

### **Prompt:**

In journal one, you wrote about your current understanding of writing, focusing specifically on how you define “good” writing and what key terms are relevant for this definition. Our work today will focus on further developing that work into your initial theory of writing.

### **Step 1: Create a Wordle**

Copy and paste your journal one into a wordle-creating site.

How to create a Tagxedo: Go to <http://www.tagxedo.com/>. Click on “create.” Paste your document into the blank space in the text box. Choose the colors and fonts as you wish once you paste your document inside the Wordle. Save the Wordle to the Wordle gallery (this is public space). Once the Wordle is saved there, you can post the url to your Tumblr, along with your work for the remaining steps. If Tagxedo doesn’t work for you, try [www.worditout.com](http://www.worditout.com).

### **Step 2: Begin to Theorize**

In about **200-250** words, respond to the following questions:

What connections do you see (if any) between your Wordle image and your key terms? What did you expect to see, and what did you not expect to see? What was surprising? If you don’t see a connection between key terms and your Wordle image, why do you think that is? Why might it be important to see your Wordle mirror your thoughts in the journal, or does it matter? Does looking at your Wordle make you rethink any of your key terms? What is the most intriguing conclusion you can draw from this exercise about your ideas about writing?

Next, **create a theory of writing based on your own key terms and Wordle image**. When creating this theory think of science classes or research you may have done: A theory is a group of statements put together to explain a phenomena (specifically, here, a theory of writing) and assists in the understanding of these statements. Consider your audience, which you define, but which might include other students, professors, colleagues in your workplace, future employers, the university community, etc. Explain your theory keeping your audience in mind.

### **Step 3: Visualize/Map your Theory**

Now that you’ve composed your initial theory of writing, take some time to visualize/map that theory on an 8.5 x11 piece of paper. Ultimately, your map should **include the key terms** that you have emphasized in your theory of writing (which may be different from your initial list), and it should depict the relationships that you see between the key terms.

Here are some examples of different kinds of maps to give you an idea of the different ways that you can represent relationships between key terms:

- <http://hyperallergic.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/barr-graph-320.jpg>
- <http://www.urbanrail.net/eu/fr/paris/paris.htm>
- <http://socks-studio.com/img/blog/lombardi-05-big.jpg>
- [http://www.johndcook.com/category\\_concepts.png](http://www.johndcook.com/category_concepts.png)
- [http://payload.cargocollective.com/1/3/97948/1950067/Literature%20Review%20Mapping%20Part%202\\_o.jpg](http://payload.cargocollective.com/1/3/97948/1950067/Literature%20Review%20Mapping%20Part%202_o.jpg)

Once you've finished, take a picture of your map so that you can post that image, along with the rest of your work, to your Tumblr. I'll also be collecting the hard copies of your maps.

#### Step 4: Making Connections

In groups of 2-3, share what you found in this activity and share your theory so far. As you're talking, be sure to consider insights that you have had about writing through this process of reflecting and mapping. Be sure to notice the overlaps and major differences between your theory and map and your group members' theories and maps. Talk with each other about what might account for these differences and similarities.

#### Step 5: Revision and Reflection

Go back to your theory in progress and consider the group discussion and how it impacts your theory, if at all. Revise your theory of writing as you wish and reflect on what you're revising and why (or why you aren't revising, if that's the case). Be certain that your revisions are distinguished from your original theory via bold or italic font, different font color, etc.

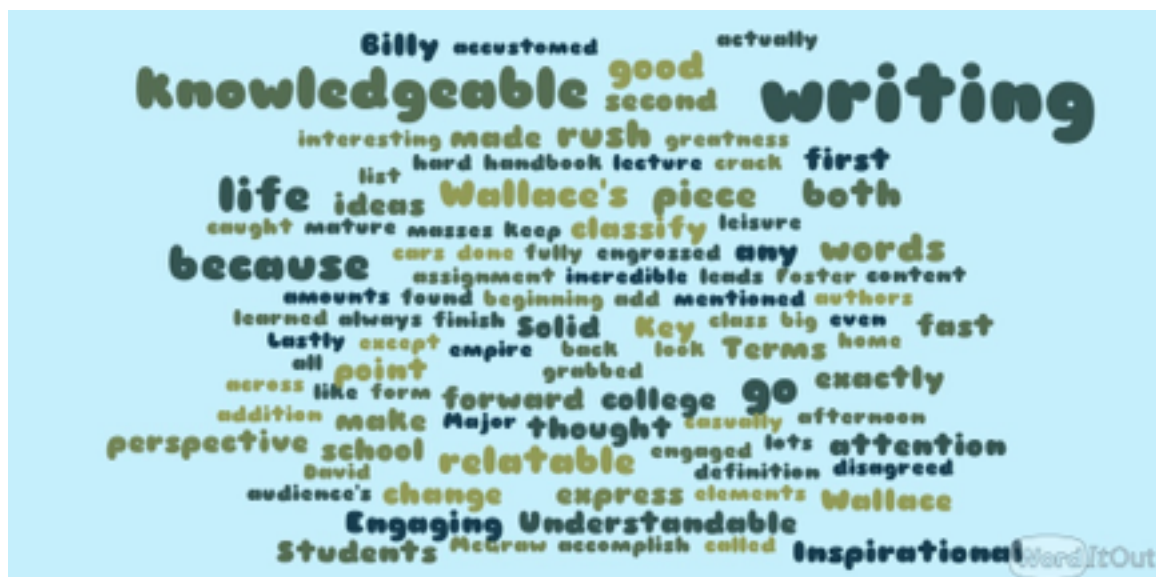
#### Step 6: Responding to Peers

Comment on at least two of your peers' theories of writing. Engage in a conversation about each other's theories in detail – offer specific information about what you see, rather than affirmation such as “I really liked this” or “I agree with you.” **Tell the writer exactly what you like, or what stands out to you about his or her theory** – in other words, what makes this writer's theory work well or what might help this writer think further about it?

#### Step 7: Wrap-Up Reflection

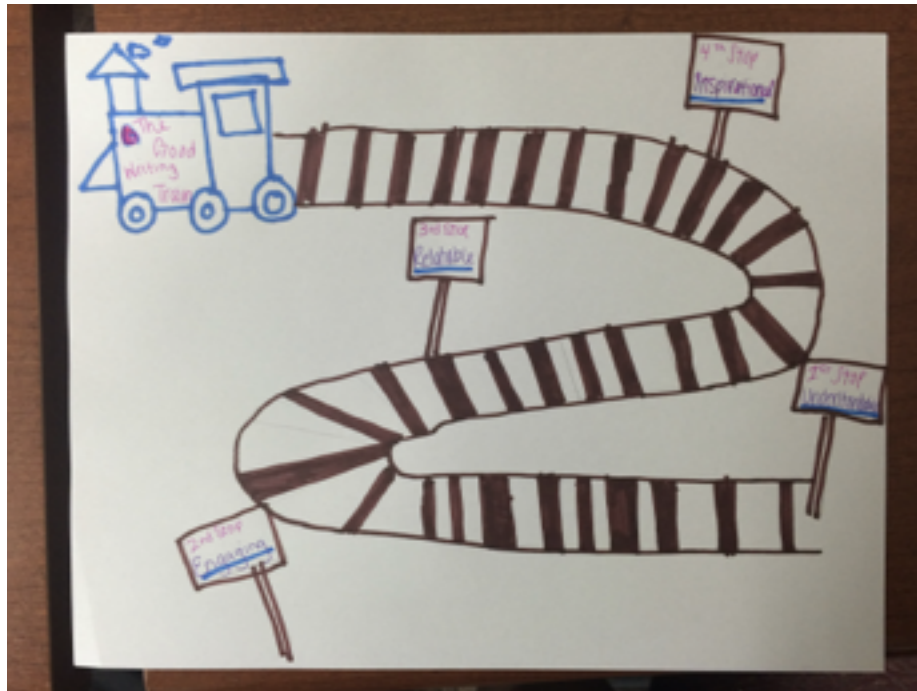
Reflect on this **entire** activity – initial theory, mapping, discussion, revision to theory, and reflecting on your theory – in about 300 words. What do you think about your theory of writing in comparison to others you saw today? How do you think having a theory of writing might be useful? What can you say now about yourself as a writer? How do you, as a writer, connect with your theory? How would you characterize your identity as a writer at this moment?

#### Response



The first thing that stands out to me in my wordle is the word knowledgeable. This term was first on my key term list, then after reading the selections I decided to remove it because I did not believe that writing had to be extremely knowledgeable to be great. I then expected to see a lot of little meaningless words like: the, because, and for, but surprisingly only saw one or two. The next thing that stood out to me were all my key terms. It was interesting to see that wordle picked them all out to use as bigger words because it means that I used them more often. At first it surprised me but then I realized that it just reinforces the fact that I explained my reasons for having those terms on my list. The most intriguing conclusion from my wordle is all the words I did use like, accustomed, perspective and engrossed. They are interesting words I do not use in my everyday language but make my writing sound more respectful.

To making writing good, it has to be understandable. If you can read and comprehend it, then it has to be engaging. If you are not interested, you will not be able to relate to the text. If you can relate to the text, it has the power to inspire you. Finally, if writing inspires you, it has done its job and it is good.



***Writing is thoughts expressed in the form of words and the two main reasons I write is to understand those thoughts and to remember things. But what makes writing good.*** To making writing good, it has to be understandable. If you can read and comprehend it, then it has to be engaging. If you are not interested, you will not be able to relate to the text. If you can relate to the text, it has the power to inspire you. Finally, if writing inspires you, it has done its job and it is good.

I revised my theory because I felt like it needed more of an intro and a thought process to how I got the the second part.

After this assignment I have definitely thought more about writing than I have in my entire life. When I try to figure anything out, I first try to define what it is. I find it easier to define things first before answering other questions like why I do it. So I asked myself, “what is writing?” I thought about this for awhile because it seemed like a simple answer but I could not find the perfect words to describe writing so I settled with “thoughts in the form of words.” I then continued to “why do I write?” Well I do not write that often other than for school but when I do, it is usually to remember a moment or to un-jumble my thoughts. These two questions lead me to revise my theory of writing which is: “Writing is thoughts expressed in the form of words and the two main reasons I write is to understand those thoughts and to remember things. But what makes writing *good*. To making writing good, it has to be understandable. If you can read and comprehend it, then it has to be engaging. If you are not interested, you will not be able to relate to the text. If you can relate to the text, it has the power to inspire you. Finally, if writing inspires you, it has done its job and it is good.” I revised my theory after discussing with others because at first I thought I had done it wrong (which is still a possibility) but then realized that my theory is mine so it can be anything I want it to be. In the end I added more to it to make it more understandable to others. On the other hand, I think it is important to have a theory because it gives you a focus on what you are trying to achieve. I would also say that my opinion on my writing skill has not changed; I still suck at writing but I now know how to make it better. My identity as a writer can be characterized as straight to the point and short and sweet.