**Class 5: Establishing Stance and Incorporating Sources**

**Length**: 80 minutes

**Learning Goals**

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

* Recognize how a writer establishes his or her stance on a subject and towards his or her audience via specific writing choices.
* Distinguish between the different possible uses of sources in an essay.
* Evaluate the effectiveness of sources based on the context and audience for a piece of writing.

**Overview**

This lesson is comprised of three primary activities:

* Students closely read Chiasson to identify and evaluate specific writing choices that indicate his stance towards his subject matter and audience (40 mins).
* Student closely read Chiasson to identify and evaluate the sources used (30 mins).
* Students revise their own blog posts on Chiasson's writerly strategies to include and demonstrate insights gained about establishing stance and incorporating sources (10 mins).

**Materials**

* Gordon Harvey’s “Elements of the Academic Essay” handout
* “Color Codes” by Dan Chiasson
* Laptops/tablets for students’ revision of their blog posts

**Activities**

*Establishing Stance*(40 minutes):

* Class reads and briefly discusses Harvey’s definitions of “stance.”
* In small groups, students read the first three (3) paragraphs of Chiasson's piece to underline or circle specific words, phrases, or sentences that indicate Chiasson’s stance towards his subject i.e. What sort of relationship does Chiasson have with *Citizen*/Rankine/lyric poetry/experiences of racism in America? What is Chiasson’s attitude about *Citizen*/Rankine/lyric poetry/experiences of racism in America? Instructor notes responses on the board under a column titled “Stance towards Subject.”
* In the same small groups, students re-read the first three (3) paragraphs of Chiasson's piece to underline or circle specific words, phrases, or sentences that indicate Chaisson’s stance towards his audience i.e. What sort or relationship does Chiasson seem to have with his audience? What is Chiasson’s attitude towards his audience? Instructor notes responses on the board under a column titled “Stance towards Audience.”
* The class reviews lists on the board and comes up with adjectives and phrases that can help convey Chiasson’s stance towards his subject and audience. The instructor notes responses and might help students refine responses by suggesting a range of potentially useful vocabulary e.g. expert, formal, academic, knowledgeable, critical, analytical, awed, disappointed, persuasive, dismissive, meticulous, etc. Instructor challenges students to relate the words they suggest to specific language choices listed on the board.
* In a class discussion, students now consider why these language choices might be effective in light of the particular context and audience. Instructor’s prompts might include:
  + What are the contexts (social, historical, personal, professional, etc.) in which Chiasson is writing?
  + Who is his audience? What four adjectives might describe them?
  + What does he expect them to know?
  + What impact does his role at the New Yorker have on his authority?
* Class now discusses the context and audience for their own essays and students freewrite to explain how they will establish a specific, appropriate stance in their own essays.

*Incorporating Sources* (30 minutes):

* Class reads and briefly discusses Harvey’s definitions of “sources.”
* Assign small groups or pairs of students to identify the sources in two successive paragraphs from Chiasson. There are 8 paragraphs so each group/pair can tackle 2 paragraphs.
* On the board, create four columns according to Harvey’s breakdown of the types of sources: “(a) factual information or data, (b) opinions or interpretation on your topic, (c) comparable versions of the thing you are discussing, or (d) applicable general concepts.” Each group sorts the sources they’ve identified into their appropriate columns. The class identifies and discusses any patterns in how these types sources are introduced and incorporated. Instructor’s prompts may include:
  + Which sources are cited? Why?
  + Which sources seem to be summarized? Why?
  + How frequently is each type of source used (relative to others)? Why?
  + Which sources seem to be used most? Why?
* Now, each group tries to determine why Chiasson used any two of the sources they identified in their paragraphs. Instructor’s prompts may include:
  + How might the audience respond to this source?
  + Why is this source used in this way at this point in Chiasson’s piece?
  + What might be the consequence if this source was not used here and in this way?
* Instructor facilitates a class discussion on the necessity of sources and the importance of intentional source use considering context, subject, audience, and stance. It is also advised that the instructor provide links to an online resource on MLA style for *academic* writing e.g. OWL at Purdue.

*Revising Blog Posts* (10 mins)

* Students evaluate and revise their own blog posts to both refine and develop their responses and to use their blog posts as an opportunity to demonstrate how to establish stance and to incorporate sources.

**Homework**

* Reading: “Breaking into the Conversation” by Mark Gaipa
* Writing: **Revision of Essay 1 Due**