

Misunderstanding the assignment:

First year students and the anxieties
of teaching in one clinical course

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WHO ARE WE? WHAT ARE WE DOING?

- Educators interested in writing and writing pedagogies
- Examining those pedagogies to inform an understanding of teaching and learning writing in baccalaureate nurse education

WHAT WE INVESTIGATED

We asked first-year students and tutors about experiences of teaching and learning of a Year 1 clinical writing assignment

WHY THIS STUDY?

➤ **We know that** writing assignments can ...



WHY THIS STUDY?

- **We don't know what** enables/constrains those connections between writing, learning and teaching.

(Whitehead, 2002)



LITERATURE

➤ **Intellectual Development**

(Baxter-Magolda, 2004)

➤ **Discipline-specific Pedagogy**

(Bean, 2011; Lave, 1991; Miller, 1994)

➤ **Writing & Writing Assignments**

(Troxler & Oermann, 2011; White, 2007; Whitehead, 2002)

OUR RESEARCH QUESTION

**What are the experiences of
teaching and learning to write a
Year 1 clinical writing assignment?**

METHODOLOGY

- **INTERDISCIPLINARY FRAMEWORKS:** Rhetorical genre, Situated learning, Writing-to-learn, Institutional Ethnography
- **PARTICIPANTS:** Year 1 nursing students (n=11) and tutors (n=4)
- **ASSIGNMENT:** Community Practice Project
- **METHOD:** Classroom observation; semi-structured interviews; focus group; peer writing sessions; textual analysis of assignment documents
- **ANALYSIS:** Content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002)

FINDINGS

We thought students/tutors would talk about the assignment.

Instead . . .

We discovered a constellation of personal, political, relational, emotional, and epistemological dynamics that were previously unknown to us.

FINDINGS

THE SOCIAL NATURE OF LEARNING-TO-WRITE IN NURSING

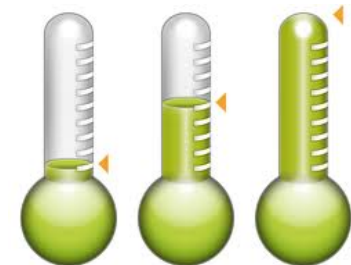
RELATIONSHIP OF ANXIETY TO THE LEARNING PROCESS

Inherent expectations and assumptions

**Provoked
by writing assignments**

MISUNDERSTANDINGS in YEAR 1

Students	Tutors
“given” knowledge	“co-participants”
Misunderstanding fuels anxiety	
Exacerbated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High mark value (60%)• Embedded components• APA style of writing	Exacerbated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short course length (6-wk)• Feedback consistencies• Grade leveling



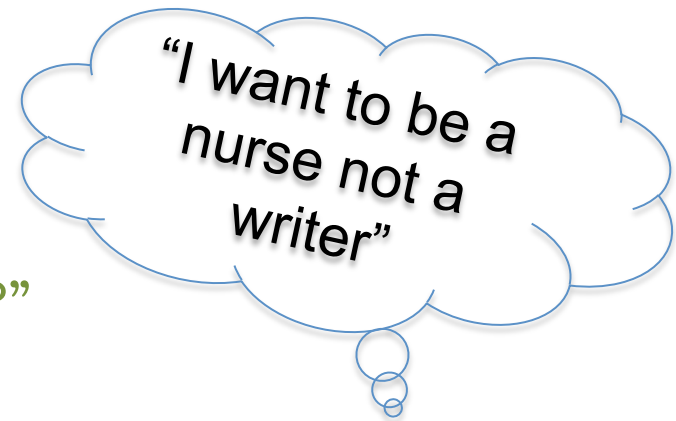


- ☒ Express Ideas
- ☒ Read Documents
- ☒ Write APA Style

RESULTS OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS & DISCONNECTIONS

[WRITING-FOR-A-GRADE]

“Tell me what you want me to do?”



[MARKING-FOR-CORRECTNESS]

“You care more about my grammar than my thinking”



FACILITATORS OF WRITING IN YEAR 1

① **LEARNING IS RELATIONAL:**
[Students] don't care how much
you know until they know how
much you care

~John C. Maxwell



FACILITATORS OF WRITING IN YEAR 1

② NEUROBIOLOGY OF LEARNING: Necessity of safe, empathic learning environment

“the anxious brain”
(Cozolino, 2002)



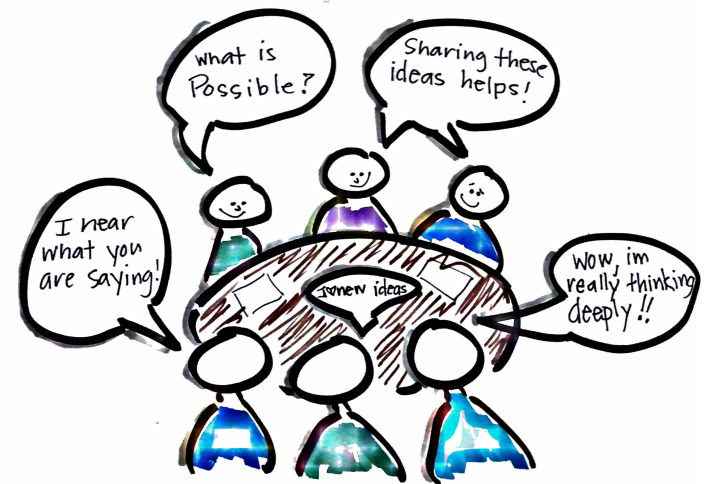
FACILITATORS OF WRITING IN YEAR 1

③ **DECODE LANGUAGE AND EXPRESSION:** Meta-messages expressed by both student and tutors

(Bean, 2011; Moffett, 1992)



WE WELCOME DISCUSSION



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Thank you.

We WELCOME COMMENTS
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