"Reading to Write" in East Asian Studies

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Abstract: A reading-writing initiative began in 2011-12 at the University of Toronto as a partnership between an East Asian Studies (EAS) department and an English Language Learning (ELL) Program. In this institution, students are expected to enter into scholarly discussions in their first year essays, yet many (both native English speakers and non-native speakers) did not seem to adequately comprehend or to complete the assigned reading. With a large number of multilingual students enrolled in its courses, EAS was seen as the ideal site to pilot integrated support for English language proficiency. Language-teaching methodology related to reading comprehension, vocabulary expansion, and academic writing was adapted to the disciplinary material and embedded in the curriculum of weekly tutorial (small group) sessions led by TAs. The initiative has resulted in a rapid development in TAs' teaching ability as well as a rise in EAS department morale. The perception among TAs and faculty is that the quality of students' reading and writing has also improved.[1]

Cultural Changes in the University

At a recent community event, some colleagues in Toronto were bantering about how many of their students are—in these professors' view— "illiterate in three languages." That designation was received appreciatively by this group of faculty who are also multilingual, with a high level of literacy in at least two languages. One of them added that these supposed illiterates are "my favourite kind of students!" In this odd mix of deprecation and admiration, the conversation was a microcosm of the ways the "multilingual majority" (Hall, 2009) in Toronto's university population is perceived. This view of students reflects the complexities and disruptions that have occurred in the young lives of so many of them, and which have led to their linguistic state of being (Johns, 2005).

Within these deep cultural changes, teaching methods are rapidly evolving. This article will discuss the development of "Reading to Write," a recently launched pedagogical experiment in two large, introductory East Asian Studies (EAS) courses at the University of Toronto (UT). English language instruction, in which primacy was given to fostering academic reading ability, was integrated into these two courses through a collaborative initiative with the English Language Learning Program ELL) http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell. Though the initiative is ongoing, the focus here will be on its first academic year, 2011-12.

Undergraduate students in UT's Faculty of Arts and Science, to which EAS belongs, come from 140 different countries and number 23,702 ("About Arts & Science" 2012). Many (40-50%) are first

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generation university students. UT has a policy of "guaranteed access," in that financial means are arranged for all accepted students, and the institution serves many Toronto residents, 40% of whom were born outside Canada. There is also a large cohort of international students, who are admitted to UT on the basis of their grades and TOEFL scores, yet commonly discover that a high TOEFL score does not necessarily mean they are prepared for work in a large research institution, where students are expected to read, discuss, and write in response to scholarly texts in their first year. The university has a well-developed system of writing centres and a WAC program, both of which have provided support to this initiative. The ELL Program also offers non-credit courses and drop-in activities for multilingual students. However, there is no required English or composition course, and there are no credit-based ESL courses. Given the scale of the need to address English language development, the goal of the initiative was to create a model that could be exported from EAS to other departments. In order to achieve this, it has been necessary to work toward a deep cultural shift around multilingualism, to build what Zamel (2004, p.7) terms "the model of possibility."

Raising Awareness about Multilingualism

Several years of preparatory groundwork preceded the EAS initiative. During this time, individual sessions were given by the ELL coordinator to groups of TAs across the disciplines, in cooperation with the WAC and TA Training programs. Topics included the functions of language in students' layered identities (Ferreira & Mendelowitz, 2009; Hafernik, 2012), teaching multilingual students (Freedman, 2012b), and marking papers in a multilingual environment (Freedman, 2012b). Resources for faculty and teaching assistants were disseminated on the Writing at UT website http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/faculty and at new faculty orientation sessions. The non-credit Intensive Academic English course offered to students by the ELL program had also generated curricular models and "content based" materials (Song, 2006; Stoller, 2002) which could be adapted to credit courses. When funding became available for a larger project, it was apparent that the most fruitful place to start was with a reconsideration of the role of reading in the academic lives of students. Initial sessions on how to incorporate reading strategies instruction into the discussion of a disciplinary text (Freedman, 2012c) had been given for faculty and TAs, and the strong responses—both positive and negative—indicated that this topic touched a nerve.

In just a few years, the initial surprise at the suggestion that students in a university requiring a very high GPA for entry might need reading instruction has begun to give way to acceptance and enthusiasm. It has been helpful to expose TAs and faculty to recent research on reading comprehension among university students, which explores the reasons for non-compliance (Hoeft, 2012) as well as students' perception of their level of comprehension vs. their actual understanding (Manarin, 2012). Instructors and TAs now see that "ESL" issues are intertwined with issues of migration, class, and educational background, and that our native-speaker population also benefits from the attention to English proficiency.

Creating an Instructional Model

The goal of the "Reading to Write" initiative was to integrate language instruction with the regular curriculum (Cox, 2011) of two large first-year East Asian Studies courses which attract many international and multilingual students. Reading was seen as the most fundamental area to address, underlying the difficulties many of the students have with research, writing, vocabulary, and speaking. At initial meetings with the EAS department, the ELL coordinator discussed the "reciprocity" between reading and writing (Leki, 2001) and the need to address the more visible writing issues through the disciplinary reading that informs writing (Grabe, 2001; Matsuda, 2001).

This department was not involved in the university's WAC program, though many of its students had taken part in voluntary, non-credit ELL programming (see http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell), so their reading difficulties were familiar to the ELL coordinator. EAS also has the advantage that faculty and TAs have first hand experience with attaining a high level of literacy in an additional language, either English or an Asian language. Given these factors, EAS was seen as an ideal site for piloting this approach, which would attempt to embed language-learning strategies that would be useful to both native English speaker and non-native speaker students.

Although these are large lecture courses with about 200 students per class, the students also have a weekly 50-minute session or "tutorial" with a teaching assistant, in groups of about 25. It was decided that all 12 weeks of the TA-led tutorial sessions would be reshaped to include the teaching and practice of strategies for high-level academic reading and writing. The faculty and Lead TA wanted to address the problems of past iterations of the courses, in which students had relied on TAs to summarize points from the professor's lectures and from the readings—in effect, making it possible for students to avoid reading. The initiative was seized as an opportunity to make the tutorials a more active learning environment, one that would scaffold the readings and the essay writing for students without removing the need to tackle the materials on their own.

The university's WAC program provided a ready-made TA development model. In the WAC program, departments choose a Lead TA who receives intensive training in writing pedagogy. In turn, the Lead TA trains the TAs in particular courses to deliver writing instruction as part of one or more tutorials, among other, related duties ("Writing Instruction," 2011). In this pilot phase of the initiative, the Lead TA was largely trained one-to-one with the ELL coordinator. However, more of this necessary background knowledge is currently being integrated into the WAC training, and cooperation between the two programs has accelerated. In the "Reading to Write" initiative, the EAS Lead TA held several developmental workshops with the course TAs each term, in which TAs simulated some of the in-tutorial activities they were expected to lead. In some of these sessions, the materials used to demonstrate methods of teaching reading strategies were taken from the literature on multilingual learners, so that TAs were simultaneously introduced to the ideas of Vivian Zamel, Ilona Leki, and other researchers.

During this preparatory period, the ELL coordinator did not encourage EAS faculty members to change or delete readings they traditionally assigned or to lessen the amount of required reading. The faculty members reflected on their choices of reading, and some changes were made, but generally the initiative has emphasized helping students rise to the expected level of achievement. The essay assignments in both courses were redesigned to emphasize the structures common in EAS literature. As well, six shorter, "low-stakes" writing assignments were designed and added to each course. In its emphasis on addressing the needs of language-learners through faculty development, the "Reading to Write" initiative reflects the CCCC position statement on Second Language Writing and Writers. This emphasis also ensures that a strong departmental culture of attention to language-learning began and continues to develop in EAS.

Redesigning EAS Tutorials

The first step in preparing tutorial materials was for the ELL coordinator to produce a series of short handouts describing various reading and language-learning strategies. The approach is similar to what might be used in an advanced English-language course, in which students are learning to read scholarly texts. Some of the methods were adapted from the ELL coordinator's experience abroad teaching English as a Foreign Language to advanced undergraduates as well as MA and PhD

candidates. However, language development was not mentioned to the EAS students in a way that might label these methods as "ESL"-related. Rather, the methods were presented as techniques that can assist nearly every reader or writer, whether one is working in an additional or a native language. (The course professor immediately found that he could profitably apply these techniques in his native language, which is English, and made this known. The Lead TA found that the strategies enabled her to process more reading material in her second language, which is Japanese, and she communicated similar excitement).

The strategies presented in the handouts in the first term were: (1) previewing (see Appendix A); (2) skimming and scanning; (3) active reading; (4) learning vocabulary from context clues; (5) summarizing, and (6) distinguishing an author's opinion (as opposed to the opinion of a cited source). In the second term, some of these earlier strategies were applied in new ways, and additional handouts were developed on: (7) distinguishing between information and argument; (8) how information is used in an argument and (9) the visual mapping of an article (Freedman, 2012a). All of these are posted in the Resources for Students section of the ELL website: http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell/resources-for-students.

Using these ELL handouts as a basis, the Lead TA created six online "low-stakes" writing assignments for each course, a plan inspired in part by Khoo's (2007) successful use of email as a medium for critical reading/writing practice by English-language students. In the Fall EAS course, an introduction to pre-modern East Asian history, these brief assignments fell into two distinct categories. The first few were accounts of the students' own experiences with these strategies, as applied to the collection of primary historical documents that formed the bulk of the Fall course reading. For example, in the first assignment, students applied previewing strategies to one of a group of texts (such as excerpts from Confucius' *Analects*) and then wrote a thorough account of their pre-reading examination of the historical context for the writings; conditions under which the material was written down, and possible reasons for the texts' inclusion in this course. The last few assignments introduced a more formal method for summarizing and also required an informal "thought" response, or active reading, conceived as the first stage of formulating a critical reading response. These assignments are reflective and personal, yet they are also linked to the disciplinary material. Students are thus given a chance to get their bearings in the first weeks of university while simultaneously practicing academic writing and being given impetus to engage with the course readings.

In the Fall EAS course, students were introduced by their TAs to a particular strategy or aspect of the reading/writing process during tutorial. Students were then expected to apply the principles independently to new texts which would become the basis for the following week's tutorial discussion. The TAs were encouraged to use these strategies recursively throughout the semester and also into the spring course. Beginning the reading of a text with in-class previewing or skimming made reading into a social activity (one participant commented that it's like seeing a book trailer, and provides a similar motivation to read). This group attention to reading also gave opportunities for the TAs to define major terms that are not necessarily explained by the readings and cannot be learned through a dictionary definition (e.g. "modernity").

For the spring course, which is an introduction to modern East Asian history and for which the Fall course is a prerequisite, the Lead TA designed more complex "low-stakes" assignments, which required a combination of summary and critical response. The reading load in the spring course is heavier and more theoretical (for example, students are expected to digest 100 pages of Lenin's "Imperialism"). Thus, the emphasis in the tutorials and writing assignments gradually shifted toward the elements of argument. The reading response assignments (submitted online) were read by the TAs prior to the tutorial session in which that reading was to be discussed (even if they didn't have time to mark the assignments ahead of the class meeting) so the TAs came to tutorial knowing what

students had not grasped in the reading. It was clear that "forcing" reading compliance did make the groups more prepared. Across the entire first year of the initiative, it was apparent to the experienced TAs that students were better able to participate and more engaged with the course material than in past iterations of these courses. Attendance at tutorials remained high, even though attendance was not part of the grade.

During this spring course, new methods were introduced, such as visually mapping an author's argument (see Appendix B), which the TAs demonstrated in tutorial and students then practiced independently on a different reading. It became apparent that some of the work on argument that was planned for this term could not be fit into the schedule, since the students needed more time to practice grasping the basics of an author's message. Students were introduced to the concept of how the selection of evidence functions to frame an historical argument, for example, but did not appear ready to formulate their own full critiques of authors' arguments. The requirements for the essay, while aiming at developing critical thinking, were centered on the thoughtful synthesis of course concepts. It was planned that in the second year of this pilot, the initiative would extend into a second-year theory course in which students would be introduced more fully to methods of argument and would be expected to critique sources in a more sophisticated manner.

The greater need to scaffold the spring readings prompted many of the TAs to concentrate on a method the Lead TA and ELL coordinator called "question-based active reading discussion." TAs would prepare a mix of comprehension and critical questions in advance and allow time for small group discussion while revisiting the assigned readings in tutorials. Since the students had been trying to read more actively since September, they were more likely to understand the benefits of engaging directly in a discussion of the reading with their classmates and TA, even if they hadn't fully understood it, and to see that to some extent they could piece together meanings collaboratively. The improved atmosphere of the tutorials also meant that they were more likely to ask questions.

Some TAs noted that students still seemed to focus primarily on the readings used in the low-stakes writing assignments and were often not as well prepared to discuss other readings. In other discussions, it was pointed out that students appeared to have done a significant amount of the reading, if not all of it, and had practiced articulating some of the course concepts prior to writing the research essay. On the whole, participants in this teaching initiative seemed to feel that department morale had been raised. At the end of the year, the Lead TA was nominated by students and faculty in EAS for the university's TA teaching excellence award, which she won. Another TA wrote to the ELL coordinator:

> I have definitely noticed that the quality of the written responses has greatly improved, particularly for our non-native English speakers, of whom there are many. The programme is definitely of use for our students, and I certainly hope that we are able to continue it in the future [...]

There was a perception among the TAs that the most negative student outcomes had been avoided, with a drop in failures that were previously linked to non-compliance with reading assignments and misperceptions about the reading material. The department's acting chair reported:

> Everyone involved is in agreement that the program is critically needed and should definitely continue—we just need to have more discussions on how to adapt it given what we have learned [...]

The main area addressed in these discussions was the need to retain sufficient tutorial time for the teaching of course content. Faculty and TAs differed as to the percentage of time they felt should be given to language instruction. It seems likely that the success of this "integrative" instruction also depends on the relative skill of the TA: The more experienced TAs seem to find it easier to fuse language instruction and course content into a more seamless whole.

Focus on Writing in EAS

By the time students in both courses were asked to write the research essay, which was based on a group of pre-selected readings, they had already submitted and received comments on many low-stakes writing pieces. This early practice in articulating the course concepts appeared to bear fruit in their essay-writing. A formal study has not been undertaken, but in their meetings with the ELL coordinator, the experienced TAs, professors, and the Lead TA have commented consistently on their perceptions of the virtual disappearance of "patch-writing" and a significant lessening of plagiarism, as well as the evidence of students' increased familiarity with course readings. The writing practice was enhanced by having students write a short paragraph at the end of each tutorial about what they had learned or what remained confusing to them. It was noted that their writing on these short pieces (for which no TA response was given) was often the best they did in the course.

In the training sessions, TAs were introduced to some of the theory of grading (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012) and the controversies over error-correction in second language writing (Casanave, 2007). Emphasis was placed on giving students comments that would prompt them toward deeper engagement with the English language and with the course readings and concepts. TAs became familiar with the method of writing comments that engage primarily on a conceptual level with the writer of even a poorly written paper containing many surface errors. This approach fit with the emphasis on reading in these courses and is also beneficial for the linguistic development of second language university-level writers (Zamel, 2004). An attempt was also made to give students some targeted error correction, particularly in areas where errors obscured meaning, and to refer them to the grammar explanations on the Purdue OWL website.

The process of writing the essay was scaffolded in both semesters, beginning with the reading responses, which could be used as the basis for an essay if the student wished to do so. In addition, three to four tutorial sessions were set aside for the discussion of the writing process (both at home essay writing and in-class exam writing were discussed by TAs) and for in-class work on the essay, which involved free writing, peer exchange, and informal feedback from the TA. The "Advice for Students" area of the Writing at U of T website (http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice) provided a number of ready-made materials that TAs could adapt for teaching essay organization (Plotnick, n.d. [a]), quoting and paraphrasing (Plotnick, n.d.[b]), and the documenting of sources (Procter, 2012). (Students were not allowed to use sources outside the pre-selected group of readings posted on the course website). One of the most direct ways in which the courses addressed language-learning was in the activity around thesis statements. In an early stage of the writing, students brought to tutorial a trial thesis and a list of evidence from sources in note form. In small groups, they then shared the thesis statement and also explained orally how they planned to draw from the sources to support the thesis. Since students were all familiar with the same sources, a discussion could then develop around which ideas or facts from these readings would best support each student's central concept.

In giving students a chance to talk through their synthesis of the readings at an early stage in the writing, the courses exemplified a pedagogy that recognizes the strong and complex links among critical reading, writing, oral ability, and listening comprehension which need to be fostered for academic success (Grabe, 2001; Williams, 2008; Yang, 2010). It is clear to many researchers that

discussion of difficult, complex topics orally as well as in writing helps students make linguistic progress (Casanave & Sosa, 2008), and that literacy proceeds most rapidly when language learning is embedded in "real" tasks which are meaningful to the student (Zamel, 2004). In addition to this, students participated in a peer exchange of drafts, through a guided activity prepared by the ELL coordinator (Freedman, 2012a) and were required to revise and resubmit their essays after they were marked by the TAs. Common problems in the essays were reviewed by the TAs in tutorial following the return of the first versions.

A Work-in-Progress

The "Reading to Write" initiative is a work-in-progress, in which the approach is still the subject of ongoing assessment, discussion, and debate. The questions include, but are not limited to

a. What is the relationship of this initiative and its broader application across departments, to the WAC program?
b. Does this approach also address the needs of both native-speaker and non-native-speaker students who have advanced English language proficiency?
c. How will language instruction be balanced with course content, especially in courses that rely more heavily on tutorials to deliver new content?
d. Will these methods accelerate English language proficiency in this largely multilingual student population?

Of these questions, the relationship of the ELL methods to the WAC program will likely be the easiest to determine, since the approaches naturally complement one another. Writing instructors have long been aware of the interrelatedness of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, and had made progress toward addressing other modalities even before ELL appeared. The writing centres, too, have a pedagogy that supports the approach of addressing more than one modality (e.g. speaking, writing, and listening). Proactive students often go to the writing centres for academic speaking practice or to address reading difficulties, even though these are not the centres' primary functions.

The question (b) of how well this approach can serve the needs of advanced students is entwined with the question (c) of how to balance language instruction with course content. The answers need to be crafted course by course as the methods are disseminated, since the ideal balance will vary with the particular student population taking the course as well as with the course content and level. TAs need to be consulted in this decision-making, since they are the ones experiencing the results of the intervention in the tutorial classroom. At the same time, faculty members, the Lead TA, and the ELL coordinator can provide concrete suggestions for addressing the full range of needs in the tutorial—from the linguistically advanced students who need a forum for trying out sophisticated arguments, to the less advanced students who need a clear definition of terms that are at the heart of the discipline. To some extent, this balance is what teaching always involves; the initiative simply causes more of these dilemmas to be articulated and provides more opportunity for discussion. Feedback from students on the quality of the tutorials and the uses they make of the strategies has also been sought and is being used in assessing the program's value and impact.

These assessments will also provide some answers to the question of (d) how helpful these interventions are for the multilingual population. It is important, however, that faculty, administrators, and TAs maintain the perspective that achieving high levels of literacy in a transnational, multilingual world is a lengthy and complex process. Linguistic development, like students' intellectual development in general, is often uneven and non-linear. Students need to

understand that successful performance in academic writing, which may be a more immediate goal, is linked to efforts in other areas which are often invisible to the people marking their papers. (e.g. a grader will comment on an overly general sentence, and it will be identified as a writing problem, but the same grader may not comment on or necessarily perceive the student's vague grasp of the reading material; the grade is given officially for the quality of the writing).

Finally, students need to develop the self-discipline to continue working independently toward a higher level of English proficiency, since the university does not require continuous instruction in English. Bensoussan's (2009) study showed that EFL students read in English mainly for information and academic purposes but rarely for pleasure, while Upton & Lee-Thompson (2001) have documented the extensive use made by many students of inner translation through the medium of their first languages. These researchers' observations help to explain the laborious progress students often make through their assigned texts; the joylessness with which many of them approach reading in English or in any language, and the reasons they are "too busy" (see Hoeft, 2012, p.13) to complete assigned reading.

The advantage of "Reading to Write" is that it intervenes early in the students' first university year, providing a set of strategies which can be applied throughout the undergraduate years and beyond. This approach takes into account the process students go through in increasing their English proficiency amidst a great flow of new experiences and information, which they are unlikely to be able to digest in a thorough, linear fashion. Thus, the initiative's methods provide direction and encouragement for students who cannot fully comprehend everything they hear and read at the beginning of their university life, and who will also need to continue developing their English language proficiency independently. Through this intervention, students can internalize a series of steps to draw upon in a wide variety of linguistic situations. This nurturing of productive language-learning habits early on can foster future success not only in our multilingual population but also in our native-speaker (often monolingual) population. All students stand to benefit from an educational environment in which English proficiency is emphasized through the dissemination of methods that acknowledge multilingualism and can also be used to attain proficiency in other languages.

Current Developments

The "Reading to Write" initiative was continued and expanded during 2012-13. Many of the TAs returned to teach in the introductory courses for a second year, already comfortable in their role and familiar with our methodology. These factors resulted in a smoother integration of the language-based instruction with the EAS course content. Important components of the continued instructional development included encouraging the TAs to create their own individual approaches to embedding language support unobtrusively into the tutorials, as well as facilitating their working more collaboratively with each other.

In the spring term, the initiative expanded into a second-year EAS course focused on theory. In addition to the recursive use of many of the reading strategies introduced in the 100-level courses, emphasis was placed on strategies for "close reading." The analytical reading of targeted passages with an eye toward theoretical tendency, authorial perspective, tone, and other elements of argument was modeled by the professor during lectures. Students then practiced close reading with guidance from TAs, who collaboratively developed critical questions to address in tutorials. The course also included several reading quizzes, or written demonstrations of analytical reading. On the whole, the students, many of whom completed all three EAS courses in this initiative, seemed more reflective about the content of their reading and their own reading practices, as well as better able to deploy

academic language. One TA commented that by the end of this term, "they [the students] were actually discussing the texts in the language of the texts."

Also during 2012-13, the "Reading to Write" initiative expanded into a third-year sociolinguistics course. In addition to introducing students to some of the reading strategies used in the EAS pilot, the team collaborated to produce several sophisticated, analytical reading and writing assignments requiring the interpretation of results. These assignments and the tutorial activities that support them model approaches to scholarly reading and language proficiency in upper-year courses, as well as across the sciences and social sciences. Plans for next year include developing methods for helping students acquire advanced vocabulary.

These current developments are already being shared across the disciplines through our WAC training as well as through invited presentations and consultations across the campus. A number of the WAC Lead TAs as well as course professors in various Faculty of Arts and Science departments and programs have begun to experiment independently with the integration of reading strategies instruction. It is anticipated that this shift in the culture of the university's approach to teaching writing will continue to gain momentum, and that new methods will emerge as these approaches are filtered through an increasing number of disciplinary curricula.

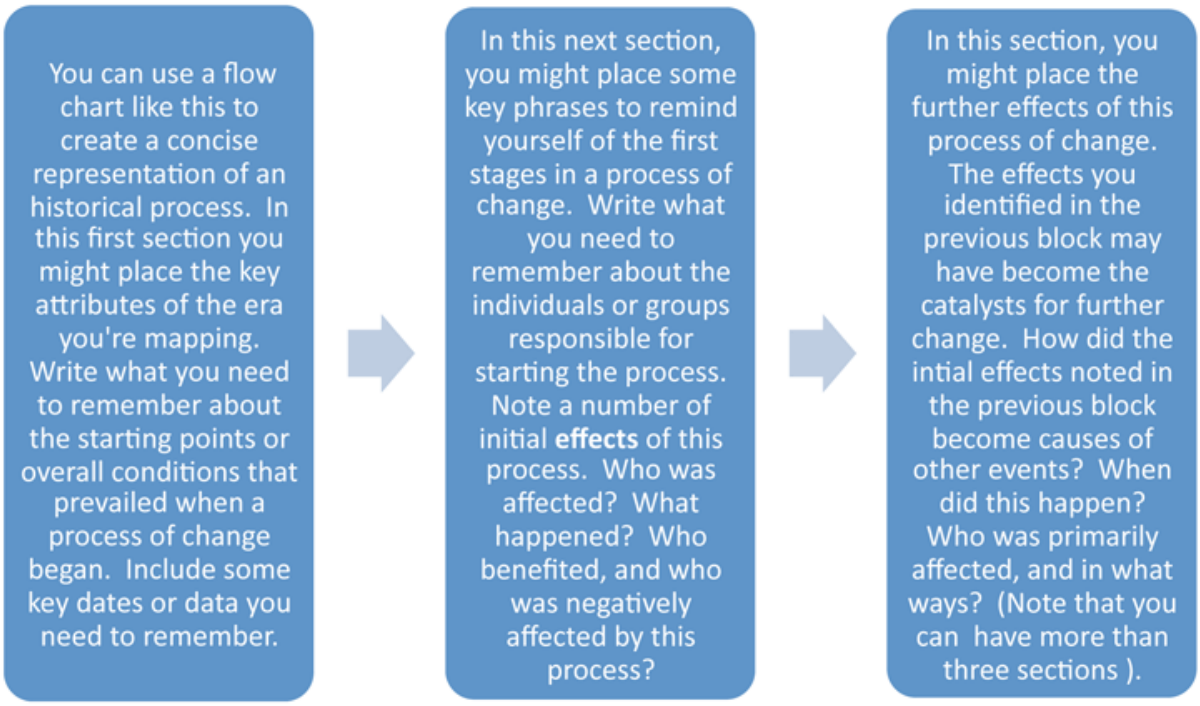
APPENDIX A - Reading to Write: About Previewing

It is common for students to dive into an academic text and begin reading in a hurry, which is often counterproductive. When reading for academic purposes, it is preferable to read with certain goals in mind. This will enable you to place your focus on the proper elements of the reading and to avoid wasting time on elements which aren't important for your purposes. Your professors and TAs may read with their research goals in mind. As a student, your primary purposes in reading are shaped by the course you're taking and/or the papers you're writing. Spend a few minutes previewing a text before starting to read, in order to orient yourself toward what is important for *you* in this reading. Here is a basic method which can be applied to many texts. Not every question will be relevant for all texts, and you may find additional questions to ask yourself.

- Read the **title**—don't skip over it! Titles are chosen to orient the reader and should give a sense of the central concepts in the text.
- Think about the **subject matter**: Have you read about this topic before? Where and when? What do you already know about it, or what might you guess? Is it linked in some way to your personal experience? Do you already have opinions about some aspect of this topic?
- **Who** wrote this text? What information do you have about this **author**? Does any information about the author appear anywhere on the title page or elsewhere in the text? If the author is an historical figure, what do you already know about him or her?
- **Where** was this text originally **published**? What type of publication is this, and where does it fit into this field of study? Who would be the **audience** for this kind of writing? What would the audience expect to find in it?
- **When** was this text originally published? What is the **significance** of this time period in this field of study? Is the text historical? Current? Or is it possibly outdated? What were the major events or theoretical trends around the time the text was written or published?
- Read the **chapter titles** or the **headings** that break up the chapter or article. What seems to be the general progression of ideas here?
- **Why** has your professor assigned this text? Where does it fit into the course as a whole? What kinds of **facts and ideas** are you expected to **retain** from this reading?

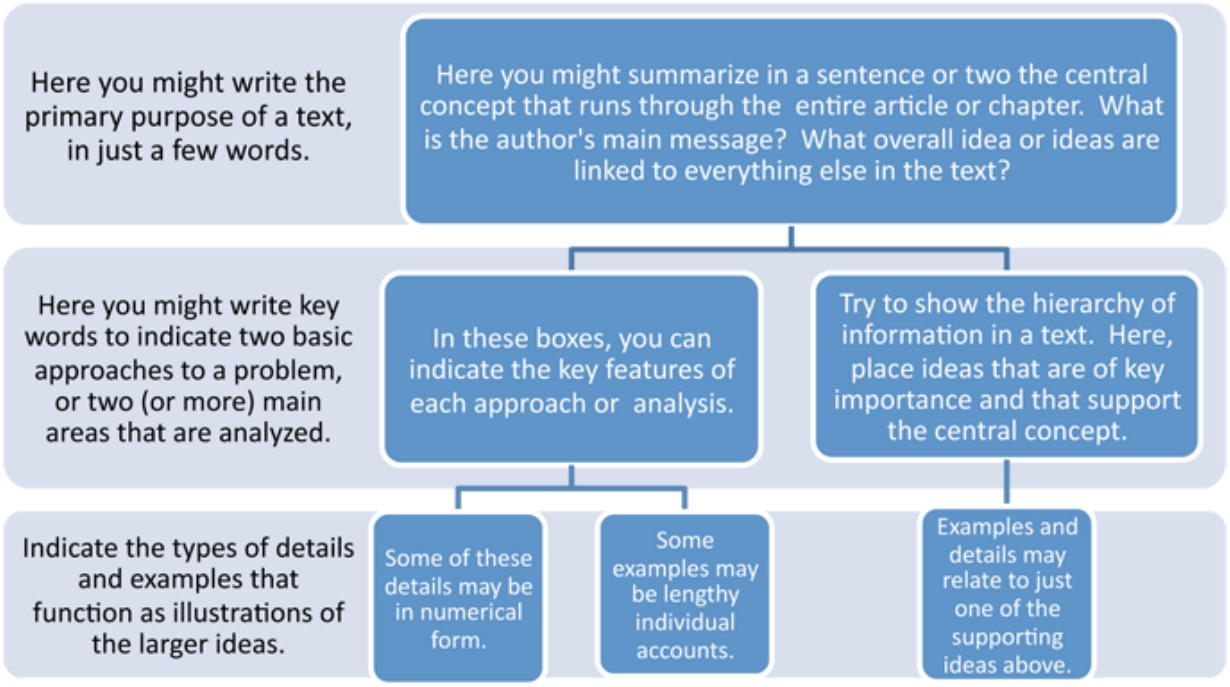
APPENDIX B - Reading to Write: Visual Mapping

Many people find it easier to absorb reading material by creating a visual map of an article, book chapter, or an important section of a piece of writing. A visual representation of concepts has the advantage of showing on a single page the complex logical relationships that an author may develop in many pages of writing. The map can provide a useful reminder of these relationships to refer back to as you move through a text. Additionally, it can function as a study tool, reminding you of key concepts that you've read and heard lectures about in greater detail. Depending upon your personal learning style, a visual map may be a superior means of memorizing material for tests and can also aid in the writing of longer papers. The map may be drawn by hand or made on the computer; sophisticated "mind-mapping" software programs also exist for this purpose. Here are some examples of visual mapping:



Note that this chart could also be added to in any way you find helpful. If you need to keep events that occurred in several regions or countries clearly separated, an individual chart could be made for each region. Alternatively, you might organize your chart to show the causes and effects that occurred across regions and countries. Quick flow charts made by hand during a lecture may also make your class notes more understandable when it's time to review them.

Here is another type of visual map which might be used to help distinguish between an overarching idea or thesis that runs through an entire article or section of a work, and the smaller details, examples, or points which help explain and illustrate that central concept.



The two examples above were made using "Smart Art", which appears under the "Insert" button in Word 2007. However, even a simple Word table like the one below can become a valuable visual aid. (This is made by clicking on "Insert Table," and then specifying the number of rows and columns you want). Many students find that the time taken to create a table is worthwhile, as it helps in keeping track of ideas in a complex reading and can also allow a comparative look at several readings.

(Example 1) Here, you could place a summary of one author's point of view on a subject.	1a) The centre column might hold the areas common to both the author and the sources cited by him or her.	(1b) Here, place contrasting evidence or ideas which the author may refer to or critique in the article.
(Example 2) Another way to use a chart is to use each column for some key area you're comparing across texts. Here, name the area.	(2a) This column could contain the relevant ideas from Article A which relate to the key area you're comparing.	2b) This column could contain the relevant ideas from Article B which relate to the key area you're comparing, and so on. There may be many more columns and rows added.
		There may be many more columns and rows added.
(Note) Many people use colour coding as a further visual aid.	You can use various colours to correspond to information about individuals, regions, etc.	

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