

# From Consumer to Producer

## Delving Deeper into Writing Situations

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### Learning Objective/Grading Criteria-- A Successful Project Packet Will:

- chronicle the features of a genre or genres within an activity system and explore why producers adhere to these conventions
- explain the various factors that impact production of a particular text, with particular use of cultural-historical activity theory
- document research into a particular writing situation or activity system surrounding a familiar genre that a student typically uses, but does not produce
- experiment in producing a part of a text in this activity system and describe how this investigation provides insight into genres imbedded in it
- demonstrate a robust writing research approach in data collection, then summarize and articulate this research in a report that utilizes appropriate citation

**Introduction:** For this project, students will study a particular genre of writing or type of text that they typically use, but do not produce. By turning their perspective from a user to a producer of this kind of writing, students will focus their investigation on the various factors that impact writers who produce this text and the system in which they do so. Students will explore the concept of genre and writing research by learning all they can about an activity system in which that genre is embedded, then experimenting with the genre by creating a portion of a sample text in that genre, chronicling how this experience changes their perception about the conventions, features, and expectations of this genre.

Research and data collection should include a study of the audience, purpose, characteristics, and expectations of the genre, but also delve into cultural and historic factors of production, including the tools/medium used to produce the text, the objectives and motives of individuals who engage in textual production within this system, and both the pragmatic and socio-cultural elements that shape the choices that go into the production of a text.



### Project Requirements:

- Detailed **field notes** demonstrating a robust investigation into a genre and activity system.
- A **summary report** that outlines findings, methodology, and conclusions. This report should use citation to explain the source of information collected.
- Experimental **production of a text** or portion of a text in the genre, annotated to note writing choices and moments of learning.

### Project Due Date:

## Assignment Details

### Writing Research Field Notes and Activity System Report (20% of final grade)

Field notes may be kept and collected in any format or medium, but should be detailed and thorough enough to demonstrate a robust study of the writing situation.

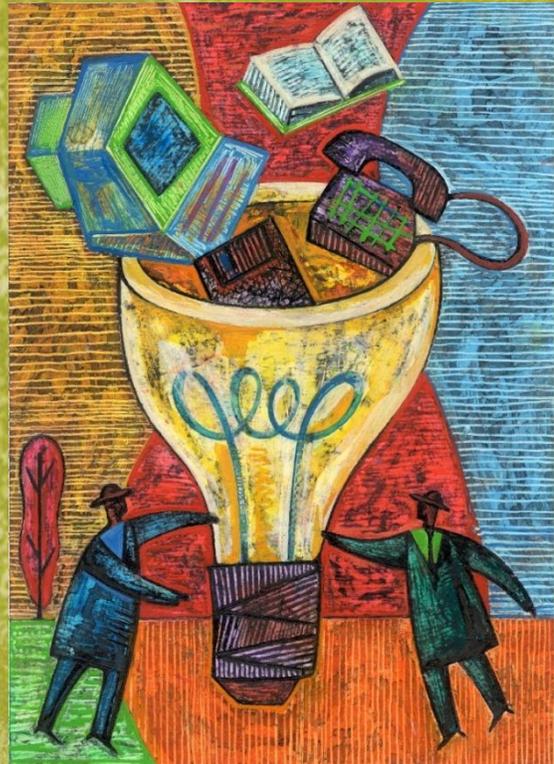
Field notes convey research and analysis of the conventions, expectations, characteristics, and style of a self-selected genre and comment on contextual factors affecting textual production. These notes consider especially the cultural/historic situation surrounding choices writers make to produce a text in this genre and how choices are affected by context.

The activity system report summarizes information and data collected and make specific commentary about why writers make specific choices that are noted as common to a particular type of writing. It should also draw conclusions about the factors of the system studied, showing insight into this writing situation and its complexity. Data collection and research should be cited throughout the activity system report.



### Textual Experimentation and Annotation (10% of final grade)

Part of data collection for the field notes and activity system report should include experimentation with textual production of a genre or genres within the system a student chooses to study. Students should attempt to create a portion of a text in the genre they have chosen to focus their study on. During this experimentation, students will annotate their discoveries about the genre and chronicle their writing choices. While this textual experiment need not be “successful” (in creating a thriving example of the genre), but should offer learning opportunities that must be recorded in the field notes and summary report.



### Topics Covered During This Project:

- What does it mean to be a writing researcher and collect data about a writing situation? What approaches might researchers take to investigate a genre or activity system?
- What factors affect the production of texts? What is cultural-historic activity theory and how can it be used as a model to guide writing research?
- How do writers make writing choices based on an understanding of the audience, purpose, conventions, and expectations of the genre in which they are producing a text?
- How is the perspective of a user/consumer of a text similar and different than the producer of this text?
- What are the conventions and expectations of a report about a genre or writing situation?
- What is the purpose and function of citation in genre reporting and writing research?