



What I Noticed This Week

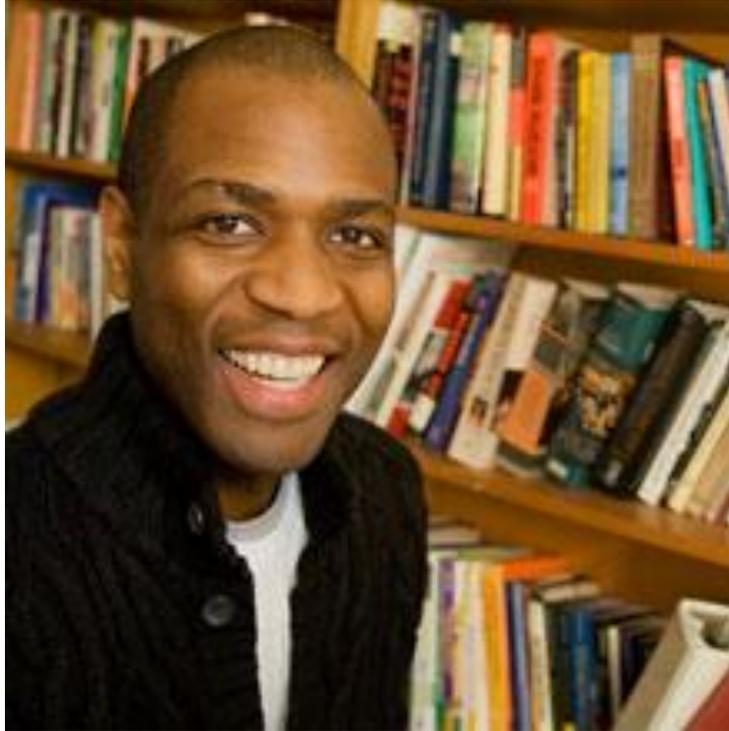
A Presentation on the Findings of My Literacy Self-Study



What I Read, Academically

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Should Writers Use They Own English?



Vershawn Ashanti Young

I'm so used to reading the conventional academic language that this writing style is shocking to me. However, I agree it's important for writers to employ their true voice. Reading this article makes me feel better about those times I let my personality shine through in my writing.

the nation's blue-chip companies wrote poorly and that businesses were spending as much as \$3.1 billion annually on remedial training" (A23).

Now, some peeps gone say this illustrate how Fish be rite, why we need to be teachin mo standard grammar and stuff. If you look at it from Fish view, yeah it mean that. But if you look at it from my view, it most certainly dont mean that. Instead, it mean that the one set of rules that people be applyin to everybody's dialects leads to perceptions that writers need "remedial training" or that speakers of dialects are dumb. Teachin speakin and writin prescriptively, as Fish want, force people into patterns of language that aint natural or easy to understand. A whole lot of folk could be writin and speakin real, real smart if Fish and others stop using one prescriptive, foot-long ruler to measure the language of peeps who use a yard stick when they communicate.

I appreciate how Young takes the same statistic and show's that it can be interpreted two different ways. He also mixes in pathos by including "Instead, it mean that the one set of rules that people be applyin to everybody's dialects leads to perceptions that writers need 'remedial training' or that speakers of dialects are dumb." These is an excellent argumentative strategy.

Young also excels at addressing counter arguments in an open-minded yet critical manner so as not to seem shortsighted or weak in his argument.



“Let me drop some code meshing knowledge on y’all.”

Using phrases like this really demonstrates Young’s point that opening up academic discourse to multiple dialects gives writers more options to achieve their writing goals. I don’t think the “dominant language” could get me this excited about hearing what Young has to say next. This writing choice exemplifies the importance of demonstrating your point not just in what you write, but in the way you write.

Learning about code-meshing also makes me less nervous about blending informal phrases with the more formal way I learned to write.

So when we teach the rhetorical devices of blacks we can add to the writing proficiency of whites and everybody else. Now, that's something, aint it? Code meshing use the way people already speak and write and help them be more rhetorically effective. It do include teaching some punctuation rules, attention to meaning and word choice, and various kinds of sentence structures and some standard English. This mean too that good writin gone look and sound a bit different than some may now expect.

And another real, real, good result is we gone help reduce prejudice. Yes, mam. Now that's a goal to reach for.

Young does an excellent job summarizing his argument in the conclusion. Doing so really reorients the reader to see the bigger picture and reminds them of anything they might have missed. I strive to do this in my own writing when appropriate.

An Introduction to Strategies for Multimodal Composing



Before even learning the term, I loved multimodal composing. I use lots of images and GIFs on my blog, and I link to lots of videos. I'm also a big fan of google slides, Youtube video essays, Instagram, tri-fold presentations, whiteboards, chalkboards, and posters.

5 AN INTRODUCTION TO AND STRATEGIES FOR MULTIMODAL COMPOSING

Melanie Gagich

OVERVIEW

This chapter introduces multimodal composing and offers five strategies for creating a multimodal text. The essay begins with a brief review of key terms associated with multimodal composing and provides definitions and examples of the five modes of communication. The first section of the essay also introduces students to the New London Group and offers three reasons why students should consider multimodal composing an important skill—one that should be learned in a writing class. The second half of the essay offers three pre-drafting and two drafting strategies for multimodal composing. Pre-drafting strategies include urging students to consider their rhetorical situation, analyze other multimodal texts, research textual content, gather visual and aural materials, and evaluate tools needed for creating their text. A brief discussion of open licenses and Creative Commons licenses is also included. Drafting strategies include citing and attributing various types of texts appropriately and suggesting that students begin drafting with an outline, script, or visual (depending on the project). I conclude the chapter with suggestions for further reading.

I always appreciate an abstract or overview because it lets me determine whether a paper has the information I'm looking for before I sift through the entire text. However, I notice that the overview's language is much drier language than that of the main text.



The five modes of multimodal composing do a great job covering the aspects that separate a well-written text from a poorly written one.



I find the spatial mode very important, especially when it comes to having appropriately placed paragraph breaks. You don't want a giant block of text, but you also don't want to break up a paragraph where it doesn't make sense.

What I Wrote, Academically

—



Introduction to Engineering Journal

This assignment had me writing about my contrasting experiences in high school and college.

I found that writing about my personal experiences encouraged me to write in a more personal, less formal tone. However, I also felt a need to suppress this tone and be more formal because I didn't know the professor's preferences for college writing. For example, I didn't use contractions.

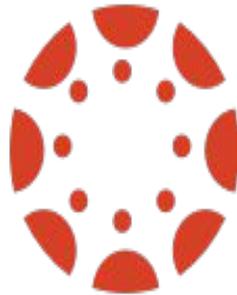




Google Docs

I submitted the assignment by pasting it into a text box on Canvas. I had to add back in paragraph indents. I also used the browser extension Grammarly for a final round of spelling and grammar checks.

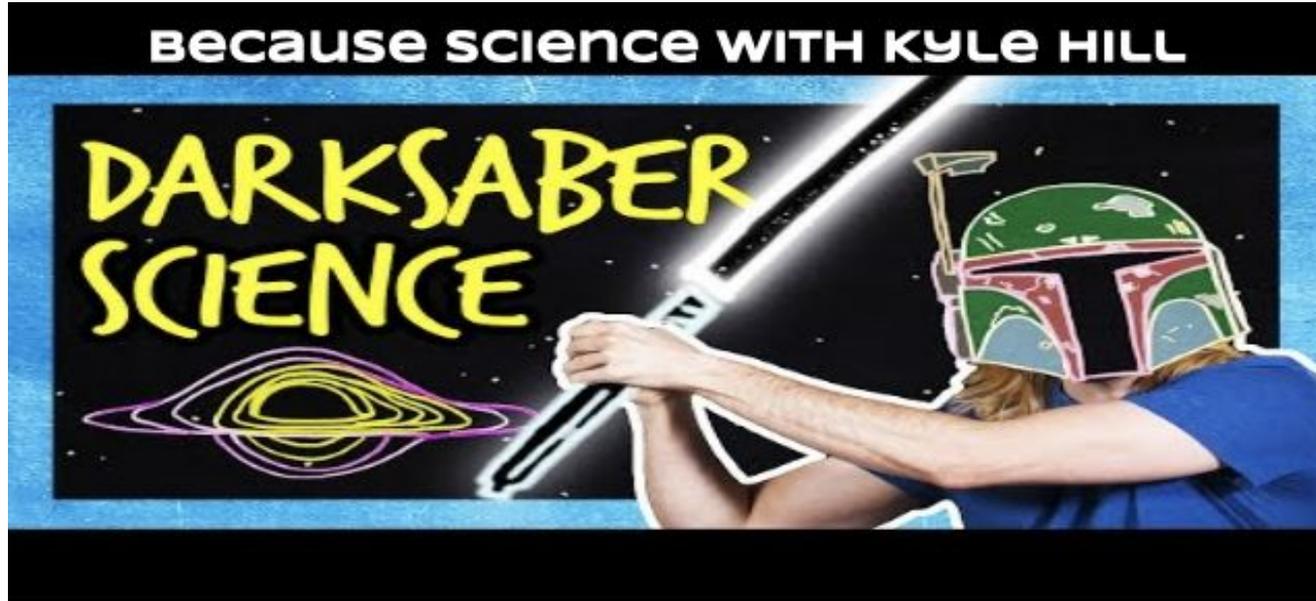
To write this journal entry, I use Google Docs. This platform served as a way of saving my work in case something went wrong and I needed to return to a previous draft. It also provided spelling and grammar checks.



canvas
for Students and Faculty

What I Watched, Non-Academically

The Darksaber Explained



Kyle Hill is very objective and quick to point out issues with his own proposed explanations. I try to follow his example in my writing.

What Dinosaurs Actually Looked Like



I love how Kurzgesagt talks about science in a poetic fashion with visuals painstakingly custom animated to fit the words. It's multimodal composing at its peak. I lack the resources to incorporate my own animations, but I try to add a similar poetic feel to my writing when possible. I also use images to punctuate points, but in a punchy way that doesn't flow like Kurzgesagt videos. I hope adopting this alternate strategy to match my resources still manages to capture my readers' attention.

New Results in Quantum Tunneling vs. The Speed of Light



Seeing this video made me so excited I felt I had to stop everything and watch it. I love how Spacetime videos always manage to trigger my scientific curiosity without leaving room for misinterpretations that could excite me even more but also lead me to relay incorrect or misleading information. This approach is vital when explaining such high-level concepts to non-experts.

What I Wrote, Non-Academically

Is the Darksaber a Black Hole?

The Physics of Star Wars' Weirdest Lightsaber



Spoilers Ahead for *The Mandalorian* and *Star Wars: Rebels* (Image Credit: Cartoon Network)

I remember such a strong sense of awe and bewilderment when the Darksaber first ignited in *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*. Instead of questioning the unusual shape or rich Jedi/Mandalorian history of the weapon, I was more so thinking, “Wait, a lightsaber can be black?!” It went against everything I knew about these fictional weapons. After all, their main aesthetic trait is emitting light. You can’t emit darkness. The only explanation was that this burning hot blade somehow emitted no visible light except from its edges and the strange electricity crackling across its surface. What’s more, it had to absorb...

The best STEM videos have a logical flow from one topic to the next. I try to accomplish the same thing in my writing.

I can see how Young’s essay on writing in your own voice, even if it’s considered informal, encouraged me to be more comedic and natural in my writing.

When I get really into writing a piece, it can be hard to put it down. I like to write a chunk of a first draft, revise it a little, write the next chunk, and then revise the whole text again once all the first draft chunks are done.

I also worry that I may not be able to post a piece for whatever reason if I wait until it's polished so I'll post an article after my first round of revision even if I'm planning another one later.

I spend a lot of time and energy citing sources and picking images that go well with the flow of my writing.

Why Do Marvel's Aliens Look Human?

Has Marvel Reimagined One of Sci-Fi's Oldest Tropes?



Image Credit: Marvel Studios

Picture an intelligent alien species from any popular science fiction franchise. Star Wars, Star Trek, Marvel, DC, Doctor Who, what have you. There's a good chance whatever species you chose walks on two legs, writes with two arms, and speaks from a head atop two shoulders. More often than not, sci-fi creators choose to depict alien species of human-like intelligence as humanoid in form. This is such a common convention that we rarely question it.

However, if aliens came to Earth today with undeniably human bodies, we'd all be thrown for a loop. What are the odds that such precisely...

I'll often just write so I can get my ideas down--I even worry I might forget them if I slow down--and go back to polish them later. If I don't have time to just write, I'll put my ideas into an outline.

Upon revision, I find myself changing the wording of my title to make it fit nicely in a single line at the top of the page. This is an example of the spatial mode of multimodal composing. Doing so also makes the words flow better, demonstrating the importance of the linguistic mode.

What I'm Writing Now

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(Also academically)

The Literacy Self-Study



As I'm writing this self-study, I notice the urge to draw connections between all the texts I've read or written through similarities, even though it's just as valid to discuss differences between texts. I think it may be because I tend to write by looking for connections that support my points. Fortunately, I got some practice writing about contrasting subjects in my ENG journal.

I find composing a Google Slides presentation much more compelling and less daunting/intimidating than writing an essay, even if the final word count is the same. Google slides allows me to be more creative and multimodal, although there is room for improvement. I find it limiting that you can only choose from a small number of themes, and you can't adjust them.

It's interesting how patterns will emerge without my forethought, like the multiple pictures in this presentation containing books, and I'll go on to actively continue the pattern.

the nation's blue-chip companies wrote poorly and that businesses were spending as much as \$3.1 billion annually on remedial training" (A23).

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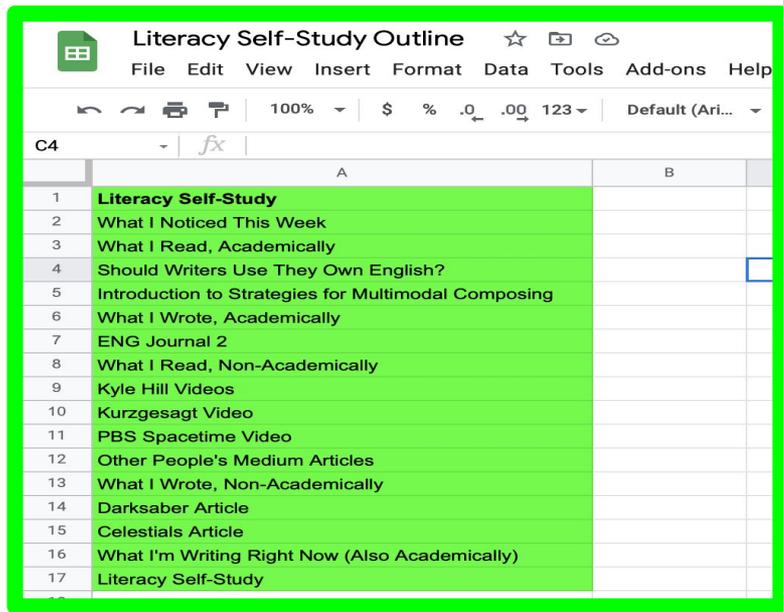
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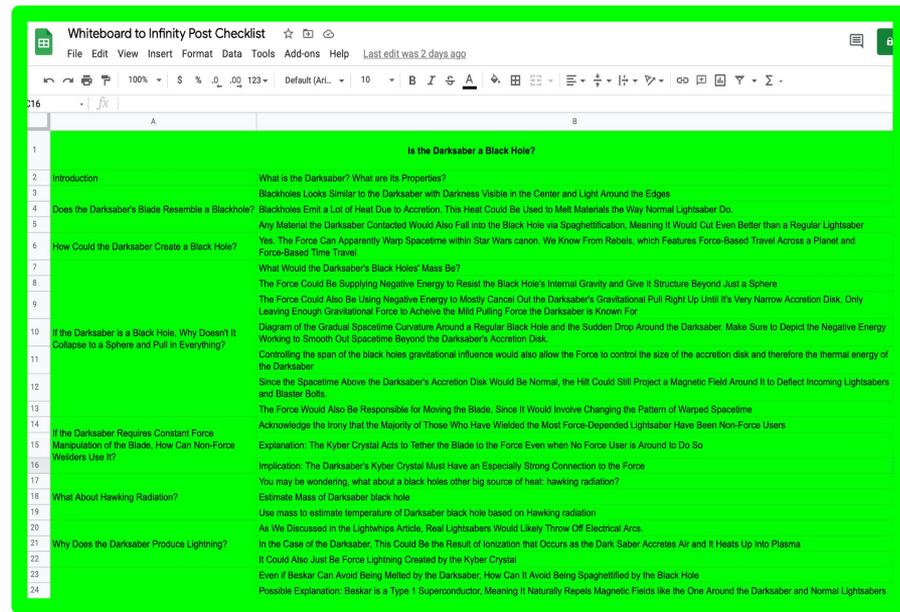
I notice myself applying what I read about in Introduction to Strategies for Multimodal Composing as I'm deciding how to present my notes: adjusting the layout of slides, changing the order of texts, etc. I even find myself using ezgif.com, the website I use to edit images on my blog, to adjust the brightness of the image above.

I'm outlining this presentation via the same method I use to outline articles I write.



The screenshot shows a Google Docs document titled "Literacy Self-Study Outline". The document is structured as a table with two columns, A and B. Column A contains a list of topics, and column B is currently empty. The topics listed in column A are:

	A	B
1	Literacy Self-Study	
2	What I Noticed This Week	
3	What I Read, Academically	
4	Should Writers Use They Own English?	
5	Introduction to Strategies for Multimodal Composing	
6	What I Wrote, Academically	
7	ENG Journal 2	
8	What I Read, Non-Academically	
9	Kyle Hill Videos	
10	Kurzgesagt Video	
11	PBS Spacetime Video	
12	Other People's Medium Articles	
13	What I Wrote, Non-Academically	
14	Darksaber Article	
15	Celestials Article	
16	What I'm Writing Right Now (Also Academically)	
17	Literacy Self-Study	



The screenshot shows a Google Docs document titled "Whiteboard to Infinity Post Checklist". The document is structured as a table with two columns, A and B. Column A contains a list of questions, and column B contains detailed answers or notes. The questions listed in column A are:

	A	B
1		Is the Darksaber a Black Hole?
2	Introduction	What is the Darksaber? What are its Properties? Blackholes Looks Similar to the Darksaber with Darkness Visible in the Center and Light Around the Edges
3	Does the Darksaber's Blade Resemble a Blackhole?	Blackholes Emit a Lot of Heat Due to Accretion. This Heat Could Be Used to Melt Materials the Way Normal Lightsaber Do. Any Material the Darksaber Contacted Would Also Fall into the Black Hole via Spaghettification, Meaning It Would Cut Even Better than a Regular Lightsaber
4	How Could the Darksaber Create a Black Hole?	Yes. The Force Can Apparently Warp Spacetime within Star Wars canon. We Know From Rebels, which Features Force-Based Travel Across a Planar and Force-Based Time Travel What Would the Darksaber's Black Holes' Mass Be? The Force Could Be Supplying Negative Energy to Resist the Black Hole's Internal Gravity and Give It Structure Beyond Just a Sphere The Force Could Also Be Using Negative Energy to Mostly Cancel Out the Darksaber's Gravitational Pull Right Up Until It's Very Narrow Accretion Disk. Only Leaving Enough Gravitational Force to Achieve the Mild Pulling Force the Darksaber is Known For Diagram of the Gradual Spacetime Curvature Around a Regular Black Hole and the Sudden Drop Around the Darksaber. Make Sure to Depict the Negative Energy Working to Smooth Out Spacetime Beyond the Darksaber's Accretion Disk
5	If the Darksaber is a Black Hole, Why Doesn't It Collapse to a Sphere and Pull in Everything?	Controlling the span of the black holes gravitational influences would also allow the Force to control the size of the accretion disk and therefore the thermal energy of the Darksaber Since the Spacetime Above the Darksaber's Accretion Disk Would Be Normal, the Hill Could Still Project a Magnetic Field Around It to Deflect Incoming Lightsabers and Blaster Bolts The Force Would Also Be Responsible for Moving the Blade. Since It Would Involve Changing the Pattern of Warped Spacetime
6	If the Darksaber Requires Constant Force Manipulation of the Blade, How Can Non-Force Wielders Use It?	Acknowledge the Irony that the Majority of Those Who Have Wielded the Most Force-Dependent Lightsaber Have Been Non-Force Users Explanation: The Kyber Crystal Acts to Tether the Blade to the Force even when No Force User is Around to Do So Implication: The Darksaber's Kyber Crystal Must Have an Especially Strong Connection to the Force You may be wondering, what about a black holes other big source of heat: hawking radiation? Estimate Mass of Darksaber black hole Use mass to estimate temperature of Darksaber black hole based on Hawking radiation As We Discussed in the Lighthips Article, Real Lightsabers Would Likely Throw Off Electrical Arcs
7	What About Hawking Radiation?	In the Case of the Darksaber, This Could Be the Result of Ionization that Occurs as the Dark Sabar Accretes Air and it Heats Up Into Plasma It Could Also Just Be Force Lightning Created by the Kyber Crystal Even if Beskar Can Avoid Being Melted by the Darksaber, How Can It Avoid Being Spaghettified by the Black Hole Possible Explanation: Beskar is a Type 1 Superconductor, Meaning It Naturally Repels Magnetic Fields like the One Around the Darksaber and Normal Lightsabers
8	Why Does the Darksaber Produce Lightning?	
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Just like in blogging, I got a bit carried away enjoying the multimodal aspect of my journal for this assignment, to the point where it was difficult to shift gears and tackle the reflection. Nevertheless...

Time to Reflect

Literacy Self-Study Reflection
