EXTRA/ALTERNATE ACTIVITY

THIS IS NOT A GOOD TITLE: ENG 1310 TITLE WORKSHOP

Time: 20-35 minutes. This is an effective activity on a paper turn-in day or as an extra exercise if there is time left after a peer review, which can be adapted to different lengths, depending on whether you decide to do one (or both) of the title activities attached.

1. Write some examples of titles on the board in random order (the below are relevant to my class’s Paper 3):

   #3
   Paper 3
   PETA Ad
   “Flawless” like Beyonce
   The Art of Persuasion
   Beyonce
   No More Fur

   Rise Ad
   Quenching the Thirst
   Ethos, Pathos, Logos
   Gatorade Ad
   Persuasive Advertising
   Kevin Durant Ad
   Aristotle’s Theory

2. (5-10 minutes) Ask the class which of the above are “good” titles? “Bad” titles? Why?

3. (5 minutes) Explain the anatomy of a title.
   a. Titles should do three things:
      i. First, predict the content.
      ii. Second, catch the reader’s interest.
      iii. Third, reflect the tone or slant of the piece of writing.
   b. Academic titles should have three parts:
      i. A catchy “hook” that introduces the paper in a creative way.
      ii. Specific keywords that identify the concepts that you will be exploring.
      iii. The “location” where those keywords will be explored (subject, book, text, area of expertise, time period).
   c. 1+2+3=great title!

4. (10 minutes) Revise some “bad” titles as a group, using the above strategies.
   a. Like any piece of writing, an effective title does not appear in one magic moment; it takes brainstorming and revising. One way to come up with a great title is to use Richard Leahy’s “Twenty Titles of the Writer” exercise (attached).
RICHARD LEARY'S TWENTY TITLES FOR THE WRITER

1. Copy out of your draft a sentence that could serve as a title.
2. Write a sentence that's not in the draft to use as a title.
3. Write a title that is a question beginning with *What, Who, When, or Where.*
4. Write a title that is a question beginning with *How or Why.*
5. Write a title that is a question beginning with *Is/Are, Do/Does, or Will.*
6. Pick out of the essay some concrete image—something the reader can hear, see, taste, smell, or feel—to use as a title.
7. Pick another concrete image out of the essay. Look for an image that is a bit unusual or surprising.
8. Write a title beginning with an -ing verb (like “Creating a Good Title”).
10. Write a title that is a lie about the essay. (You probably won't use this one, but it might stimulate your thinking.)
11. Write a one-word title—the most obvious one possible.
12. Write a less obvious one-word title.
13. Write a two-word title.
14. Write a three-word title.
15. Write a four-word title.
16. Write a five-word title.
17. Think of a familiar saying, title of a book, song, movie, that might fit your essay.
18. Take the title you just wrote and twist it by changing a word or creating a pun on it.
19. Do the same with another saying or title of a book, song, or movie.
20. Find two titles you've written so far that you might use together in a double title. Join them together with a colon [:].

Bull 2
The first step in creating a catchy title is to actually write your essay. Often, papers will take on minds of their own, and you’ll end up writing on a different subject than you had planned. If you create the title first, it will mean spending more time revising the title once the paper is completed.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Idea 1</th>
<th>Idea 2</th>
<th>Idea 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Phrases</strong></td>
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**Theme:** Your specific argument  
**Ideas:** Adjectives that describe that argument

**Audience:** The target group you are trying to reach  
**Ideas:** Adjectives that describe that group

**Language:** The words you use to refer to your main idea  
**Ideas:** Words pulled from your essay (often the concluding paragraph) that refer to your main idea

**Phrases:** Quotations from sources you’ve used/readings discussed  
**Ideas:** Key phrases pulled from quotations in your essay that capture your main idea

Let’s say you are writing an essay about *The Hunger Games*. Here’s a sample of potential title options using the template above.

<table>
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<th>Idea 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme</strong></td>
<td>Psychological impact of <em>The Hunger Games</em> on readers</td>
<td>Parallels to modern-day society in <em>The Hunger Games</em></td>
<td>Gender roles in <em>The Hunger Games</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
<td>Young adult readers</td>
<td>People familiar with pop culture</td>
<td>People interested in literature and society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>Psychological impact</td>
<td>Parallels to society</td>
<td>Gender roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phrases</strong></td>
<td>“Readers Intrigued and Disturbed”</td>
<td>“The Capitol as a Mirror of Society”</td>
<td>“Femininity Redefined”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bull 3