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# Open Education Week: Open Pedagogy and Student Content Creation

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Open Education Week 2021

# *Open Pedagogy & Student Content Creation*

FARIBORZ  
MASEEH  
HALL

March 5, 2021



Portland State  
UNIVERSITY

## Interact & Engage: #OEWeek



Turn on your speakers and turn up your sound.



Use the Chat to interact with fellow attendees.



Submit questions for our speaker in the Q&A.

***Welcome!***



# *Land Acknowledgement*

Portland State University is located in the heart of downtown Portland, Oregon, in Multnomah County. We honor the Indigenous people whose traditional and ancestral homelands we stand on, the Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Tumwater, Watlala bands of the Chinook, the Tualatin Kalapuya and many other indigenous nations of the Columbia River. It is important to acknowledge the ancestors of this place and to recognize that we are here because of the sacrifices forced upon them. In remembering these communities, we honor their legacy, their lives, and their descendants.

# *What is Open Pedagogy?*

“Open pedagogy is the practice of engaging with students as creators of information rather than simply consumers of it. It's a form of experiential learning in which students demonstrate understanding through the act of creation” ([UTA Libraries](#)).

“When you use open pedagogy in your classroom, you are inviting your students to be part of the teaching process, participating in the co-creation of knowledge” ([BCCampus](#)).

““Open Pedagogy,” as we engage with it, is a site of praxis, a place where theories about learning, teaching, technology, and social justice enter into a conversation with each other and inform the development of educational practices and structures. This site is dynamic, contested, constantly under revision, and resists static definitional claims” ([Open Pedagogy Notebook](#)).



## *Shane Abrams*

Shane Abrams is currently a high school English Language Arts and Social Studies teacher in Ashland, Oregon. After cutting his teeth at a high school for at-risk youth in Colorado, he taught literature & composition at Portland State University and Portland Community College for four years, where he authored a writing textbook and loudly advocated for adjunct rights through union organizing. Amid teaching essential academic and socioemotional skills, he aims to cultivate activism and agency among young people.





## Frank Granshaw

Frank Granshaw is a retired geoscience educator, glacial geologist, an avid hiker, gardener, and insufferably proud grandpa. In addition to having taught Global Environmental Change since 2014, he has developed a resource manual for the course ([Climate Toolkit: A Resource Manual for Climate Science and Action](#)) and is heavily involved with climate education and advocacy work through a number of local, national, and international organizations.



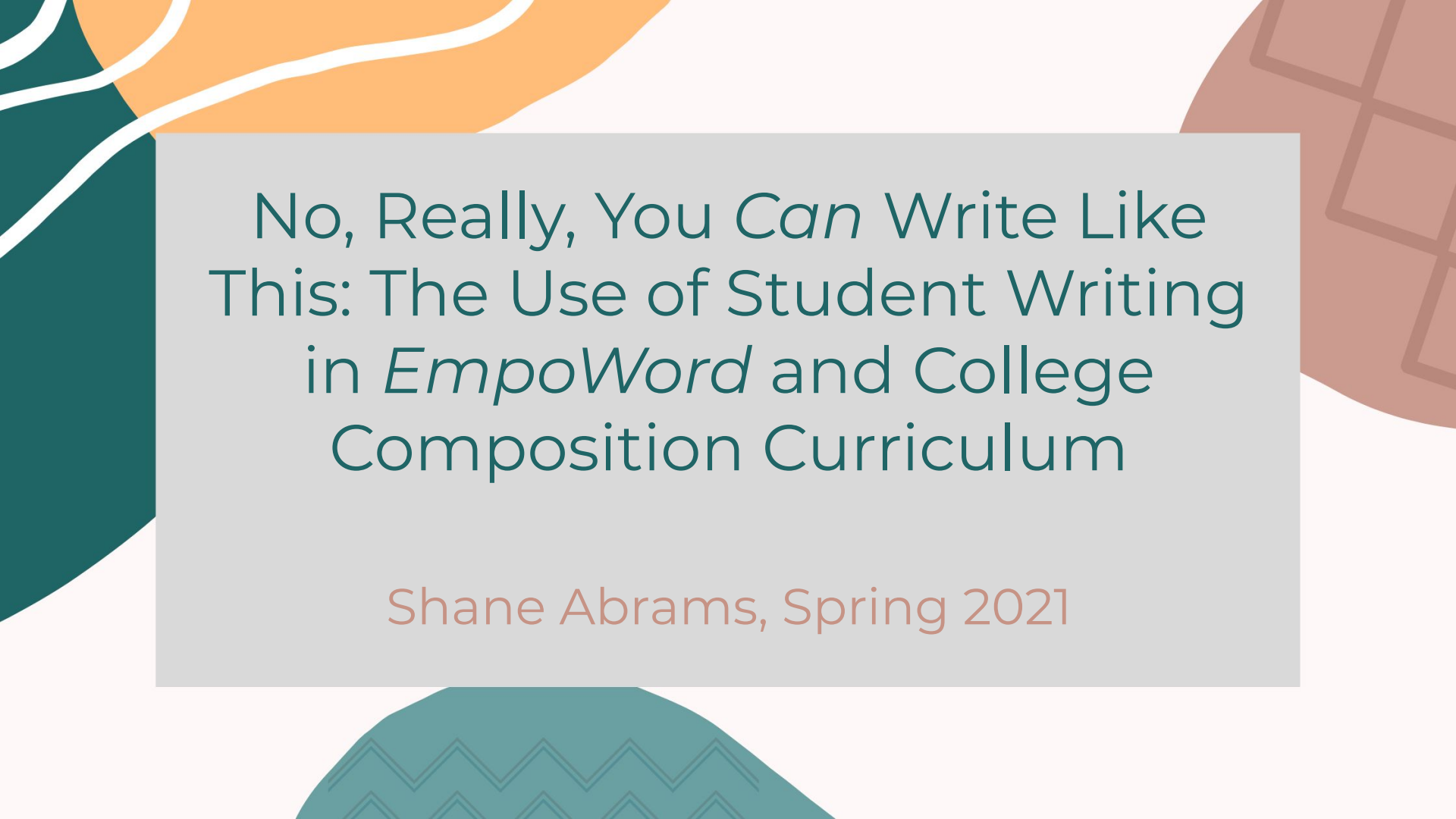




## *Veronica Hotton*

Veronica Hotton is an Instructor at Portland State University in the University Studies program. Veronica received a Ph.D. in Education from Simon Fraser University that focused on Curriculum Theory and Implementation, Philosophy of Education. She has an M.A. in Geography from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Veronica also has a B.S. in Environmental Studies & Music, and a B.M. in Orchestral Instruments, which are both from Central Michigan University.

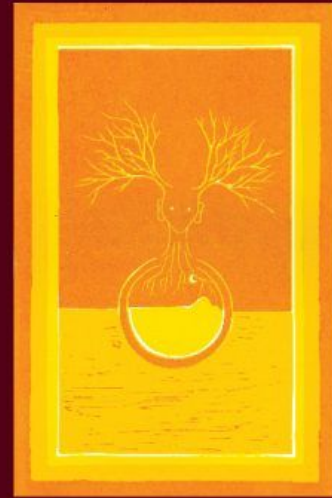




No, Really, You *Can* Write Like  
This: The Use of Student Writing  
in *EmpoWord* and College  
Composition Curriculum

Shane Abrams, Spring 2021

# Inception of the project



**EMPOWORD**

A STUDENT-CENTERED ANTHOLOGY AND HANDBOOK  
FOR COLLEGE WRITERS

SHANE ABRAMS, PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

# Needs & Opportunities

- Adjunct precarity
- Graduate Assistantship - Composition curriculum & pedagogy support
- Reduction of financial barriers in required courses

- Student responsiveness:
  - Practical alignment with curriculum
  - Representing their experiences and interests
  - Envisioning themselves as authors
  - Modeling growth mindset



# Needs & Opportunities

- Writing philosophy: iteration, self-reflection, collaboration, situational awareness, social justice\*

- Student responsiveness:
  - Practical alignment with curriculum
  - Representing their experiences and interests
  - Envisioning themselves as authors
  - Modeling growth mindset

The background features several abstract elements: a large teal shape on the left, a light pink shape at the top, a grey grid pattern on the right, and a zigzag pattern at the bottom. A prominent red rectangle is centered on the page, containing the word "Development" in white text.

Development

# Discovering Direction

- Early efforts focused on translating student-centered pedagogy to digital, “static” format
  - What’s special about my version of this?
  - What will serve the educators with versatility / adaptability?
- Focus on student work
  - Application, demonstration by example
  - “Teacher Takeaways”

ethnography	a study of a particular culture, subculture, or group of people. Uses thick description to explore a place and its associated culture.
figurative language	language which implies a meaning that is not to be taken literally. Common examples include metaphor, simile, personification, onomatopoeia, and hyperbole.
imagery	sensory language; literal or figurative language that appeals to an audience's imagined sense of sight, sound, smell, touch, or taste.
thick description	economical and deliberate language which attempts to capture complex subjects (like cultures, people, or environments) in written or spoken language. Coined by anthropologists Clifford Geertz and Gilbert Ryle.

## Techniques

### Imagery and Experiential Language

Strong description helps a reader experience what you've experienced, whether it was an event, an interaction, or simply a place. Even though you could never capture it perfectly, you should try to approximate sensations, feelings, and details as closely as you can. Your most vivid description will be that which gives your reader a way to imagine being themselves as of your story.

Imagery is a device that you have likely encountered in your studies before: it refers to language used to "paint a scene" for the reader, directing their attention to striking details. Here are a few examples:

- Bamboo walls, dwarf banana trees, silk lanterns, and a hand-size jade Buddha on a wooden table decorate the restaurant. For a moment, I imagined I was on vacation. The bright orange lantern over my table was the blazing hot sun and the cool air currents coming from the ceiling fan caused the leaves of the banana trees to brush against one another in soothing crackling sounds.<sup>14</sup>
- The sunny midday sky calls to us all like a guilty pleasure while the warning winds of winter tug our scarves warmer around our necks; the

City of Roses is painted the color of red dusk, and the setting sun casts her longing rays over the Eastern shoulders of Mt. Hood, drawing the curtains on another crimson-grey day.<sup>15</sup>

- Flipping the switch, the lights flicker—not menacingly, but rather in a homey, imperfect manner. Hundreds of seats are sprawled out in front of a black, worn down stage. Each seat has its own unique creak, creating a symphony of groans whenever an audience takes their seats. The walls are adorned with a



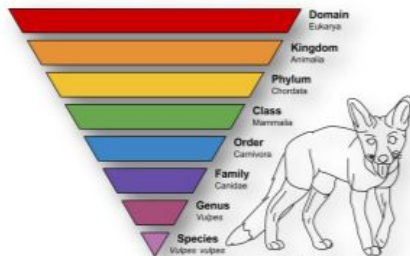
"Star-Marked" by Henry Underman is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

## Activities

### Specificity Taxonomy

Good description lives and dies in particularities. It takes deliberate effort to refine our general ideas and memories into more focused, specific language that the reader can identify with.

A **taxonomy** is a system of classification that arranges a variety of items into an order that makes sense to someone. You might remember from your biology class the ranking taxonomy based on Carl Linnaeus' classifications, pictured here.



"Taxonomic Rank Graph" by Annina Brown is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0

To practice shifting from general to specific, fill in the blanks in the taxonomy<sup>21</sup> below. After you have filled in the blanks, use the bottom three rows to make your own. As you work, notice how attention to detail, even on the scale of an individual word, builds a more tangible image.

	More General	General	Specific	More Specific
(example)	animal	mammal	dog	Great Dane
1a	organism		conifer	Douglas fir
1b		airplane		Boeing 757
2a		novel		Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire



## Model Texts by Student Authors

### Innocence Again<sup>24</sup>

Imagine the sensation of the one split second that you are floating through the air as you were thrown up in the air as a child, that feeling of freedom and carefree spirit as happiness abounds. Looking at the world through innocent eyes, all thoughts and feelings of amazement. Being free, happy, innocent, amazed, wowed. Imagine the first time seeing the colors when your eyes and brain start to recognize them but never being able to name the shade or hue. Looking at the sky as it changes from the

### Teacher Takeaways

*"One of the more difficult aspects of writing a good descriptive essay is to use the description to move beyond itself — to 'think through writing.' This author does it well. Interspersed between the details of diving are deliberate metaphors and analogies that enable the reader to gain access and derive deeper meanings. While the essay could benefit from a more structured system of organization and clearer unifying points, and while the language is at times a bit sentimental, this piece is also a treasure trove of sensory imagery (notably colors) and descriptive devices such as personification and recursion."*

— Professor Fiscoletti

water applies to the many  
it aspects of my life. It has  
ught me that life is very  
have to live in the moment  
miss the opportunities that  
ry way. I allow myself to  
ill my sorrow, despair and  
ointments when I dive into  
p blue sea and savor the  
s of peacefulness and  
ss. There is nothing around  
fish and corals, big and  
floating along in silence

ly the sound of my breath—*inhale and exhale*. An array of colors explodes in  
my eyes, colors that I never imagine I will discover again, an underwater  
as beautiful as the rainbow in the sky after a storm. As far as my eyes can see,  
to the depth of the ocean with nothing to anchor me. The deeper I get, the  
it turns. From the light blue sky to the deep navy blue, even blackness into the  
s the horizon darkens, the feeding frenzy of the underwater world starts and the  
landscape comes alive. Total darkness surrounds me but the sounds that I can  
e the little clicks in addition to my breathing. My senses overload as I cannot see  
around me, but the sea tells me it is alive and it anchors me to the depth of my

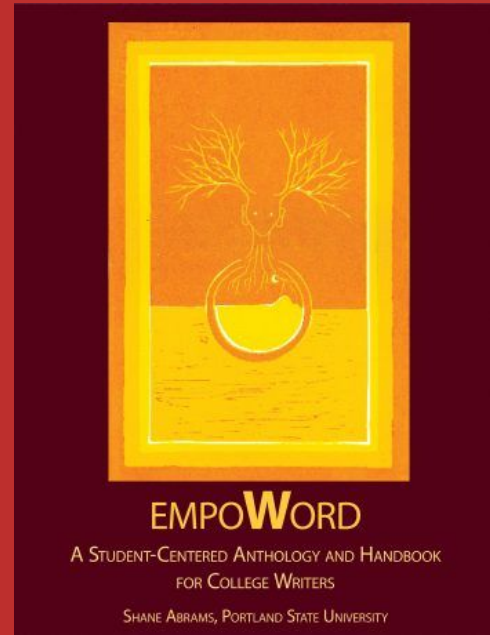
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Aspirations for the  
next edition

# Aspirations for the next edition

- Accessibility
- Digital pedagogy
- Social justice focus — contextualization of diverse experiences and advocacy
- Facilitation of work critique

# Thank you!





***Break (5 min)***

# Turning a Disposable Assignment into a Renewable Assignment



# *Disposable vs. Renewable Assignments*

According to Open Education advocate and scholar David Wiley, disposable assignments “add no value to the world— after a student spends three hours creating it, a teacher spends 30 minutes grading it, and then the student throws it away.”

“Wiley instead encourages faculty to craft “renewable assignments” that add value to the world (in and/or outside of the course) after they are completed. What the students produce through their coursework can be useful to and usable by fellow students, the instructor, and others.”

[“Are Your Assignments Disposable or Renewable?”](#)



## *Example Assignments: From Disposable to Renewable*

<b>Disposable</b>	<b>Renewable</b>
Essay or Lab report	Blog post or Wikipedia entry, zine
PowerPoint Presentation	YouTube video, brochure
Traditional textbook	Student-authored book or website



## *Activity (20 min)*

1. Open [this crowdsourced slide deck](#), read the instructions, and claim a slide
2. Share an existing assignment and how you might revise it to be renewable and open
3. Explore other attendees' assignment ideas and share feedback with the comment tool



# *Discussion*

1. How do you think renewable assignments might fit into your courses?
2. What benefits do you see in using renewable assignments in your courses?
3. What obstacles do you anticipate in incorporating renewable assignments into your courses?



# *Open Pedagogy Resources*

- [Example Student Release Form](#) (allows students to select Creative Commons licensing for their work)
- [Open Pedagogy Examples](#)
- [Open Pedagogy Notebook](#) (more examples)
- [Google Folder with Open License Materials for Students](#)