

THE ORGANIC INTEGRATION OF READING & WRITING THROUGH THEMATIC JOURNEYS



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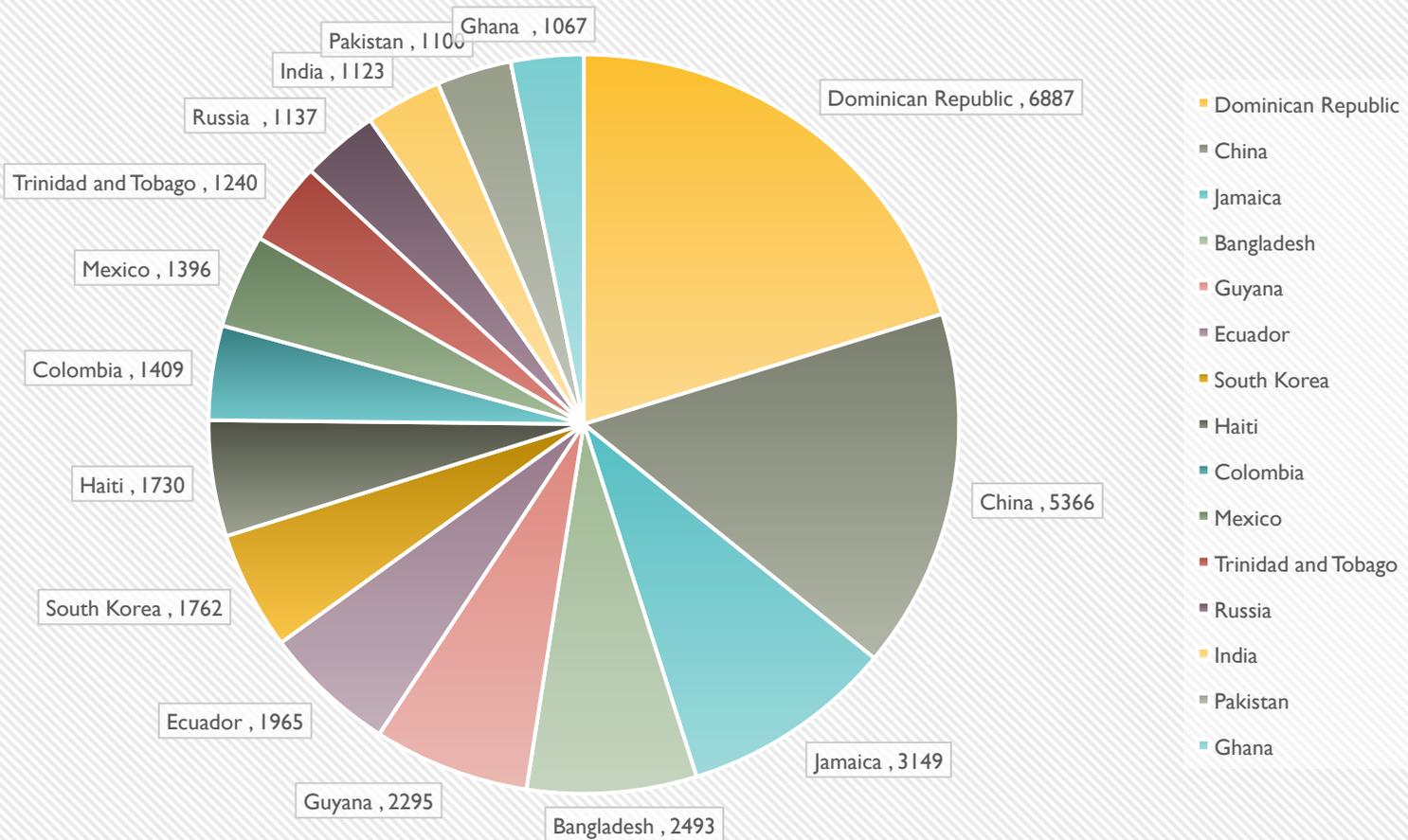
TODAY'S PRESENTATION GOALS

- Provide Background on the scope of **the challenge** CUNY faces in **preparing its ELL population** for college-level coursework.
- Discuss **the movement** in the US towards **the integration** of reading/writing instruction.
- Share **our philosophy** concerning the organic relationship between reading and writing as integrated skills
- Introduce a **conceptual framework** for exploring integrated reading and writing courses
- Present an overview of one **thematic journey** through an **academic discipline, with ICT components**.

SOME BACKGROUND ON CUNY

- The City University of New York(CUNY) is the United States leading urban public university.
- CUNY serves more than **480,000 students** at **23 colleges** and institutions in New York City.

FOREIGN-BORN STUDENTS ENROLLED IN CUNY



GOAL FOR ELLS IN CUNY SYSTEM

- To offer quality ELL instruction, with a focus on building skills in reading and writing
- Note-Students are placed into developmental reading/writing courses based on university placement exams
- Effective, and somewhat speedy integration into the freshman year curriculum, across academic disciplines

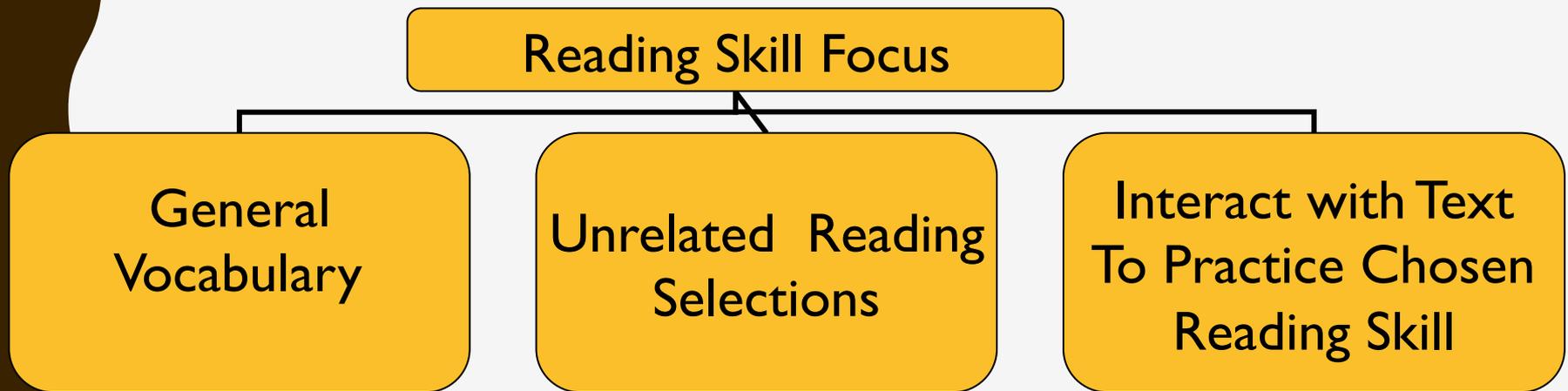
CUNY READING & WRITING DEV. ED COURSES TAUGHT IN ISOLATION-1970'S- THE PRESENT

- Separate Reading and Writing Placement Exams into the university
- Reading seen as a 'global literacy' issue
- Writing was taught by instructors trained in the area of 'composition and rhetoric'
- National Movement toward the integration of reading and writing courses in developmental education began in the last five years

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON ISSUES WITH ELL STUDENTS/FACULTY IN THE INTEGRATED, READING/WRITING CLASSROOM?

- Students are vulnerable readers. Low-level literacy in their L1
- Writing instructors have little training in literacy training
- Tendency for New Integrated courses to Simply Compress Old Reading curriculum and Writing curriculum into one. Lazy Solution!

PUTTING THE CART BEFORE THE HORSE



PUTTING THE HORSE BEFORE THE CART

High-Interest Thematic Readings

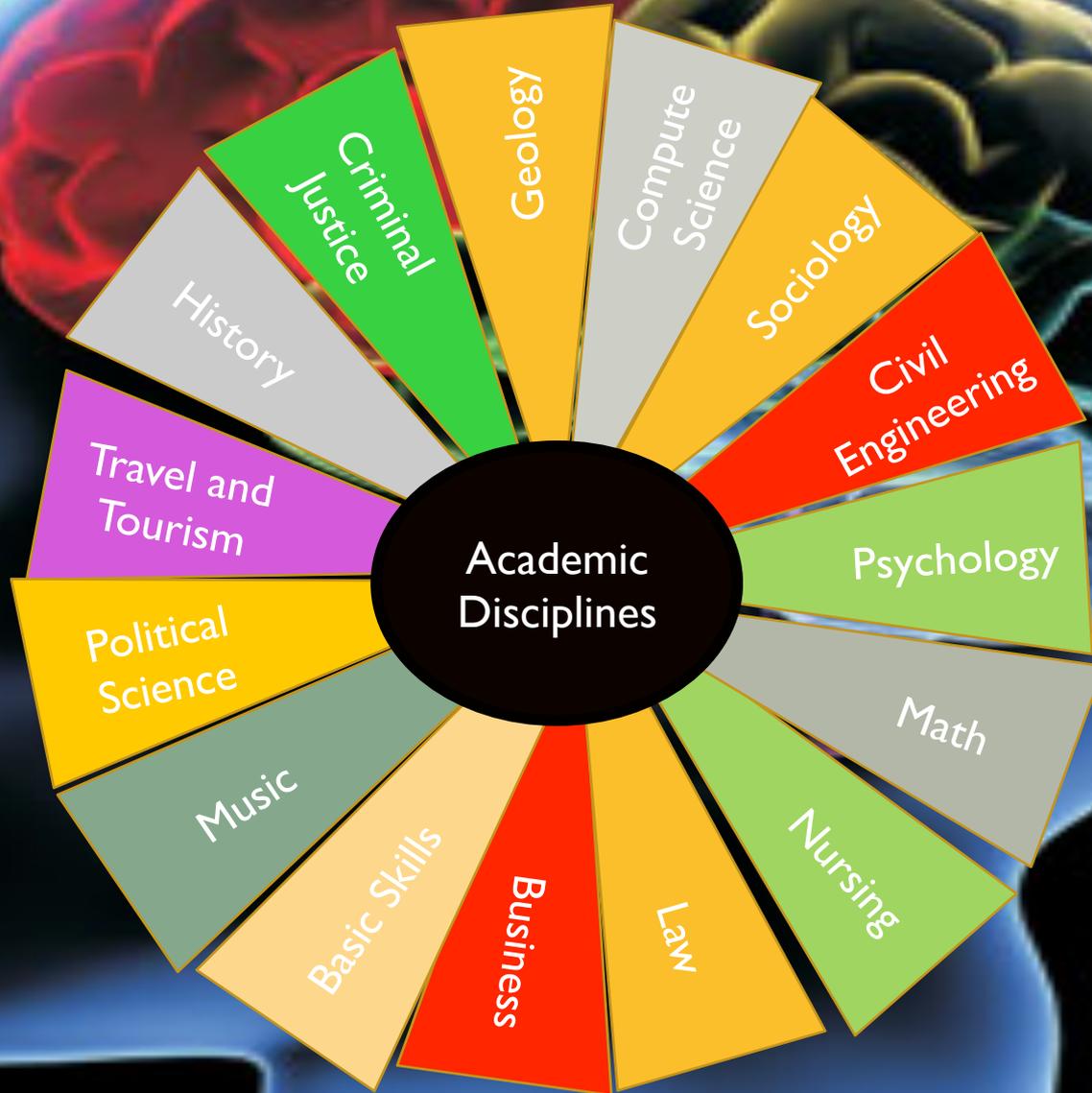
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graph TD; A[High-Interest Thematic Readings] --> B[Discipline-Specific Vocabulary]; A --> C[Interacting with Text through higher order thinking questions and web-based extension activities]; A --> D[Reflecting on reading Through Blog Discussions And topic-based PP Presentations];
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Discipline-Specific Vocabulary

Interacting with Text through higher order thinking questions and web-based extension activities

Reflecting on reading Through Blog Discussions And topic-based PP Presentations

What do Students Study in College?



RESEARCH SUPPORTING A THEMATIC APPROACH

Skill & Drill Approach: “That’s a problem for all students: Spending hours finding the main idea can get pretty boring. But it’s a particular problem for low-income students because they’re often the most vulnerable readers, and if the act of reading doesn’t grab their attention now, it may never will.”

“Skills are important. However, as the cognitive scientist Daniel T. Willingham and others have demonstrated, you can’t improve reading comprehension just by practicing free-floating skills. For students to understand what they’re reading, they need relevant background knowledge and vocabulary.”

Wexler, 2015

Source: How Common Core Can Help in the Battle of Skills vs. Knowledge

The New York Times/8/28/ 2015

Natalie Wexler writes about public education in Washington, D.C.

DEVELOPMENTAL READING A CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH USING READING MODULES

Benefits of Content Modules:

- A. Provide a ‘Purpose for Reading.
- B. Provide “cultural literacy” in several academic areas.
- C. Provide the opportunity for students to become academically and socially engaged in the classroom.
- D. Provide the opportunity for web-based research and developing the critical skill of distinguishing quality sources from unreliable ones.

Susan
Edington, 2003

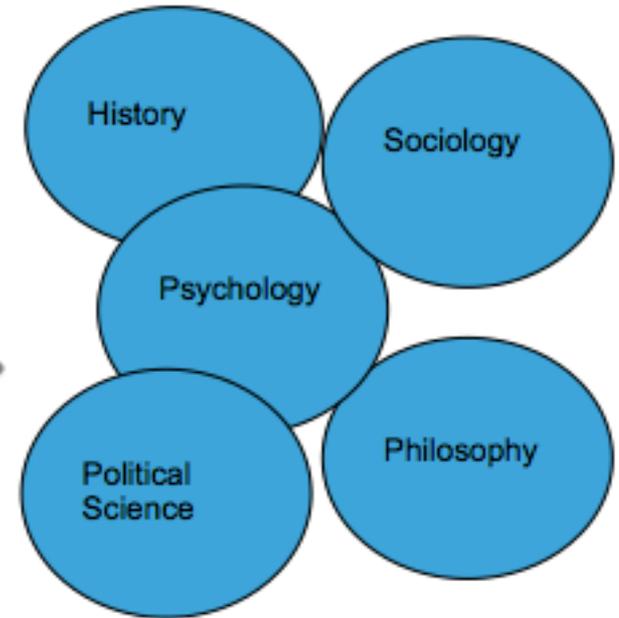
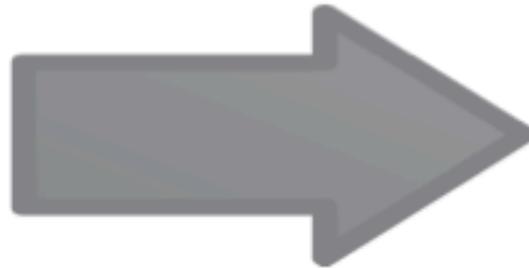
Students struggle to transfer reading and writing skills to different contexts



Reading Class



Writing Class



Learning to Teach Integrated Reading and Writing: Evidence from Research and Practice

Julia Baufman and Hilda Barrow. NADE 2015

OUR PILOT: BUILDING AN INTEGRATED, CONTENT-BASED COURSE

- Thematic unit curriculum piloted at eight CUNY campuses in the FALL 16 and Spring 2017 semester.
- Focus of pilot, thematic units for upper-level developmental courses
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Communications
- Criminal Justice
- Health Science

CUNY LIBERAL ARTS CURRICULUM

- 100 level courses in social sciences for all
- Literature courses required
- Goal of a well-rounded education

Some Advantages of our RAC/
WAC approach:

- A taste of the LA curriculum just around the corner
- Many freshmen are 'undecided' about their course of study
- An opportunity to incorporate technology based, academic research into the curriculum

AN EXAMPLE OF A 'THEMATIC JOURNEY': EXPLORING CRIMINAL JUSTICE'



BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THEMATIC JOURNEY



- Open-ended preview questions about controversial issues pertinent to the discipline
Blog response to preview Q's that pique students' interests
- Interacting with discipline-specific terminology
E-book- introductory level first chapters of textbook on given academic discipline
- Contemporary web-based readings on sub-topics in the discipline

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THEMATIC JOURNEY



- Introducing a particular reading skill-thematically linked
- Reinforcing a parallel writing skill
- Further exploration on-line with videos and preliminary academic research
- Essay question overarching thematic readings
- Debate on controversial issue within discipline

INTELLECTUALLY STIMULATING PREVIEW QUESTIONS:

- **Previewing Criminal Justice**
- **Read the following questions and discuss them with your classmates. As you answer the questions, consider your personal experience and knowledge of criminal justice in general.**
- Do you generally believe in America's criminal justice system? Do you believe the system is fair? Explain. Do you have a positive view of the police force? Why or why not?
- In your opinion, should the death penalty be legal? If yes, for what types of crimes should it be administered? Would abolishing the death penalty make America less safe? Explain.
- Do you believe that DNA testing completely eliminates the possibility of innocent people being wrongly convicted of a crime? If yes, explain how this type of evidence reduces the margin of error.
- In your opinion, is it a good idea for members of a community to form their own neighborhood-watch policing units? Why or why not?

BLOG RESPONSES

1. Students discuss the preview questions with their classmates.
2. They post their responses to at least two of them on a class blog (ours is called '**The Wall**').
3. Students review the postings on The Wall and respond to at least two of their classmates' postings that grab their interest.



DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC TERMINOLOGY

1-MINUTE CHALLENGE

BRAINSTORM WITH A COLLEAGUE AS MANY VOCABULARY WORDS RELATED TO THE DISCIPLINE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE FOR HOMEWORK, ADD ANOTHER 15 DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC VOCABULARY TERMS TO 'CJ TREE' POSTED ON THE WALL



THE INTERNET AS A BRIDGE FOR NON-READERS

- Students use 'Google Skills' as a gateway into finding relevant sources of reading
- Students transfer 'Google Skills' to academic territory, working with academic databases to find secondary sources of support for their argumentative essays.

READINGS ON SUB-TOPICS IN THE DISCIPLINE

STUDENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR FINDING RELEVANT ARTICLES FROM RELIABLE

- **SOURCES** *Some Say Cop Videos Misleading*
 - *Room for Debate: Young Offenders Locked Up for Life*
 - *LAPD Adds Officers and Crime Falls— But Is There a Connection?*
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REINFORCING PARALLEL READING/WRITING SKILLS

To maintain discipline focus, reading and writing skills are couched within the given academic discipline



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES ON-LINE: IT'S SHOWTIME

Go online and find a video link whose topic ties into one of the unit readings (maximum length = 10 minutes). After viewing the video clip, write a half-page summary of the video's key points. Post your personal reaction to the ideas in the clip (between 150 and 400 words) on our class blog.



Go online and do some research to gather information about two experts in the field of Criminal Justice: one from the past such as Allan Pinkerton or Clarence Darrow and another contemporary expert such as Christopher Stone or David Onek. Fill out the table provided below with pertinent information about the two experts.

Past Influential Expert	Present Influential Expert
Name	Name
Place of birth	Place of birth
Year of birth	Year of birth
Education	Education
What is s/he most famous for?	What is s/he most famous for?
Famous quote	Famous quote

After you fill out the table, discuss your findings with your classmates and learn from them about what they discovered on the Internet.

WRITING THE ACADEMIC ESSAY

Unit Essay Question

Do you believe that the police live up to the promise of protecting and serving the community?

Unit Essay Option

Create your own essay topic pertinent to the criminal justice readings.



ASSESSING OUR PILOT, INTEGRATED, CONTENT-BASED COURSE

- Thematic unit curriculum piloted at eight CUNY campuses in the FALL 16 and Spring 2017 semester.
- Challenging to assess as structure of reading/writing exit exam changed in Fall 16.
- Currently compiling data on average grades for developmental reading/writing students in 100 level social science content courses.

Comparing performance of those who participated in the pilot course with those who did not.

LET'S SEE WHERE THIS GOES!

REFERENCES

Edington, Susan, *Developmental Reading: A Constructive Approach Using Reading Modules* by, 2003

Raufman, Julia and Barrow, Hilda, *Learning to Teach Integrated Reading and Writing: Evidence from Research and Practice*. Community College Research Center. Columbia University, NY. February 2015

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Wexler, Natalie, *How Common Core Can Help in the Battle of Skills vs. Knowledge* by in *The New York Times*/8/28/ 2015