**Mosaic II Spring 2012**

**Dr. Rebekah Zhuraw**

**Texts in Context (TIC)**

**Possible Points: 20**

**Thumbnail:**

Texts are tools, extending the capacity to transmit the complex or extended thoughts of one or more human being to others. No text truly exists until it has blossomed in the recipient’s mind, the author’s ideas mated with our ideas, and the awakened faculties of our being evoked to imagine/think/play with them. The context of your being becomes the new screen upon which the original thought form plays. And yet the same thought form is playing and has played on many other screens, including that of the original author. What does this mean? What possibilities does this entail?

Texts have many lives. Texts enter and ignite the public discourse. They are active agents, directing conversations and affecting lives. They are adamant lovers, tricky spies, sword-carrying colonizers, potential allies, or sometimes something to stand up against. How has the text your group has been assigned (or its author or topics it broaches) fared in the public discourse?

**Assignment Specifics:**

The Group Portion: Student Led Classroom

Each student will be assigned to a group that will do background research on one of the assigned texts in order to frame a discourse that in some way contextualizes the text, ultimately sharing their discovery with the class by leading one 50 minute Text in Context discussion. (See syllabus.) (For T/R class periods, you will still lead only a 50 minute discussion.)

There are many ways that any text could be contextualized. Each group will decide for itself what makes them curious about the text and what gaps in their knowledge they would like to fill. Contextualization might take historical, cultural, political, social or personal dimensions. Each group will meet with me to decide the best approach to their topic. Your TIC project must reflect an academic level of inquiry and analysis. Topics must be focused and dovetail effectively. You will often have as little as one week to accomplish and present your research to the class.

Each TIC group should set up a Google group or similar forum for collaboration where you can report and coordinate your findings and ideas. I highly advise that you find a way to meet face to face once on your own after you have conducted your research to choreograph your Text in Context class plan. You will be given about 5 minutes at the beginning of the class to set up as I take roll and distribute ballots, but that’s it.

TIC projects must involve class participation. They cannot solely be presentations, but should involve exercises, enactments, question & answer periods, etc.

Everyone in the group must actively be involved in both the research and the classroom portions of the project.

The Individual Research Portion

When your group meets with me, we will decide both the group project and the individual research components. You will then each, individually, do that research. Your initial research will be done through search engines. However, you are not to solely rely on Google, but to review and expand your knowledge of other search engines and databases such as those introduced in English 802, as well as to exercise your ability to assess the credibility, purpose, and audience of sites and texts. Resourcefulness, thoroughness, and variety will be rewarded.

The individual portion of your research involves the creation of a series of inter-related documents:

1. The Research Log: Each researcher is expected to find at least 4-5 sources and to choose from these two best sources for which they will fill out a Research Log. The Research Log includes a section for your General Research Process and your Two Best Sources, serving both as an annotated bibliography and a travelogue of how you got there. I recommend that you fill out the Log as you perform your research.

2. Voice Board and Jing: As a major portion of Mosaic is the reflexive awareness of your own learning practices, you will further record your journey from initial concept to finished product through two additional media: Voice Board and Jing.

Voice Board is a tool located in the Tools Tab on Bb. You will use Voice Board at two intervals: before you begin your research and after you have completed the entire project. The Voice Boards are 3 minutes each and are available to the entire class.

Before you actually begin your research, you will record an Initial Voice Board addressing how you chose your subject, your proposed research methods, rationale, and expectations.

Jing is a video capture program that you will use to record your actual research process while you are surfing databases. Jing will record 5 minutes of activity. You must submit three Jings recording the 1st 15 minutes of your research. I will provide you with instructions prepared by a librarian on how to download and use Jing and Screencast, a dropbox where you will post your Jings so that I can view them.

After your group has led your Text in Context class and you have completed your Individual Research Log, you will review your Jings and your initial Voice Board and think about the entire project. Then you will record a Final Voice Board evaluating the completed project, both your individual work and your group project as a whole. What was your role in the group? What part of this project met your expectations? What was different? How so? What did you learn by reviewing your Jings? Overall, how did the TIC project go for you? If you could change anything about the project now, in retrospect, what would it be? What advice would you give others about the project?

**The Research Log, Jings, and Final Voice Board must all be submitted within 3 days after the classroom presentation.**

**You should configure your computer for Voice Board and Jing immediately so you can troubleshoot now, rather than waiting until the last minute and having technical difficulties thwart your timely the completion of the project!**

Grading

The Texts in Context assignment grade will have two components:

1) The class will grade the Student Led Classroom portion by ballot. We will create the criteria on the ballots ourselves, as a class, prior to the first TIC class and use these same criteria for all TIC Student Led Classrooms throughout the semester. This is 10 points of your grade.

At the end of the semester we will critique the ballot criteria to determine how well it served the project and if it should be modified further.

2) I will grade the individual research portions of the assignment once all of the materials are submitted. This is another 10 points of your grade.

These two point values will be added together for your total Texts in Context grade. You will receive a breakdown of the point values and any comments by myself or classmates when your receive your Text in Context grade.