

Overview of Eleven Genres to Support Writing Drafts

See the relevant chapters for guiding questions for writing in each of the genres.

Genre: structure for your draft	What to keep in mind while drafting	Questions you might ask yourself as you draft
<p>Books and edited collections</p> <p>Read book chapter</p>	<p>For a book proposal, ensure your passion for the subject matter comes through as well as the need for the book and the potential market. As an author or authors drafting a book, among your principle concerns will be organization, breadth, and depth. You are telling a larger and longer story than in any other genre we discuss, and so you need to map out and regularly check whether you are achieving the best balance between breadth and depth as you work within a word limit. Regularly return to the theme or focus of the text and ask yourself if you are still addressing that theme while ensuring coherence.</p> <p>As an editor of a collection, you will also need to consider organization, breadth, and depth but in terms of other people’s writing rather than your own. When you invite chapters, consider providing a template or outline that asks authors to address the same points as other authors in the collection but, of course, focused on their own contributions. As you offer feedback and guidance to chapter authors, consider ways in which you can ensure a coherent experience for your readers, reminding authors to address the sections of the outline provided.</p>	<p>Have I articulated or invited a sufficiently diverse set of perspectives? Are the chapters organized in the best order to build into an engaging and coherent whole?</p> <p>For a book proposal: Why is there a need for this book? What is the overarching argument?</p> <p>For a book: Am I deepening, expanding, or otherwise developing the argument as I move through the book, or alternatively, am I offering a logical series of perspectives from different angles?</p> <p>For an edited collection: Am I ensuring that each chapter has integrity but also that there is consistency across chapters?</p>
<p>Case studies</p> <p>Read book chapter</p>	<p>Contributing a discussion of a particular approach in your own practice affords you an opportunity to present yourself as a learning and teaching scholar and also invites potential dialogue and collaboration around the practice you present.</p>	<p>What is this a case study of? What is most compelling and important about this case study to <i>me</i> as an author? What might readers find most compelling and inspiring?</p>

<p>Conference and workshop presentations</p> <p>Read book chapter</p>	<p>Many people find it best to avoid writing out your presentation, as reading from a script is rarely effective. Drafting some outline notes in bullet format which you memorize and use as prompts when you “talk” to your audience is much better than attempting to “read” a script because how we talk and how we write are significantly different, in terms of length and construction of sentences, for example. You need to make sure the connections and transitions are clear, and be prepared to respond to real-time input and feedback—questions and suggestions from participants. For a workshop, devote as much time to designing the activities as designing the presentation portion of the workshop. For posters, the layout and design are as important as the content.</p>	<p>Will this [statement, activity] be clear and accessible on a first hearing? Is the series of steps I am moving through/asking participants to move through logical and compelling and will they lead them to engage productively with the topic?</p>
<p>Empirical research articles</p> <p>Read book chapter</p>	<p>While the strict requirements of an empirical research article might seem constraining to some, they can also be seen as providing a clear structure that you can work, and even wiggle, within. In particular, they afford you the flexibility to jump around among the sections, as we suggest in our general guidelines, filling in different parts when you have time and are in that frame of mind (to describe methods, for instance, which is more technical, or to work on the discussion, which requires more creativity and analysis).</p>	<p>What particular contribution do my data, argument, and implications have to offer? How am I situating those within larger, ongoing conversations or positioning them to start a new conversation?</p>
<p>Literature reviews</p> <p>Read book chapter</p>	<p>Because a free standing literature review is primarily an analysis of what has already been published, albeit within a new frame and possibly opening new directions for thinking, it gives you an opportunity to join a conversation about learning and teaching from your particular perspective as a new, experienced, or student scholar without having to generate new data or a new conceptual model. Your synthesis should go beyond summarizing the literature and produce new insights and often a new framework.</p>	<p>How does the point I am making here help readers understand in a new way from what has already been presented or argued?</p>

<p>Opinion pieces</p> <p>Read book chapter</p>	<p>Because in an opinion piece you are conveying your own particular perspective, you need to consider how best to make that “hearable” and compelling to readers who may not have thought of what you address or may disagree.</p>	<p>What is my main argument? What voice or perspective am I adding to the ongoing conversation about learning and teaching and why is it important?</p>
<p>Reflective essays</p> <p>Read book chapter</p>	<p>Keep in mind that reflective essays are not necessarily trying to prove or convince but rather to convey the particulars of a lived experience and their significance.</p>	<p>In what ways am I conveying the lived experience I am describing and analyzing?</p>
<p>Social media</p> <p>Read book chapter</p>	<p>Social media, including posts shared via a blog, LISTSERV, or Twitter, allows you to play with the format in creative ways and to write outside of narrow academic constraints. Drafting involves text work along with consideration of the format, images, and hyperlinks.</p>	<p>What do I want readers to take away from my social media contribution, and how do I want to express myself as a writer using social media?</p>
<p>Stories</p> <p>Read book chapter</p>	<p>Since a story is a narrative, your focus can be on which details will bring the experience most vividly alive for readers. Stories might be the most challenging genre in which to gain enough distance from the content to convey it effectively to readers, so try to be cognizant of that challenge as you are drafting.</p>	<p>In what ways am I moving from writer-based to reader-based prose—from writing for yourself as audience to work through your ideas to writing for an external audience, someone not inside your own head?</p>
<p>Teaching award, fellowship, and promotion applications</p> <p>Read book chapter</p>	<p>Drafting such applications is an iterative process that has to focus on the criteria. Kelly’s drafting approach includes: claim (of “excellence”) + example (of what you do in your teaching) + evidence (data supporting excellence claim). She gets people to write these in outline form first and then to think through the flow. Don’t forget the role critical friends can play in this genre because they will see your practices and praise you in ways that you might not see.</p>	<p>As I draft my application, how can I keep to the fore my compelling argument as to how I meet the criteria?</p>

<p>Theoretical and conceptual articles</p> <p>Read book chapter</p>	<p>Because your theoretical or conceptual article aims to provoke, deepen, or expand thinking about learning and teaching, you might want to be sure you keep front and center in your mind how your draft is doing that.</p>	<p>How does the point I am making here provoke, deepen, or expand thinking? Of course, every point you make does not need to do that by itself, but if you endeavor to address the question repeatedly, you might find interesting patterns or themes that help clarify your argument as you write.</p>
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