

My internship began by observing student/teacher writing conferences at The Sweet Shop. And while I would have liked to observe the first few days of class, when procedures and policies are set up, so that I could get a clear view of what the class would be like, the conferences seem to be foundational and a good place to start. As I reflect back with my mind full of the pedagogical discussions we've had, critical theory, course requirements, etc., all of these seem secondary to the ultimate task at hand: foster student writers. In these one-on-one meetings, as well as small groups, and class discussion, a lot of work can be done. Having students talk about their writing gives insight into how they are (or are not) implementing strategies discussed in class, allows the students and teacher to see what types and qualities of text are being produced, and creates "teaching moments" in which the teacher can isolate a specific writing element and use it to explore strategies for revision or rhetoric. Going back to my journals of these early days, reminds me of how important it is to focus on the writing and to have as much conversation about it as is possible.

I forgot that I was supposed to keep a journal of my internship. I'm usually the kind of person that is on top of all my assignments, perhaps not always completing them to the standard that I would like because of restraints of time and resources, but I seldom totally forget. I suppose this is a reminder that I am "human" and that humans forget things. But more importantly, it is a reminder that my students are human. Nobody is perfect. So giving student some space to "fail" and opportunities to learn from that failure without unchangeable penalties is important. My mentor let students make up a missed reading response by attending a Warehouse reading. I'll want to do something similar in my own classroom—nobody's perfect.

"How 'Pop Culture' do I want to be?" For some, pop culture is a way to connect the curriculum with a "common" narrative or vocabulary. They see it as increasing student engagement, meeting students where they are, and perhaps even as an opportunity to begin to deepen student thinking about their regular media consumption. I'll almost certainly include models, references, and analysis of pop culture in my classroom. But, I'm hesitant to use it as a strand or an emphasis. I'm hesitant in part because digital media is not just pervasive, but also has an insidious way of seeping into every aspect of life, including academia. So even if I don't make it a priority, it will find its way in. Also, I enjoy pop culture, yes, at times for analysis which may or

may not find its way into the genres of my writing life, but also at other times just to be entertained, to tune in to turn of my mind, to LOL. I'm not sure I want to encroach upon that area of my students' lives in such an apparent way. I'm also worried that an emphasis on pop culture may lower my students' expectations for the tenor of the class. I know that I can combat this attitude with my own tenor and the incorporation of advanced and "serious" texts, but I'm not sure it's a fight I want to fight. I think my goal is that students will use what they learn in class to reach into many aspects of their own lives, perhaps including pop culture. I'm just not ready to give it a place of priority in my class. Maybe I'm getting too old. Maybe my idea of the "common" pop culture is already passé. I'm hip. Really. I am.

By the third week, my experience in the class allowed me to begin to see some student issues that may have been there earlier in the course, but for me, were only now coming to the surface. A major issue is students just not doing the work. Some came to conferences without the required word count, skipped class on workshop day when drafts were due, or didn't engage with the reading assignments, or perhaps didn't do them at all. My mentor was excellent in communicating the seriousness of these issues through well worded "lectures" matched with an authoritative demeanor. These are not my personal strengths. After ten years of teaching and dealing with various levels of engagement, I find it difficult to reprimand my students in this way. I may be more likely to use this technique in one-on-one conferences, but I find my class "lectures" falling on deaf ears, and find myself questioning my own authenticity when I try to play the part of disappointed professor. Dr. Coxwell-Teague recommended having assigned responses as a way to hold students accountable for the reading, but also a way for students to engage with the text meaningfully—unlike, for instance, a reading quiz. I also believe that actions speak louder than words, so I'll probably include some sort of late-work penalty and adhere to it strictly—especially for the first few assignments.

Observing the class was helpful. I definitely learned the structure of the assignments and such of 1101—though I won't be teaching that course. I also got to know an amazing mentor and writer. That may be the best part. I would have liked to see some different approaches from different mentors, and of course, the best way to learn is to do—and that will start in the fall. I plan to continue to journal about my comp experiences.