their argument.

Similar to the way Position and Applying Literary Terminology were incorporated in two out of six students' thesis statements, Grounds were incorporated in two out of six students' essays to support their Position. Quinn incorporated Grounds in their essay to provide reasons for their argument about how *Lunch with Carmella* by Harvey Pekar and Robert Crumb uses imagery to portray the value of gossip: "The comics *Lunch with Carmella* uses images to convey the message that these two guys value gossip. The author uses the first few panels to jump straight into the message. He illustrates the two talking about an old eccentric coworker throughout the whole

comic." Quinn provides reasons and explanations that support their claims about the social value of gossip throughout their essay, which suggest that they know how to blend Grounds and Position to strengthen their argument. Similarly, Xen incorporated Grounds in their essay to provide reasons and explanations to support their claims about the grandmother's spiritual views:

> The Grandmother is initially seen as a close-minded and has her own strong views on morality and religion, although when nearing the end of the story, she makes an almost complete tonal shift in character. This is apparent when she is pleading for her life at the hands of The Misfit. She tries to appeal to his sense of humanity saying he seems like a good person, and asking him if he prays.

> Because morality can have different meanings to people, Xen's grounds explain their claim

that the grandmother, who has a well-developed personality experiences a transformation in the text. Xen's reasons and explanations that support their claims also suggest that they know how to blend Grounds and Position to strengthen their argument. Quinn's and Xen's examples indicate that they are proficient using both the genre feature code Grounds and the genre feature code Position because reasons and explanations to support a claim can only be provided if a claim has been made.

Additionally, Both Ashok and Bodhi, two out of six students, incorporated Format in their essays by placing their thesis statement in their first paragraph. Coupled with their incorporation of more than one genre feature in their thesis statement, Ashok's and Bodhi's use of format further suggest that they know how to blend genre features to strengthen their argument.

Table 4 Argumentative Writing Genre Feature Codes

Code	Incorporated in # of Essays	Absent from # of Essays
Position	2	4
Applying Literary Terminology	2	4
Consistency	0	6
Grounds	2	4
Restatement	0	6
Topic Sentences	1	5
Transitions	1	5
Clarity	1	5
Definitions	1	5
Explanation of Grounds	2	4
Format	2	4
Organization	0	6
Conclusion	1	5
Closing	1	5

However, three out of fourteen genre features—Consistency, Organization and Repetition—were absent from all six students' essays. Instead, some students (1) used textual evidence that was not relevant to their claims, (2) included material that was relevant to their general topic but not clearly connected to their argument, and (3) did not use language and terms consistently throughout their essays. Additionally, the genre feature code Transitions was absent

from five of the six students' essays. In these essays, students tended to use rhetorical techniques that were not appropriate for the genre, such as blending facts with emotions in an attempt to convince their reader. On the other hand, one student's essay used rhetorical techniques that were appropriate for the genre, such as juxtaposition, parallel structure, and transitional words and phrases throughout their essay.

Although Ashok and Quinn incorporated literary terms in their thesis statements, Consistency was absent from their essays because they, like the other students, did not use literary terminology throughout their essays to support their positions. In other students' essays, literary terms were absent from their thesis statements as well as the rest of their essays. For example, Kyaw's thesis statement, "In both short stories they both dictate the idea of kids innocence and how a school is guarded by not guarded when it comes to the knowledge of life," did not include literary terms in response to their assignment prompt, which suggest that Kyaw may need help with their assignment prompt, Kyaw may need help with consistency, and that Kyaw may need help with literary terms.

Restatement was also absent from all six students essays because none of the students used repetition or paraphrase to clarify or emphasize their positions throughout their essays. For example, Haskell's essay uses literary terms but does not use restatement to explain those terms nor to repeat this main idea in more than one place in their essay:

> David Owens takes a more satire approach to scars. He sees each permanent mark as a good memory, not as a painful reminder. Owens appeals to the audience through emotions. Everyone has scars and for every scar there is a unique story. Owens has come to appreciate his scars over time, and in many cases they made him stronger.

Haskell's position about the writer's use of sarcasm is neither clarified nor emphasized, which suggest that Haskell may need help with Restatement and may also need help with literary terms.

Similarly, Organization was absent from all six students essays because none of the students arranged their claims, evidence, and use of literary terms in a way that presented a logical progression of ideas throughout their essay. For example, Ashok's thesis statement states a specific claim about individual identity in the beginning of their essay; but, although their claim is made using literary terms, their claim is not clearly restated using literary terms nor supported with evidence from the text in the rest of their essay, which suggests that Ashok may need help with Organization.

In general, these findings demonstrated that all six students who participated in this study incorporated some genre features of argumentative writing in their essays. Several students applied genre features inconsistently throughout their essays and, in most cases, did not apply the majority of the genre features key to argumentative writing. Additionally, 1) all six students struggled with the genre feature Consistency, Organization and Repetition and 2) a noteworthy number of the students were able to blend genre features to strengthen their arguments.

Table 5 Argumentative Essay Assignment and Genre Feature Codes by Student

Student	Argumentative Essay Assignment	Genre Features Incorporated in Student's Essay	Genre Features Absent from Student's Essay
Ashok	Submit an argumentative essay that develops an argument about how the author uses image/imagery in the text ("The Story of an Hour" by Kate Chopin) to convey a specific message about freedom.	Position Applying Literary Terminology Transitions Definitions Format Conclusion Closing	Consistency Grounds Restatement Topic Sentences Clarity Explanation of Grounds Organization
Bodhi	Submit an argumentative essay that develops an argument about how the author uses characterization in the text ("Thank You, Ma'am" by Langston Hughes) to convey a specific message about good versus evil.	Position Applying Literary Terminology Format	Consistency Grounds Restatement Topic Sentences Transitions Clarity Definitions Explanation of Grounds Organization Conclusion Closing

Haskell	Submit an argumentative essay that develops an argument about how each author uses image/imagery in each text ("Scars" by David Owen and "Scars" by Lukas Graham) to convey a specific message about identity.		Position Applying Literary Terminology Consistency Grounds Restatement Topic Sentences Transitions Clarity Definitions Explanation of Grounds Format Organization Conclusion Closing

Kyaw	Submit an argumentative essay that develops an argument about how each author uses characterization in each text ("The School" by Donald Barthelme and *Schoolhouse Rock* by Jason Martin) to convey a specific message about teaching.		Position Applying Literary Terminology Consistency Grounds Restatement Topic Sentences Transitions Clarity Definitions Explanation of Grounds Format Organization Conclusion Closing

Quinn	Submit an argumentative essay that develops an argument about how each author uses characterization in each text ("Lunch with Carmella" by Harvey Pekar and Robert Crumb, and *Traces of Memory* by Ann Wuehler) to convey a specific message about identity.	Applying Literary Terminology Grounds Clarity Explanation of Grounds	Position Applying Literary Terminology Consistency Restatement Topic Sentences Transitions Definitions Format Organization Conclusion Closing
Xen	Submit an argumentative essay that develops an argument about how the author uses image/imagery in the text ("A Good Man is Hard to Find" by Flannery O'Connor) to convey a specific message about cultures.	Grounds Topic Sentences Explanation of Grounds	Position Applying Literary Terminology Consistency Restatement Transitions Clarity Definitions Format Organization Conclusion Closing

4.2 Students' Interviews

After I finished my analysis of students' essays, I conducted interviews with each student, which revealed more details about my students' perceptions of purpose for their argumentative writing (see Appendix C) Most students had clear perceptions about argumentative writing genre features and distinctions between argumentative writing and persuasive writing. Several themes that demonstrated these perceptions emerged during my interviews in response to question #1, "Thinking about your writing, what does argumentative writing mean to you?" the question #1 probe, "Can you give specific examples of how you make your writing argumentative?" and the question #1 clarifying question (see Appendix B) "How do you distinguish argumentative writing from persuasive writing?" Note that not all students in the study were asked the clarifying question because the clarifying question was based on students' initial responses. Students' responses were wide-ranging, from describing argumentative writing as storytelling to a structured transfer of ideas (see Table 6).

4.2.1 Argument versus Persuasion

Many of the students I interviewed used the term "evidence" to describe their argumentative writing, which suggest that proving a point is the purpose for argumentative writing. For example, Quinn described argumentative writing by pointing out that,

> …you're trying to convince the reader that, um…to like stand with your viewpoint…and you have to use a lot of evidence and…specific claims to prove why they should, why they should like believe you and everything, and I try to like…include as many specific examples as I can so that—because I have the argument in my head and I know what it is to me—but I have to prove it to the person who's reading it.

Quinn's use of terms such as "convince" and "believe" suggest a blend of argumentative writing and persuasive writing because persuasion and grounds are features of both argumentative writing and persuasive writing genres. At the same time, Quinn's use of evidence, and other terms such as "prove" and "examples," suggest that they see the purpose for their argumentative writing as a way to communicate their opinions to their readers and that specific claims and evidence are tools needed to accomplish that purpose.

Xen's response also used the term "evidence" to describe their argumentative writing as,

"…more about providing an argument, like or a claim…I think an argumentative essay is…more like based on your facts or your evidence, [while persuasive writing is] more about persuading someone…more based around, like what you want to say [and] something that you're more passionate about…I guess grounded or emotional in a way. Similar to Quinn's response, Xen views of argumentative writing and persuasive writing as a blend of features of both genres, which suggest they have a good understanding of the ways both argumentative writing and persuasive writing genres can overlap.

Bodhi described argumentative writing as "…more solely focused on what you're taking about and less opinionated…." and described persuasive writing as "…your own perspective as well as the other side…," which suggest that Bodhi has a clear understanding of distinctions between the viewpoint used in argumentative writing and the viewpoint used in persuasive writing. In general, all three examples describe the purpose of argumentative writing much like a case being presented to a jury using a blend of claims, evidence, and emotions to accomplish that purpose.

4.2.2 Formulaic

Other students used the term "formulaic" to describe their argumentative writing. For example, Bodhi's responses described argumentative writing as "more direct" and "like a formula" suggest that Bodhi views their argumentative writing both as a structured progression of ideas in response to an assignment prompt and as a direct, structured communication with their readers based on expected formats for academic essay writing. Quinn's responses also described argumentative as "…more like…formal and like…formatted—I think like a bit more organized in thought" and persuasive writing as "more like…I don't know, more gentle…not as much being like 'this is the truth' and this is why." Both Bodhi's and Quinn's responses suggest a perception of argumentative writing as a structured form of communication, perhaps because it is usually taught and assigned in school, and as a way of persuading the reader through "more gentle" rhetorical strategies, such as pathos and empathy. Because academic essays are usually more formal than literary ones, both Bodhi's and Quinn's responses suggest that they see the purpose of argumentative writing as providing proof of their academic ability to their teachers by presenting their thoughts in a prescribed, structured way. At the same time, Bodhi's and Quinn's responses suggest that the repetition of academic writing, from one essay to the next, may be perceived as an academic treadmill of rigid expectations and programmed performance. Because only two out of six students described argumentative writing using these terms, further research is needed to investigate this perception of argumentative writing.

4.2.3 Readers

The idea of the reader was prominent in 4 out of six students' responses. Xen, Haskell, Kyaw and Ashok described the idea of persuading the reader as purpose for their argumentative writing. Xen said that the "sole purpose [of argumentative writing] is to persuade, ah the reader…to, ah, agree with or believe the opinion that you propose," which suggest that, similar to Quinn's use of terms such as "convince" and "believe," Xen sees their writing as a way to communicate viewpoints directly with their readers. Haskell said that "…you want the reader to kind of see things how you do through, um…you know, um, just good arguments for, for your case…" Haskell's response suggest that Haskell sees their writing as an exchange of ideas with their readers. Likewise, Ashok described their argumentative writing as a creative exchange of ideas because "…you're writing about something you care about and…you've gotta be very creative with it because you wanna make sure the…obviously the story you're writing about or whatever you're writing about that day is, ah…very interesting to the reader. Ashok's response suggest that they see their argumentative writing as a kind of emotional, creative storytelling that brings happiness to their readers.

In addition, Kyaw described their argumentative writing as a way to share beliefs with their reader by pointing out that "[argumentative writing] could be used in many different ways, but…one of the ways it can be used is…spreading the truth, in a way…" Kyaw's response suggest that they see sharing their beliefs with their readers as a purpose for their argumentative writing, and that truth and multiple viewpoints are tools needed to accomplish that purpose.

In general, the data sheds light on various ways students' perceptions of purpose for their argumentative writing influenced how those genre features were incorporated in or absent from their essays, and how they expressed their thoughts, opinions, and feelings. At the same time, the

data raises the question of why some students blend argumentative writing and persuasive writing genre features. Most students had clear understandings that their writing was being received by an audience, and several students had understandings that their essays needed facts and evidence to convince readers to agree with their ideas. Although all six of my students' responses may not express definitions of argumentative writing genre features, all six of my students' responses express the objective of the genre by demonstrating their perceptions of argumentative writing as a creative, caring way to present ideas for others to consider.

Table 6 Response Summery to Interview Question #1 by Student

Student	Response Summary
Ashok	Described argumentative writing as storytelling that captivates the reader's attention.
Bodhi	Described argumentative writing as straight forward exchange of information.
Haskell	Described argumentative writing as an effort to get the reader to recognize and trust their ideas.

Kyaw	Described argumentative writing as a way for them to share their reality with the world.
Quinn	Described argumentative writing as a way to make the reader trust their ideas.
Xen	Described argumentative writing as a deliberate effort to get the reader to side with their opinion.

4.3 Stages of the Writing Process

During my interviews, most students had clear perceptions about knowledge and use of three out of five commonly recognized stages of writing the process: Prewriting, Drafting, and Publishing. All six students shared details about their perceptions of Prewriting, Drafting, and Publishing stages of the writing process in response to question #6 "Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does prewriting mean to you?" question #7," Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does drafting mean to you?" and question #10, "Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does publishing mean to you?"

4.3.1 Prewriting

In general, most students viewed Prewriting as a planning stage of the writing process where they are able to generate ideas that can be arranged, changed, and reflected on throughout the writing process (see Table 7). For example, Ashok described Prewriting as "basically what ideas you've got in your head" adding that they "like prewriting because it's a good thing because you always need to write down your thoughts before you jump into the real thing." This suggests that Ashok sees Prewriting as a stage of the writing process that can be used to capture their initial thoughts before they start a draft to keep from having to rely solely on memory to start a draft. Ashok's use of words like "ideas" and "thoughts" suggest a perception of Prewriting as a planning stage in the writing processes when they can spread their ideas out like puzzle pieces to be later assembled in the Drafting stage of the writing process. Similarly, Haskell described Prewriting as "setting up all your evidence and information making it organized and clear but not actually drafting anything" adding that "you're just kind of organizing your information however you wish." Haskell's response suggest that they have a similar perception of Prewriting to Ashok, as a stage of the writing process that can be used to capture their initial thoughts, although Haskell sees Prewriting as an organized planning stage in the writing processes where information can be set out like ingredients to be mixed for a delicious meal. Bodhi described Prewriting as "getting your first impressions on a piece of writing" adding that "you make like annotations and like also writing down what you think about it and then…uh…what ideas about what you're goanna write like bullet points." Bodhi's response suggest that Bodhi has a clear perception of Prewriting as a stage in the writing processes for planning and generating ideas.

Quinn described Prewriting as "just like…the amalgamation of thought and, and like examples, and just kind of like" adding that Prewriting is "just the preliminary thing that you do

before you actually start word vomiting…so that you have a baseline for what you're going to word vomit." Quinn's use of phrases like "amalgamation of thought," "word vomit" and the word baseline suggest that Quinn also has a clear perception of Prewriting as a stage in the writing processes for planning and generating ideas.

Kyaw described Prewriting as "a way to develop your argument" adding that "if you have a direction you want to go in…you could add on to it." Kyaw's use of the phrase "develop your argument" and the word "direction" suggest that Kyaw also has a clear perception of Prewriting as stage in the writing processes for generating ideas and setting goals. Equally, Xen also described their Prewriting as "just like small summaries of like, this is what I'm gonna do, this I how I'm gonna do it, and I'm gonna go do it." Xen's use of phrase like "small summaries," "what I'm gonna do," and "how I'm gonna do it" also suggest that Xen has a clear perception of Prewriting as a stage in the writing processes for generating ideas and setting goals.

In general, most students have perceptions of Prewriting as a stage of the writing process for planning and organizing their ideas. Students' responses suggest that they value this stage of the writing process as tool to help them communicate their ideas with others.

Table 7 Response Summery to Interview Question #6 by Student

Student	Response Summary
Ashok	Described Prewriting as a time to collect their initial thoughts and ideas.
Bodhi	Described Prewriting as a time for gathering and organizing their initial reactions.
Haskell	Described Prewriting as a time to assemble and organize their ideas.
Kyaw	Described Prewriting as a time for creating and planning their purpose.
Quinn	Described Prewriting as a time to collect initial ideas they can build on.
Xen	Described Prewriting as a time to plan what they will write.

4.3.2 Revising and Editing

In contrast, students' perceptions were wide-ranging about knowledge and use of two out of five commonly recognized stages of writing the process: Revising and Editing. All six students shared details about their perceptions of Revising and Editing stages of the writing process in response to question #8, "Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does revising mean to you?" and question #9, "Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does editing mean to you?" In general, some students seemed unsure about or struggled to describe distinctions between the Revising and the Editing stages of the writing process.

Some students described Revising as a stage in the writing process for making changes to grammar, language, and content (see Table 8). Bodhi, for example, described Revising as "just looking through it a lot…and getting other's opinions too of what doesn't make sense like fixing it or like grammar, spelling, and stuff." Bodhi's use of phrases like "looking through," "other's opinions," and "what doesn't make sense" and words like "fixing," "grammar," and "spelling" suggest that Bodhi has a perception of Revising as a stage in the writing process that uses feedback for editing, not revision.

A larger group of students saw revision as a combination of feedback on grammar, spelling and ideas. Kyaw noted, "if you feel like something's to harsh, like you're censoring it in a way, or you're making it a little easier to comprehend… I don't know." Kyaw's use of the phrase "I don't know," "easier to comprehend" and the word "censoring," suggest that Kyaw also has a perception of Revising as a stage in the writing process that makes ideas clearer to the audience. Xen described Revising as "kind of going line by line, or paragraph" describing their process as going "down each paragraph, each line and then [I] have to draw like how, how does this work, right like how does like, how do these words have any sort of impact or meaning and how can I change them to

make sure that they have more impact and meaning? Xen added that "the last one that I check for is always grammar, ah I always revise grammar last because I know I mess up sometimes." Xen's use of the phrase "line by line" and words like "paragraph," "meaning," "change," "impact" and "grammar" suggest that Xen has a perception of Revising as a stage in the writing process that first focuses on revision of ideas and then editing. Haskell described Revising as "going through the drafts or…your completed product…revision is…looking over a draft or an essay and…looking for anything you want to change or maybe grammatical mistakes or anything like that" adding that "actually, well that's editing…revision is kind of just looking over it and identifying what you want to change…editing is actually changing it." Like Xen, Haskell's use of phrases like "going through drafts," "looking over" and words like "change," "grammatical," "mistakes," and "identifying" suggest that Haskell has a perception of Revising as a stage in the writing process that blends revisions and editing.

Some students described Editing as a stage in the writing process that focuses on fixing mistakes (see Table 9). For example, Bodhi described Editing as "a more fine-tuned version of revising" adding that "after you make the most revisions like you go back and fix like smaller things." Bodhi's use of the phrase "fine-tuned version" and the word "fix" suggest that Bodhi has a perception of Editing as a stage in the writing process that focuses on grammar and typos. In a similar way, Kyaw described Editing as "just review…to just get advice on what you think grammatically, how it could be changed" adding that Editing is to "get a reaction from people to see what they think about your writing." Kyaw's use of words like "review," "advice," "grammatically," "changed," and "reaction" suggest that Kyaw has a perception of Editing as a stage in the writing process that focuses on grammar, typos, and ideas. At the same time, Xen described Editing as "kind of trying, just making things as clear and not…all over the place a

possible" adding that "you wanna get your point across, you wanna make sure that it's, ah…ah readable, legible, ah understandable, ah comprehendible and etcetera." Xen's use of words like "clear," "readable," "legible," "understandable," and "comprehensible" suggest that Xen has a perception of Editing as a stage in the writing process that focuses on grammar, ideas, and the reader.

Some students seemed unsure of distinctions between Revising and Editing or described them as the same. For example, Ashok described Editing as the "same as revising…because editing is like, fix all the minor mistakes you made…although you add all the things you need to make…the best interesting story for your audience" adding that "I think editing and revising are the same thing for me to be honest …that's what you need editing for." Ashok's use of the phrase "same as revising" and words like "fix" and "mistakes" suggest that Ashok has a perception of Editing as a stage in the writing process that blends editing and revisions, which may suggest they view revisions and edits in writing as similar to a face-to-face conversation because of the need for people to make simultaneous internal revisions and edits during a conversation. Likewise, Quinn described Revising and Editing by admitting "I know there's a difference between revising and editing but I don't remember what it is and, so I kind of consider revising and editing the same thing in my head" adding that "it's just like…getting another person to look at it to see any mistakes that you actually…grammar or spelling or if there's a word choice or something" and concluding by pointing out that Revising and Editing are "also going through and looking to be like is there a different way I could say this that would be…better or like it would, more clearly convey the message that you want to convey." Quinn's use of phrases like "the same thing," "another person to look," "word choice," and "different way" and words like "grammar," "spelling," "clearly,"

"convey," and "message" suggests that Quinn has a perception of Revising and Editing as a stage in the writing process that blends revisions, editing, and feedback.

In general, some students viewed Revising and Editing as stages of the writing process for fixing their mistakes. Some students viewed Revising and Editing as stages of the writing process for focusing on ideas and readers. Most students' responses suggest that they value feedback on their writing during the Revising and Editing stages of the writing process because it helps them make sure their readers can understand their ideas.

Table 8 Response Summery to Interview Question #8 by Student

Student	Response Summary
Ashok	Described Revising as a time to correct their errors.
Bodhi	Described Revising as a time to review, get feedback, and correct errors.
Haskell	Described Revising as a time review, make changes, and correct errors.
Kyaw	Described Revising as a time to make changes for clarity.

Quinn	Described Revising as a time for feedback, correcting errors, and making changes for clarity.
Xen	Described Revising as a time to review, make changes, and correct errors.

Table 9 Response Summery to Interview Question #9 by Student

Student	Response Summary
Ashok	Described Editing as a time to correct errors and make changes.
Bodhi	Described Editing as a time for making major and minor changes.
Kyaw	Described Editing as a time to review, correct errors, and get feedback.
Xen	Described Editing as a time make changes for clarity.

4.4 Audience

Students' perceptions of audience for their argumentative writing were varied. It should be noted that the Fusion one-to-one classroom learning experience of one student and a single teacher may have influenced students' perceptions of audience other than just a teacher because no other students are in their sessions. That said, all six students shared details about their perceptions of audience for their argumentative writing in response to question #3, "Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does audience mean to you?" question #11, "Who usually gives you feedback on your writing?" the question #11 probe, "Who do you get feedback from other than your teacher?" and question #12, "How do you use feedback?"

Some students seemed unsure about how to describe their Audience although they were aware they are writing for other people (see Table 10). Ashok described audience as something that they "don't really pay attention to it because, uh…I don't care if you don't like my story as long as I've put my all into it." Similar to their response about readers, Ashok's response suggest that they see their audience as receivers of a kind of creative storytelling, much like an audience in a lecture hall. Xen also describes audience as "kind of just any sort of like other, ah…what's the word, like…spectator or, um reader actually who witnesses your creation," which suggest that Xen also sees audience as receivers of a kind of creative storytelling but in the broader sense of readers of a blog. Bodhi described audience in a similar way as "whoever is reading the piece…whoever's gonna intake what you write." This perception of audience was also shared by Kyaw, who said that "there's plenty of different audiences, you got age, gender, race, ethnicity," and Quinn, who said that audience is "just the person or people who you're writing for." Bodhi's, Kyaw's, and Quinn's responses suggest that they have a perception of audience as numerous people across a range of social groups, much like viewers of a website.

61

Coupled with students' perceptions of audience were students' responses to question #11 that revealed that five out of six students received feedback from friends, three out of six students received feedback from family members, one out of six students received feedback from their teacher, and one out of six students received feedback from other students, which, like students' responses to questions about Revising and Editing, suggest that students are aware of the value of feedback as a tool to help them more accurately share their ideas with others. In addition, responses about how students used feedback they received were varied as well.

Three out of six students used their feedback for revisions. For example, Kyaw said that "it definitely help[s] me improve my writing," which suggest that Kyaw sees feedback as a way to let their audience identify which parts of their writing work well and which parts are unclear and need to be changed. Bodhi said that they "try to like incorporate it in things," which suggest that Bodhi also sees value in feedback they receive and use their feedback as a way to identify which parts of their writing worked well and which parts were unclear and need to be changed. Quinn said that "it's usually just like you need to connect this to your main idea or something," which suggest that Quinn also sees feedback as a way to identify changes they need to make to their writing to efficiently share their ideas.

Some students use their own judgment to pick and choose which feedback to use for revising and editing. Haskell said that "when I do…grammatical errors are obviously immediately fixed…and I make the…edit based on how, what, how I think it'll fit in the essay," which suggest that Haskell sees value in some feedback as a way to identify any prescriptive rules of grammar, language, or mechanics that need to be changed, but does not value all feedback. Likewise, Ashok uses their feedback "in like…ways to help out my paper…just to see if the feedback could be useful for the paper or not…cause some feedback is not," which suggest that Ashok also sees value

in some feedback but does not value all feedback as a way to identify which parts of their writing need to be changed. Xen has a similar perspective on feedback, saying that "I use it as a reference, like depending on the gravity it can restructure a whole essay, I could rewrite the whole essay because of it," which suggest that Xen also sees value in feedback as a tool they can be used to make subtle to sweeping changes in their writing.

In general, students had perceptions of audience as numerous people who can potentially read their writing and provide feedback that can help them make changes to their writing. Most students saw value in feedback and often use their feedback to make revisions, edits, or both in varying degrees, taking advantage of opportunities to receive feedback from someone other than their teacher, such as small groups of family members or friends.

Table 10 Response Summery to Interview Question #3 by Student

Student	Response Summary
Ashok	Described Audience as people who are interested in their writing.
Bodhi	Described Audience as anyone who is reading their writing.
Kyaw	Described Audience as specific people who read their writing.

Quinn	Described Audience as a person or people who read their writing.
Xen	Described Audience as one or more people who read their writing.

5.0 Conclusions

Rather than a summary or review, the conclusion is a fusion of constituents in this genre. It functions to consolidate the discourse and retrospectively affirm what has been communicated.

—Ken Hyland

Quite often, day-to-day activities interfere with my ability to reflect on my teaching because I focus more on what my students have done and said since their last session, instead of on what they have done and said since their semester began. I often find myself in situations where I must make a spontaneous decision about how to guide a student's writing because the student has submitted their essay either a few minutes before our session begins, or a few minutes after our session began. This study has helped me explore, reevaluate, and expand my decision making about how to guide my students' writing because I have been able to step back from, get closer to, and take a longer look at both my students' writing and my teaching by focusing on what my students have done and said over time.

The purpose of this study was to examine students' proficiency with and knowledge of stages of the writing process and argumentative essay genre features through an exploration of their argumentative essays and interview responses to make curriculum recommendations. Because this study was not an intervention project, students who participated in this study were not given writing process or genre instruction in preparation for their assignment for this study.

This study offers two responses to the question of which stages of the writing process and argumentative essay genre features my students struggle with and excel at. One response provided by findings for this study is that students who had prior instruction of either stages of the writing process or argumentative essay genre features excelled at those with which they were familiar,

while students who had not had prior instruction of either stages of the writing process nor argumentative essay genre features struggled with those with which they were not familiar.

A second response provided by changes in my teaching practice as a result of this study is that students struggle with or excel at stages of the writing process and argumentative essay genre features based on their knowledge of the complimentary nature of both approaches to writing. Students need to use the stages of the writing process to plan their writing, organize their writing, reflect on their writing, make changes to their writing, and share their writing with others to develop their writing skills. By writing skills, I mean each student's ability to create unique texts that represent their creative capabilities for using the writing process and genre features to share their thoughts and ideas. The cyclical, nonlinear nature of the writing process helps students develop their writing skills because writing is a skill that only develops with proficient repetition. Navigating the writing process while combining genre features requires repetition because both processes are different for every text a student creates. For example, a student may execute their prewriting plan for one text, then find themselves return to the Prewriting stage of the writing process to develop a new plan after receiving feedback during the Revising stage of the writing process. Knowing when the process is working well and when changes need to be made are creative capabilities that students develop over time.

5.1 Limitations

This study, like all studies, had some limitations. First, this study was conducted in a private school system with private middle school and high school students. As Graham, Hebert, Sandbank, & Harris (2016) point out, additional research will be needed to replicate this study in urban and

rural locations and with public/charter middle school and high school students. Second, students' argumentative essays for this study are not representative of all genres of writing that process and genre approaches can be applied to because this study focused on a single genre of writing. Additionally, students' argumentative essays were analyzed only for specific genre features, not for overall quality.

Several sources of variability contributed to variance in students' argumentative essays, including each students' mode of writing, paper and pen or word processing, and time restrictions. As Graham, Hebert, Sandbank, & Harris (2016) point out, additional research will be needed to examine the effects these sources of variability have on students' argumentative essays. In addition, the sample size for this study was limited and not under control of the research team as only Fusion Academy Tysons students enrolled in courses taught by the

principal investigator, Arnold Thomas Bigger, participated in this study. Overall, this study, although somewhat narrow in scope, has highlighted several opportunities for changes in my teaching practice that I hope to address in the future and that other educators might reflect on, too.

5.2 Implications

Five salient opportunities for changes in my teaching practice were demonstrated by this study. First, this study demonstrated a need to ask students questions about their processes for completing their writing assignments. By questions about their processes, I mean asking students to explain to me how they are reading their assignment prompt before they begin reading texts, interpreting what the prompt is asking them to do, rereading their assignment prompt before they submit their essay and doing what the prompt asked them to do. For example, I asked Quinn to

explain his process for recognizing characterization and identity in each text and to explain his process for discovering a specific message about identity in each text. Asking students to explain their process allowed me as a teacher to identify when students did not understand what their assignment was asking them to do. That gave me the opportunity to make immediate changes to how I explained the assignment so the students could engage in independent work with a clear understanding of the task. Once students were comfortable sharing their reading and writing processes, several of them also shared their processes for deciding which text to read first when they were assigned multiple texts.

Second, this study demonstrated a need for me to ask my students questions about their understanding, or lack of understanding, of genre features. By questions about their understanding, or lack of understanding, I mean asking students to explain to me if they (1) can define genre features and (2) can identify genre features in texts. Although all six students incorporated some genre features in their essays, three out of fourteen genre features used in this study were absent from all six students' essays and several students applied genre features inconsistently throughout their essays. Some students seemed to be able to define genre features but seemed not to be able to identify them in texts, which might explain why students applied genre features inconsistently throughout their essays. Asking students to define and identify genre features before they begin reading texts seemed to help students use genre features more consistently throughout their essays.

Third, this study demonstrated to me that I needed to teach students about the writing process explicitly to help them complete plans developed during their prewriting. Even some high school students did not have a complete understanding of the writing process. Several students developed strong plans in their prewriting but did not execute these plans in their drafts, such as not using genre features from the thesis statement throughout the draft. Students benefitted from

greater explanations on how to use prewriting to write a separate first draft as well as how to revise with audience expectations and understanding in mind.

Fourth, this study demonstrated a need to incorporate writing processes and genre approaches together to provide students with scaffolding by breaking assignment into more manageable parts. For example, I have started to provide student with graphic organizers to break their assignment prompts into parts. Because there is a lot more to writing than understanding the prompt, some students used their graphic organizers to help them better understand the argumentative writing genre by separating genre features in their prewriting. Students focused on the genre features Position, Applying Literary Terminology, Consistency, Grounds, Restatement, and Topic Sentences, which became a strategy for them to use genre features from their thesis statements throughout their drafts.

Fifth, this study demonstrated a need for students to get feedback from an audience other than their teacher in order to more clearly and completely explain their ideas to an audience less familiar with their assignments and texts. The places where students' argumentative essays were less clear and comprehensive were often tied to an absence of a genre feature, such as literary terminology or topic sentences. Some of their essays read more like conversational letters written to me. Thus, another change that I have made in my teaching strategies is that I incorporate opportunities for my students to collect feedback from other students and faculty members on campus to help them see where a wider audience would expect greater explanation or clarity. After a student completes their first draft, I print five copies of their draft for them to give to five people for feedback on their writing, which gives students feedback from an audience other than their teacher. I plan to recommend this feedback strategy to my department head after this study is defended and implement it with my new group of students next term.

5.3 Teachable Moments

Looking back at all the moments from this study, two teachable moments stand out more than any others because I am sure benefits were gained by both the students in this study and their teacher. The first teachable moment was when I asked Xen, who had learned about the writing process from another teacher in a previous school, to submit their prewriting, to which Xen commented that their previous teacher had never collected their prewriting. Having been a teenager once myself, I asked Xen if knowing that their previous teacher never collected their prewriting ever resulted in their not completing prewriting for their writing assignments, to which Xen admitted that they often had not completed prewriting for their writing assignments. I explained to Xen that I collect prewriting from students to confirm that they are following the steps of the writing process because the writing process does not work well when steps are completed incorrectly or are not completed. I compared the writing process to the process people use to tie their shoelaces: most of the time people do not need to look at their shoelaces when they tie them because they have become proficient with the skill from years of repetition, but when people are distracted when they tie their shoelaces steps of the process are completed incorrectly or are not completed, and the laces come undone. Xen seemed to gain a better appreciation for the writing process, and I gained a better understanding for why teachers should provide students with explanations for why, not just how.

The second teachable moment was when I realized that the students in this study were not aware of how valuable time is as part of the writing process. I was surprised when students told me that they were not reading over their essays before submitting them because they did not have time. I compared time management to eating a pizza: most people do not try to eat a pizza as one piece, most people cut a pizza into eight slices and eat them one slice at a time. I let my students

know that they do not need to complete assignments for my course in one sitting, and they should use their prewriting to plan and organize the slices of their assignments. Students seemed to gain a better appreciation for managing the time they had to complete their assignments, and I gained a better understanding for why teachers should make sure students have time to complete their assignments.

One of the first lessons I learned as a student teacher was not to expect my lesson plans to go according to plan. Over my teaching career, my understanding of this lesson has expanded because the second lesson I learned as a teacher was not to expect lessons that worked for one student, or group of students, to work for the next student, or group of students. Not surprisingly, I learned both lessons not from my education nor my colleagues but from my students because my students often teach me how much I do not know. Some people might say that when students begin to teach their teacher it is evidence students have learned their lessons well. My experience has been that students begin to teach their teachers when teachers realize that everyone learns from other people if they watch what other people do and listen to what other people say because the relationship between teaching and learning is complementary. I learned so much from my students about their proficiency with and knowledge of process and genre approaches to writing and how I can adjust my teaching to better support their development. Perhaps my next study should investigate how students inform their teachers about process and genre approaches to writing.

Appendix A Interview Protocol

Interview Question
Probe
1. Thinking about your writing, what does argumentative writing mean to you?
Can you give specific examples of how you make your writing argumentative?
2. What was your last argumentative essay about?
Can you give me specific examples about what made your essay argumentative?
3. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does audience mean to you?
Have you ever written an argumentative essay for someone other than a teacher?
4. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does purpose mean to you?
Can you give me specific examples of a purpose you have written for?
5. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, can you tell me what you did to start writing?
Can you explain what worked well and why you did it?
6. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does prewriting mean to you?
Can you give specific examples of how you plan your writing?
7. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does drafting mean to you?
Can you describe the 1st draft of your last argumentative essay?

8. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does revising mean to you?

Can you give specific examples of when you made revisions in your last argumentative essay?

9. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does editing mean to you?

Can you give specific examples of how you made corrections to your last argumentative essay?

10. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does publishing mean to you?

Can you give specific examples of when you have offered your writing to someone other than a teacher?

11. Who usually gives you feedback on your writing?

Who do you get feedback from other than your teacher?

12. How do you use feedback?

Can you give specific examples of how you used feedback in your last argumentative essay?

13. Thinking about feedback for your last argumentative essay, can you describe any word choice or language changes you made because of feedback you received?

Probe — Can you explain why you made changes because of feedback you received?

14. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, can you tell me what changes you would make for a different communication format, such as an email, a speech, or presentation, other than your essay format?

Can you explain why you would, or would not, make changes to your argumentative essays?

15. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, can you tell me how you organized your writing to support your argument?

Can you explain how your organization made your essay argumentative?

16. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, can you tell me how your cultural perspectives and life experiences influenced your word choices or language use?

Can you give me specific examples of how your word choices or language made your essay argumentative?

17. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, can you give me examples of different opinions other people might have about your argument?

Can you explain why other people might have different opinions about your argument?

18. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, can you tell me how you chose support for your argument?

Can you explain how the support you chose for your argument made your essay argumentative?

19. Thinking about your last argumentative essay, can you tell me how your cultural perspectives and life experiences influenced your position on your topic?

Can you give me specific examples of how your cultural perspectives and life experiences influenced your position on your topic?

20. Can you think of a time when you learned about the writing process from another teacher?

Can you give specific examples of what you learned about the writing process?

Appendix B Clarifying Questions Added During the Study

Interview Question Clarifying Question
Thinking about your writing, what does argumentative writing mean to you? How do you distinguish argumentative writing from persuasive writing?
Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does revising mean to you? Were the changes that you made, were they specifically because of feedback you received or because you were proofreading it yourself?
Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does editing mean to you? What would you say is the distinction between the two, editing and revising?
How do you use feedback? What I notice you said that this is infrequent, or it happens rarely that you apply feedback people give you…can you tell me why that is?

Appendix C Interview Question Responses by Student

Student	Interview Question	Response
Ashok	Thinking about your writing, what does argumentative writing mean to you?	"Argumentative writing is to me like…you've gotta be very creative with it because you wanna make sure the story you're writing about or whatever you're writing about that day is…very interesting to the reader or whoever you're writing to, so it intrigues them to encouragely read the story with joy."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does audience mean to you?	"Audience…I don't really pay attention to it because, uh…I like to focus on the main part which is the writing…audience is very important not to me but others because you want to actually like…make the story very interesting for the audience so they can actually enjoy reading your story… just for me in general audience isn't very important to me 'cause I don't care if you don't like my story as long as I've put my all into it."

Ashok	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does prewriting mean to you?	"Prewriting is like…basically what ideas you've got in your head and writing them down and um…I like prewriting because it's a good thing because you always need to write down your thoughts before you jump into the real thing."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does drafting mean to you?	"Drafting is like your clean slate…essentially you write freely but at the same time you wanna try to…get everything right …drafting is easy because you can easily pick out your mistakes when you finish…cause it's not your final submitting."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does revising mean to you?	"Revising is basically fixing your mistakes… if you see something you mess up on you ain't gonna just leave it there…you revise the paper to make it to what it's supposed to be."

Ashok	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does editing mean to you?	"Editing…same as revising, I usually see revising and editing as the same thing…because editing is like, fix all the minor mistakes you made…although you add all the things you need to make to the paper as…as possible for the best period or make the best interesting story for your audience…that's why I think editing and revising are the same thing for me to be honest…because you don't wanna give your college professor a…a paper and it's is spelled wrong or something…that's what you need editing for."
	What would you say is the distinction between the two, editing and revising?	"…I think editing and revising are the same thing for me to be honest."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does publishing mean to you?	"Publishing, ah…basically your final marking point I guess…you just…send it through…you, you pray to God that it's a good grade…that's what publishing is."

Ashok	Who usually gives you feedback on your writing?	"Usually, my parents or usually, my ex-girlfriend…and my aunt too…she does that stuff for a living…I let her...just look at the paper and say…tell me what's wrong with it."
	How do you use feedback?	"Usually, I use it in like…ways to help out my paper…just to see if the feedback could be useful for the paper or not…cause some feedback is not…sometimes it's not useful for your paper…so I gotta…first off, analyze what feedback I got…see what could be put forth into the paper."
	Can you think of a time when you learned about the writing process from another teacher?	"I don't…you definitely taught it the way it's supposed to be taught, I would say that, but um…public school teachers don't really teach you the full steps of the writing process…I learned a lot more from the writing process from you than any other teacher I ever had…there used to be three steps to me but now there's five steps to me."

Bodhi	Thinking about your writing, what does argumentative writing mean to you?	"I think making a more direct point than persuasive writing…this is like this because of this…as like a formula for a claim."
	How do you distinguish argumentative writing from persuasive writing?	"Persuasive writing it's, um…your own perspective as well as the other side…in argumentative it's more solely focused on what you're talking about and less opinionated...not less opinionated but less…wishy-washy."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does audience mean to you?	"Whoever is reading the piece…when you write you should know who your audience is and write accordingly for whoever's gonna intake what you write."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does prewriting mean to you?	"…getting your first impressions on a piece of writing…you make like annotations and like also writing down what you think about it and then…uh…what ideas about what you're goanna write like bullet points."

Bodhi	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does drafting mean to you?	"Putting the prewriting together in a way that makes more sense and is a fluid piece of writing."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does revising mean to you?	"…just looking through it a lot…and getting other's opinions too of what doesn't make sense like fixing it or like grammar, spelling, and stuff."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does editing mean to you?	"…a more fine-tuned version of revising…like, just like after you make the most revisions like you go back and fix like smaller things."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does publishing mean to you?	"…putting it in the correct format if you haven't already like getting a final draft."
	Who usually gives you feedback on your writing?	"I have a friend who's in ninth grade and her older sister is like really smart."

Bodhi	How do you use feedback?	"I try to like incorporate it in things."
	Can you think of a time when you learned about the writing process from another teacher?	"…we had like a handout that had like the five steps."
Haskell	Thinking about your writing, what does argumentative writing mean to you?	"Argumentative writing means…that you want to try to convey your points…through your writing and…you want the reader to kind of see things how you do…and why others should believe it's true."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does prewriting mean to you?	"Prewriting is…setting up all your evidence and information making it organized and clear but not actually drafting anything…you're just kind of organizing your information however you wish."

Haskell	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does drafting mean to you?	"Drafting means…taking all the information you've collected and…kind of creating a structure…for your essay."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does revising mean to you?	"Revising means…going through the drafts or…your completed product…revision is…looking over a draft or an essay and…looking for anything you want to change or maybe grammatical mistakes or anything like that…actually, well that's editing…revision is kind of just looking over it and identifying what you want to change…editing is actually changing it."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does publishing mean to you?	"Publishing means…you're confident in what you've…written or maybe not…confident and you still want to publish it…what publishing means is that everything is completed, and you've looked over it all and it's ready to go"

	Who usually gives you feedback on your writing?	"My friend…or, secondary, my parents."
Haskell	How do you use feedback?	"It's pretty infrequent that I do, but…when I do…grammatical errors are obviously immediately fixed…some things about like…content…so I don't…change it exactly how they say it but I take their comments and I…keep them…and I make the…edit based on how, what, how I think it'll fit in the essay."
Kyaw	Thinking about your writing, what does argumentative writing mean to you?	"Argumentative writing is a way for me to…spreading the truth, in a way…about things that have really happened…people get a different viewpoint instead of just one so that we look at multiple different things instead of just…narrowing their view down to what they think is appropriate according to societal structure."

	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does audience mean to you?	"…there's plenty of different audiences, you got age, gender, race, ethnicity…like you could write something for a specific group of people who live in one place…your target group of people who don't understand."
Kyaw	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does prewriting mean to you?	"Prewriting is a way to develop your argument…if you have a direction…you want to go in…you could add on to it."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does drafting mean to you?	"…it just gives you time to think about what you're writing so you can look over it multiple times."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does revising mean to you?	"I don't know…if you feel like something's to harsh, like you're censoring it in a way, or you're making it a little easier to comprehend."

	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does editing mean to you?	"I feel like editing's personally just review…to just get advice on what you think grammatically, how it could be changed…get a reaction from people to see what they think about your writing."
Kyaw	Who usually gives you feedback on your writing?	"I sometimes reach out to my friends and ask them to look at it or sometimes family members."
	How do you use feedback?	"… they definitely help me improve my writing…I think sometimes when you get in your writing you can get a little bit stuck to one viewpoint, so it's good to have a friend be like "hey, the point of this writing, you even said this, the point of your writing is to get multiple viewpoints in it so like what the hell are you doing, come on do better."

Quinn	Thinking about your writing, what does argumentative writing mean to you?	"…trying to convince the reader…to like stand with your viewpoint…you have to use a lot of evidence and…specific claims to prove why they should, why they should like believe you."
	How do you distinguish argumentative writing from persuasive writing?	"I think argumentative is more like…formal and like…formatted…a bit more organized in thought…I think persuasive is more like…more gentile…not as much being like "this is the truth" and this is why."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does audience mean to you?	"…just the person or people who you're writing for, so you kind of have to cater a bit to their mind set…like if you're writing an argumentative essay about why peaches are better than pears and you're writing it for an audience of people who think pears are better than peaches you're gonna have to do a lot more work…than if it was an audience who already thinks that peaches are better than pears."

	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does prewriting mean to you?	"…it's just like…the amalgamation of thought and, and like examples, and just kind of like, um…just the preliminary thing that you do before you actually start word vomiting…so that you have a baseline for what you're going to word vomit."
Quinn	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does drafting mean to you?	"I think it's just organizing your word vomit."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does revising mean to you?	"I know there's a difference between revising and editing but I don't remember what it is and, so I kind of consider revising and editing the same thing in my head—so, it's just like…getting another person to look at it to see any mistakes that you actually— grammar or spelling or if there's a word choice or something— and then, also going through and looking to be like is there a different way I could say this that would be…better or like it would, more clearly convey the message that you want to convey"

Quinn	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does publishing mean to you?	"Putting your stuff out into the world, basically."
	Who usually gives you feedback on your writing?	"Teachers…peer review stuff, like that was teacher forced, so it wasn't like, by choice, um…I've tried doing it with my parents once but that didn't go well, they stressed me out, so I don't ask them to look at my essays anymore."
	How do you use feedback?	"…it's usually just like you need to connect this to your main idea or something, so then I'm like oh you're right I didn't do that so, I write a sentence or two about it."
	Can you think of a time when you learned about the writing process from another teacher?	"I've block out those memories…I don't remember, I mean any of the advice that they gave me kind of really wasn't that helpful…I remember when one teacher's advice…it was just like this is how you do this thing…and…it was like…how to like sneak in your quotes into a thing without it being like…clunky and unnatural."

| Xen | Thinking about your writing, what does argumentative writing mean to you? | "OK, I don't want to give a definition because that's too easy… I think, honestly, I can't think of much right now …I don't know, I guess a document for a, ah…an essay or a document that, ah, its sole purpose is to persuade, ah the reader of said document to, ah be able to draw connections and to provide an opinion…just trying to persuade your reader to, ah agree with or believe the opinion that you propose, ah…it's based on evidence, right, so you need to have evidence to base your claim, it depends on, like the context of its, ah centered around literature or culture or whatever, uh you base it around your viewpoint and what you take away from the topic that was your assignment." |

Xen	How do you distinguish argumentative writing from persuasive writing?	"…an argumentative essay…it's more based around one, like point of view, the individual's point of view on the issue or the subject that he was given…I guess a persuasive essay would be more…it's more direct for…a persuasive essay is more about persuading someone and an argumentative essay is more about providing an argument, like or a claim, uh so I guess…an argumentative would be just to express your position and not really need to persuade anyone, uh it can be as unbiased as possible or as biased as possible, an argumentative essay is more streamlined more, more like well written, more descriptive, a persuasive essay is kind of more, more based around, like what you want to say, a persuasive one would usually like be something that you're more passionate about more, like you feel, you feel more strongly about, and the argumentative essay would be more like based on your facts or your evidence."

Xen	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does audience mean to you?	"…I think audience is, it can, it can be singular or it can be plural, it can be a person who's reading it, it could be a group of people, I don't know if this is specifically writing related or if it's just like audience in general, ah I think an audience is kind of just any sort of like other, ah…what's the word, like…spectator or, um reader actually who witnesses your creation or whatever."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does prewriting mean to you?	"…my prewrites generally are just like small summaries of like, this is what I'm gonna do, this I how I'm gonna do it, and I'm gonna go do."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does drafting mean to you?	"…drafting is the easy part and, um…I usually get hung up on the, either the direction of the draft, the like, if the, the subject matter actually relates to the argument, or whatever."

| Xen | Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does revising mean to you? | "…looking at, like, kind of going line by line, or paragraph, I'll group things, ah by like, I, I have to go down each paragraph, each line and then have to draw like how, how does this work, right like how does like, how do these words have any sort of impact or meaning and how can I change them to make sure that they have more impact and meaning, the last one that I check for is always grammar, ah I always revise grammar last because I know I mess up sometimes…that's like, that's the most meticulous part for me, I guess that's what I do to revise but it's, all depends on like how crappy my essay is…or if it's not crappy and I already changed it how can I change it back or how can I?" |

	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does editing mean to you?	"…like, I guess what, is editing, ah…kind of trying, just making things as clear and not…all over the place a possible, you wanna get your point across, you wanna make sure that it's, ah…ah readable, legible, ah understandable, ah comprehendible and etcetera."
Xen	What would you say is the distinction between the two, editing and revising?	"… editing is more like, like when I said like I go through line by line or sentence by sentence, and revising is more, ah it's more based on, around like the whole tone or like the direction of, of the thing you're writing, right, it's more, ah, it has a lot more like…gravity."
	Thinking about your last argumentative essay, what does publishing mean to you?	"…publishing is…I think of, I make a direct connection to distribution…publishing is like the, it is technically like the final step in ensuring your work is like…ah, like, like I guess, ah…finalized."

Xen	Who usually gives you feedback on your writing?	"…well, I like to go to credible sources, people who aren't complete doofuses…I like to go to, rely on very credible and very, ah scholarly sources, like ah…maybe intelligent sources, like… ah, credible, credible individuals."
	How do you use feedback?	"…I use it as a reference, like depending on the gravity it can restructure a whole essay, I could rewrite the whole essay because of it…so I guess it, like, that's dependent on how the feedback is, like how it's received, at least like when I, like when I get it…like anything from like star editing changes to like writing a whole new essay."
	Can you think of a time when you learned about the writing process from another teacher?	"…big ups to my ninth, ninth grade English teacher…I just want to say my ninth grade English teacher, like every day we had lessons on different, ah…like…I guess English related subjects and they were all, it was like really intense, I

Xen		remember because we had to, ah we'd write like seven or eight of notes a day based off of different, like, ah…writing styles, different, ah…grammar, like different grammar structures, different et cetera, and it was so intense, I remember it being like the most intense English class…it was very rewarding because I learned a lot, uh and I was able to apply it, ah…I really enjoyed learning about like tone and perspective, ah…in writing because I feel like they really shape, ah…like anything related to writing like if you, like there are so many different ways an author can express himself through tone and through perspective that like…I think that…it can make for a really interesting read or it can make a really compelling argument."

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