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Focused and Autonomous Writing Through Objects

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Key Challenge:
Distracted Students

Key Needs:
*Focus, Motivation, Engagement
in scholarship-informed writing*

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Adopting this practice

- I. Model focused engagement through curated objects.
 - List key learning outcomes (LOs).
 - Choose the most important topics/ideas/skills within LOs.
 - Curate objects (including texts) that highlight LOs.
 - Introduce objects early in the course.
 - Encourage students to ask questions about the objects.
- II. Guide students to a high stakes summative assignment (such as a term paper) by structuring scholarly writing assignments.
 - Require frequent low-stakes knowledge explorations about the objects.
 - Encourage students to explore the objects from multiple perspectives.
 - Use the Cornell notes system to structure note-taking about the objects' contexts.
 - Encourage ongoing independent research through regular structured discussions with citations and quotations from scholarly sources.
 - Optional: Use Google Forms to structure and capture online note-taking.

Focused and Autonomous Writing through Objects: Combining Object-based learning (OBL) with structured research writing supports student autonomy *and* focus

Teaching Practice Summary:

Objects—carefully curated—help focus discussions and knowledge explorations. Objects become the basis of student-centered scholarly writing when Object-based Learning (OBL) is combined with structured research writing assignments.

Resources



bit.ly/TeachingPractice2022

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This approach was inspired by Dr. Julian Kilker, who uses Google forms to encourage scholarship-informed writing. I also thank the students in my classes in 2021 for exploring this approach with me.

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