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Course to be globalized: English 112 Writing/Research in the Disciplines

Course information and description:

English 112, the second in a series of two English courses, introduces research techniques, documentation styles, and writing strategies. Emphasis is placed on analyzing information and ideas and incorporating research findings into documented writing and research projects. Upon completion, students should be able to evaluate and synthesize information from primary and secondary sources using documentation appropriate to various disciplines.

Description of module:

This global module will balance the social sciences and the humanities to show how literature can restore human dignity even as it reveals human struggles with systemic international forces. Students will research global migration and the Middle Eastern customs that are woven through *Exit West*. In order to establish a class ethos, they will also practice the advanced listening skills from UNESCO that the characters in the book are sometimes denied. Finally they will write a research paper addressing one of the global issues raised in the novel in order to become true practitioners of rhetoric and ethical decision makers about complex issues that affect both local and global audiences. *In several places, I have shifted to a student-centered audience so that an instructor could go ahead and use the module right away.*

Student Global Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will analyze how literature can limit people's voices as well as allow voices to be heard that have been relatively silent or stereotyped.
2. Students will recognize the cultural norms, customs, and traditions that frame human interactions within and between cultures.
3. Students will establish shared values to evaluate issues that address challenges facing humanity globally and locally.

Student Global Learning Activities:

Activity 1: An Invitation to Read: Setting Students up for Success with *Exit West* by Mohsin Hamid

Objective

Students will read closely, annotate the first page of *Exit West*, pose questions, and make predictions.

Procedure

In a format students can see, write setting (when and where?), character (who?), narrator and point of view (who is talking? A character? A disembodied voice? How much does this person know? How trustworthy is this voice?), diction (what kinds of word choices?), detail (which ones seem important?), imagery (how are we, the audience invited to experience the beginning of the novel, through what senses?), syntax (do you notice the rhythm?), tone (how would you describe the tone?), style (does the writer have a style?).

Tell students that the beginning of a novel is an invitation to read. The writer gives a ton of information, and to prove it, we open the first page. Read the first page out loud. Then give students 10 minutes to capture as many ideas that relate to these topics as they can. Tell them everything that they can put their finger in is evidence. If students have other categories, they may contribute them.

Open up class discussion. What do they notice? What connections can they make? Prompt with the questions above. Notice when their ideas start to connect and ask for predictions. Get everyone to speak. This peaks interest in the novel and gives even slower or weaker readers a good foundation to connect to.

Assessment

Exit West has only twelve chapters, so it is not difficult to make an adaptable reading schedule. The schedule sets the days journals will be due and will be used to set up **Activity #2 Hosting a Topic and Chapter in *Exit West***. Students write journals before each class meeting to prepare for class discussions.

Student Directions: The criteria for journals are:

1. Make a claim or pose a question
2. Support the claim with evidence or use evidence to show why you have that question.
3. Support with at least one quote, documented MLA style.
4. Analyze your evidence. Make meaning of it. Summaries will not get credit. I am asking you to think, not prove that you read the chapter.
5. Make a connection

Follow up

Later, students reread and reflect on their journal entries as they transition into their research papers. Journals that require evidence meet students where they are, build their close reading skills, help them gather the evidence and quotes from the novel they notice and consider important, and allow them to formulate their own questions and develop their own ideas. Journals are often places where students discover the focus of their research paper. Students often refer to these journals in class discussions.

Activity 2: Students Host a Topic and Chapter in *Exit West*

Objectives

Students will:

- Present, individually or collaboratively, work appropriate to the rhetorical situation.
- Investigate the world beyond their immediate environment, framing significant problems and conducting well-crafted and age-appropriate research
- Recognize perspectives, others' and their own, articulating and explaining such perspectives thoughtfully and respectfully
- Communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences, bridging geographic, linguistic, ideological, and cultural barriers
- Reflect critically on their role as a member of the global community and pursue ways to create positive change

Student Directions

Host a chapter and a topic

Hospitality has an important function in every society. Hosts bridge gaps between strangers, soften the boundary between the outside world and home, and facilitate understanding. Your responsibility as host is to use either a historical or cultural perspective to build context around the novel as we read, enriching the reading for your classmates and facilitating class discussion.

Procedure

Step 1. Select a day (and possibly a partner)

Step 2. Select a topic. Topics may fall under general categories, like the arts, culture, or history. Within these broad topics, the subtopics are listed below.

Step 3. Dig through the presented sources that have been curated by the experts in Middle East/North Africa Region at UNC Chapel Hill in collaboration with World View. Select at least one scholarly source per person to read. If you have a partner, check with your partner that you are not both reading the same scholarly source. You may look for other sources as well.

Step 4. Read the section of *Exit West* that you signed up for and prepare questions to facilitate that part of the discussion. You may want to show how ideas within the novel are developing. Open ended questions spark discussion, but sometimes a few fact based questions warm up students to those open ended questions.

Step 5. Look for connections between the book and the research you have found.

Step 6. Consider how you want to present the material. You may want to include an example through media to give your classmates a visual or use an activity that they can engage in. Think of your audience—what kind of presentation would you want to see? What kind of presentation would you want to experience?

An **example** might be printing one of Omar Offendum’s songs, listed below, make copies for the class or have it ready to show on the screen. Ask students to read the song lyrics. Then ask what is this song about? Can you see where he is from? What part of the song shows that?

Then play the song. Ask students to make connections between his homeland and where he is now. How do these themes apply to Nadia and Saeed’s experiences? Which character does he seem most like? Why? Then lead into the discussion questions you have prepared on the novel.

Resources provided by the faculty of UNC-Chapel Hill are attached.

Additional scholarly sources are posted online in individual folders.

Topic	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3 And More . . .
The Arts: Music	Debke (dance) Origins and purpose	Omar Offendum https://offendum.bandcamp.com	Tootard: Laissez Passer https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gmvhDFIH6Y Khebz Dawle Marcel Khalfe: Passport
The Arts: Literature and Film	“Lament for Syria” poem by Amineh Abou Kerech (14 years old)	<i>A Separation</i> (2011) by director Ashgar Farhadi	<i>Persepolis</i> (2007) based on the novel by Marjane Satrapi
The Arts: Literary Criticism	Texts to choose from in separate folder	Stereotypes in Western culture: “Reel Bad Arabs” (2006): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2EEL3uFvPc	Introductions to Edward Said’s Orientalism: Interview with Edward Said: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVC8EYd_Z_g BBC Ideas: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZST6qnRR1mY Knowledgeable Reaction: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NExfbX7E42o
History: Syria	“Lament for Syria” poem by Amineh Abou	White Helmets, the Syrian defense forces who will save anyone	Vox: Syria’s War: Who’s Fighting and Why (6 minutes) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFpa

	<p>Kerech (14 years old)</p> <p>Poster art from Syrian civil war</p> <p>Scholarly texts to choose from in separate folder</p>	<p>regardless of what side of the conflict they are on, and whose motto is taken from the Quran: 'to save a life is to save all of humanity'.</p> <p>https://www.whitehelmet.org/en/</p> <p><i>Good Morning, Kafranbel: This American Life</i> episode</p> <p>https://www.thisamericanlife.org/667/wartime-radio/act-two-10</p>	<p>nWNgfQY</p> <p>BBC News: Syria: Seven Years of War Explained (6 minutes) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoL0L_DbuQQ</p> <p>The Guardian: The Syrian War Explained in 5 Minutes - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K5H5w3_QTG0</p> <p>Vox: The Fall of Aleppo Explained (4 minutes) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EsAilPOdQCQ</p> <p>BBC News: Syrian Kids Explain the War (4 minutes) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2iz2tNiRpeY</p> <p>Vox: How Syria's Kurds Are Trying to Create a Democracy (6 minutes) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gaKwjvxukvg&vl=en</p> <p>Our Consortium: The Historical Roots of the Syrian Refugee Crisis (9 minutes) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tR2IaJSOLGw&list=PLSdleNHvfGH0itmAtuBzksedc18vDP3&index=1</p>
<p>History: Migrant Stories</p>	<p>Texts to choose from in separate folder</p> <p>Refugee oral lives history project</p> <p>https://sites.duke.edu/arabiccommunities/</p>	<p>Podcast:</p> <p>"Displaced" by Vox & International Rescue Committee:</p> <p>https://www.rescue.org/displaced</p>	<p>Podcasts:</p> <p>"Deporting Ottoman Americans" by Ottoman History Podcast: http://www.ottomanhistorypodcast.com/p/doa.html</p> <p>Refugee's Stories Podcast: https://www.refugeestoriespodcast.org/refugees-stories-podcast-episodes</p>

History: Women's Roles	Texts to choose from in separate folder	<p>"The Weaponization of Nostalgia: How Afghan Miniskirts Became the Latest Salvo in the War on Terror" by Alex Shams:</p> <p>https://ajammc.com/2017/09/06/weaponization-nostalgia-afghan-miniskirts/</p>	<p>"Divorce: Iranian Style"</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYaRb070r8E</p>
Culture: Hospitality	Activity suggestion What is better, store bought hummus or homemade?	Activity suggestion: Visit a mosque	Texts to choose from in separate folder Resources found in guest speaker video Anna Krzeminska-Kaczynska
Culture: Courtship and Marriage	Texts to choose from in separate folder	<p>"Divorce: Iranian Style"</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYaRb070r8E</p>	
Local or Community based Solutions:	<p>Syrian Women Seamstresses:</p> <p>UNHCR UN Refugee Agency</p>	<p>NaTakallam language services</p> <p>https://natakallam.com/in-the-classroom/</p>	<p>Every Campus a Refuge</p> <p>https://everycampusarefuge.net</p> <p>Injaz, once part of USAID and Save the Children, now an independent non-profit</p> <p>http://injaz.org.jo/Pages/viewpage.aspx?pageID=111</p>
Peace studies	The German model of refugee assistance	<p>The United Nations SDGs Sustainable Development Goals</p> <p>https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs</p>	<p>The United Nations: Refugees</p> <p>https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/refugees/index.html</p> <p>Resources from guest speaker Anna Krzeminska-Kaczynska</p>

Follow up

Students work independently or together, building both popular and credible as well as scholarly sources that become the foundation of their MLA research papers.

Activity 3: Darla Deardorff's Story Circles (adapted):

Objective

To develop advanced listening skills in a diverse community and identify common values as well as personally engage with issues of cultural difference that the novel raises.

Instructions to students

Procedure

Sit in a circle and introduce yourselves using the prompt in #1 below. After introductions (#1), take turns sharing your story (using the prompt in #2 below)– the others need to listen for understanding and NOT interrupt, ask questions or make comments. Simply listen for understanding. Then the next person tells his or her story until all persons in the circle have told their stories – without interruption or comment. Be sure to listen carefully since you will be asked to share a “flashback” from each story at the end (#3 below). A “flashback” is something that was memorable for you in the story. Be prepared to share this in 15 seconds or less for each story. (The timekeeper is the person to the right of the storyteller.)

1. Sit in a circle and in *2 minutes or less*, briefly introduce yourself by **sharing three words or phrases that describe your background and why those words/phrases are important to you** – no interruptions, comments or questions. Just take turns introducing.

2. In *3 minutes or less*, tell **your response to the prompt**. No interruptions, comments, or questions.

Prompt: Tell about a specific memorable experience you've had with someone who is different from you (age, religion, gender, socio-economic, culture, nationality, etc.) AND what you learned about yourself and/or the other person in that experience.

3. Once all stories have been shared, then engage in the “flashback” time: Go back to the first story, and each person (other than the storyteller) shares a **specific memorable part** of that person's story (*in 15 seconds or less*). Then go on to the second story and so on, until “flashbacks” have been shared for all the stories told.

4. Once the “flashbacks” have been shared, together discuss some of the following questions in the remaining time. * *Please monitor the time so the group can finish at the requested time.* *

Assessment and Follow Up Journal Discussion Questions:

1. What common themes did you hear from the stories?
2. What surprised you?
3. What challenged you in the stories you heard?

4. What did you learn about yourself through this experience?
5. How did the experience today connect to the issues in the novel, *Exit West*?

Activity 4: Inviting an Expert to Class

Objective

Students will have the option to listen to and ask questions of an expert on the region/and or the forces of global migration.

Procedure

Recruiting a speaker need not be a stressful event and can allow students to not only read a novel with a global focus, but also to experience it through people they can talk to first hand. I recruited Anna Krzeminska-Kaczynska, a global education director and geography teacher from Poland, and Aleksander Pikulski, a scholar of Arabic studies who studies in Oman. Set up what will be discussed, at least a general outline, ahead of time. Make sure to save time for student questions. We were able to conduct our discussions through Zoom even during the Corona virus.

Options for Speakers

Invite an instructor you know who teaches a different discipline	Connect with people in the public sphere	Connect with teachers or scholars in other countries or universities through international teaching organizations
Geography History Religion Music/Art	<p><u>Skype a Journalist into your Classroom with the Pulitzer Center</u></p> <p>Start the new year with a journalist Skype! Unbounded by geography, the Pulitzer Center's Skype in the Classroom initiative connects journalists with students all over the world. Our team of professional reporters can speak to diverse international issues and to grade levels ranging from elementary through college. Skype sessions begin with a presentation in which our reporters outline their background and guide students through one of their reporting projects, followed by a Q&A that</p>	World View at UNC-Chapel Hill

	<p>allows students to engage directly. Visit the Skype in the Classroom page or reach out to education@pulitzercenter.org to learn more.</p>	
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Assessment and Follow up

Students used this discussion as a touchstone for later discussions, many included what they learned in their journals, and I recorded it and posted it in Moodle for students to use as a reference in their research papers if they desired.

Activity 5: Identifying Models and Balancing Voices

Objective

Students will

1. Clearly crediting their sources.
2. Build conclusions upon a well-established pattern of balanced primary and secondary evidence that are explained and analyzed.
3. Chart a controlling idea for their research paper.

Purpose

“Literary criticism aims to bring order and organization to our experience of literary works, focusing our attention on this, disregarding that, putting various parts together, making sense of what we see. When you write about literature, you serve as a kind of guide, leading your reader, and yourself, through the work.”

~Steven Lynn *Texts and Contexts*

Task

How does understanding the context in which a writer creates a novel enrich its meaning? After reading *Exit West*, write a research paper in which you analyze the novel and explain how an element of culture or history helps a reader understand the tensions, plot, and/or characters in *Exit West*. Support your discussion with evidence from the text(s). Discuss competing or alternate views represented within the text or competing views within the scholarly community. What conclusions can you draw about the meaning of the novel?

Elements of culture could include women’s roles in the Middle East, courtship and marriage, art, literature, or literary criticism, music, technology, etc.

Procedure: A Beginning Step to Practice Research Paper Writing

Explain the TPEQEA method for writing “meaty and meaningful” paragraphs and use the example to scholarly example to demonstrate it. Ask students if they can see where the author shifts to the next

mental move. I pose the questions at the end, but also have them written where students can see them so they can go back and refer to them when they write their own paragraph using the method.

Directions for Students

TPEQEA

TPEQEA is a writing strategy that helps students write clear and concise paragraphs.

Writing Format

Name	# of Sentences	Function
Topic Sentence	1	General, broad introductory sentence
Point	1	Specific, focused sentence
Example	1-3	An example that illustrates the point
Quote(s)	1-3	Direct quote(s) from the text which support(s) your point
Elaboration	3-5	Explain the point/quote/example
Analysis	2-5	Take it further; how does this impact society; why do we care? So, what?

Example

TPEQEA from Maximiliano Jimenez “Partly Familiar, Partly Novel Too”

Perhaps, though, one of the most salient and meaningful episodes that deal with the literalizing of science-fictional tropes is found in chapter five. As in many other instances, the narrator presents the crossing of some of the people that venture through the magical doors, going from their conflictive surroundings to an ideally better place. This specific case is that of a family who reaches Dubai, and the focalization here is worthy of attention. After narrating how the four people emerge from a door inside a pedestal floor; the narrator says:

On a security camera the family could be seen blinking in the sterile artificial light [...] though the feed lacked audio input it was of sufficient resolution that lip-reading software could identify their language as Tamil [...] After a brief interlude the family was picked up again by a second

camera [...] they were at that moment simultaneously captured on three exterior surveillance feeds [...] they could be seen at multiple angles [...] A small quadcopter drone was hovering fifty meters above them now, too quiet to be heard, and relaying its feeds of various tourists' selfie-taking mobile phones [...] they were intercepted and led away, apparently bewildered, or overawed, for they held hands and did not resist or scatter or run. (Hamid 91-93).

Technology once again plays an important role in this scene, and while this is not an extrapolation of the capacities and reaches of current devices—like what the SF series *Black Mirror* does—in this episode Hamid constructs a paranoid space of surveillance and persecution. The association with George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is almost natural. In this manner, *Exit West* seems to be activating associations with the dystopian spaces recognizable in some works of science fiction. Hardly can it be argued that the society Hamid presents is dystopic, but the mere allusion to such a literary topic brings the dystopian implications to the fore. The fact that this is done via a realistic portrayal of the current global situation raises important considerations. Hamid's depiction of forced migration seems to be suggesting that the refugee crisis is already, indeed, a sort of real-life dystopia if viewed through this lens (Jimenez 133).

- Which sentence is the topic sentence?
- Which sentence directs and focuses the audience?
- Which sentence or sentences provides an example which illustrates the point?
- Where is the direct quote which supports the point?
- Where does the writer elaborate or explain either the point, the quote, or the example?
- Where does the author take it further, show how this impacts society, shows why we should care, or answers the So, what?

Assessment: Writer's Workshop

Students write their own paragraph modeling the TPEQEA method. In the next class session, students are broken into small groups to check their group member's TPEQEA for clarity, documentation of both a source from the novel and a scholarly source. It is a good idea to choose a student sample that has ideas that merit attention, but that is not perfect. This student left off the citation for her scholarly source, but her ideas show a complex understanding of the issues in the novel, and a careful reading of the scholarly text. As we discuss the student work in groups, show a few samples of common problems, but also compliment students for their insights, push them to develop their ideas further, and challenge them to return to class with a controlling idea for their research paper.

Student Sample TPEQEA Journal

Transnationalism is a concept that refers to the extension and dispersion of social, political, and economic processes in and between and beyond the sovereign jurisdictional boundaries of nation-states (Last name page). Hamid's novel asks the reader to acknowledge the inherency of migration to the human race and accept that we are a global community and not chained to the places of our birth. In chapter 8, Hamid touches on the inevitability of coexistence and the resulting acceptance:

“Perhaps they had grasped that the doors could not be closed, and new doors would continue to open, and they had understood that the denial of coexistence would have required one party to cease to exist, and the extinguishing party too would have been transformed in the process, and too many native parents would not after have been able to look their children in the eye, to speak with head held high of what their generation had done. Or perhaps the sheer number of places where there were now doors had made it useless to fight in any one” (166).

Hamid speaks to humanity in the previous quote. The authorities in London finally came to terms with the fact that they could not get the refugees out of their city and instead of responding with violence they chose the humane route and turned the water and electricity back on. This point drives home the unavoidable results of migration and emphasizes that being hospitable, rather than fearful of these unknown peoples, is the humane thing to do.

Follow up

Students move into writing their 8-10 page research paper, by coming to class with their introduction and an outline.

Resources and References used in the creation of the module (e.g. books, articles, etc.)

Deardorff, D. (2019). Excerpted from UNESCO manual on developing intercultural competence based on human rights by Darla K. Deardorff, UNESCO

Hamid, M. (2017). *Exit West*. Haryana, India: Penguin Random House.

Lynn, Steven. (2001). *Texts and Contexts: Writing about Literature with Critical Theory*. Third Edition. New York: Longman.

Jimenez, M. (2020). Partly familiar, partly novel too: Fantasy and Science Fiction in Mohsin Hamid’s *Exit West*. *Nuevas Poligrafias*, 123-145.

Jacobson, K. (2019). Refugees and global migration. *Great Decisions*, 13–24.

Note: I learned about the TPEQEA method from a Literacy Design Collaborative workshop, but the presenters did not know who had created the method, just that it worked.