WAC Writing Assignments N. Mitchell

ENG 417: Writer’s Craft Fall 2011

**Informal Writing Assignment 1:**

Simile Workshop

**Purposes:**

-to have students practice using similes to describe abstractions

-to demonstrate how particular use of simile reveals particulars of the speaker

**Steps:**

1. Generate a list of abstractions together in class

2. Have students write a simile which attempts to describe the abstraction

* as a well worn cliché
* as an original simile which references their own experiences
* as might be used by several different characters such as a farmer, a Rastafarian, a science professor, a race car driver, etc.

3. Students share similes aloud and discuss how the use of simile economically reveals the particulars of the speaker.

***Informal Writing Assignment 2:***

Sound Workshop

**Purpose:**

**-**to raise student awareness of how sound reveals emotional tone.

**Steps:**

1. Read AI’s *Twenty Year Marriage* together in class.
2. Have students identify the hard (mutes) sounds within the line and at the end of the line.
3. Have students substitute mute sounds with softer (liquids, sibilants) sounds in a short, (15 min.) in-class writing exercise.
4. Have students share the results by reading poems aloud, and discuss how the emotional tone of the speaker changes with these new sounds.

Students are given class participation credit for this exercise.