**Class 6: Developing Scholarly Authority, Crafting Introductions**

**Length**: 80 mins

**Learning Goals**

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

* Recognize that academic writers develop and demonstrate “authority” in their work by demonstrating familiarity with and engaging in scholarly “conversations” with other thinkers.
* Determine their own positions within scholarly conversations based on their stances towards their subjects and audiences.
* Craft effective introductions that enter scholarly conversations with authority.

**Overview**

This lesson is comprised of three primary activities:

* Reviewing Gaipa’s article to identify principles and strategies for developing and demonstrating authority (15 mins).
* Discussing how these might apply to the introduction of Essay 1 (25 mins).
* Peer workshopping introductions from Essay 1 (30 mins).
* Brainstorming how Gaipa’s strategies might be used in Essay 2 (10 mins).

**Materials**

* “Breaking Into the Conversation” by Mark Gaipa
* Students’ introductions from Essay 1 printed separately. (It’s crucial that they’re printed because they’re going to be exchanged with multiple peers during the workshop.)

**Activities**

*Reviewing Gaipa* (15 mins)

* Class reviews “authority” as Gaipa defines it in his introductory paragraph. Prompts for discussion may include:
	+ Does his definition conflict with your own preconceived notion of “authority” in scholarly writing?
	+ Why might his notion of “authority” be important for academic readers?

Instructor emphasizes that critically engaging with sources like other academics is crucial to demonstrating one’s familiarity with and authority on a subject.

* Next prompt for discussion: What are the three steps Gaipa lays out for producing criticism? Quote from his essay to support your responses.
	+ “First, students need to familiarize themselves with the criticism” (423) i.e. What is the existing conversation about your topic?
	+ “the next step [is] to begin evaluating the criticism that relates to their topic” (424) i.e. How do the various thinkers in the conversation position themselves in relation to one another? Which perspectives are mainstream? Which are marginal? Who is each thinker responding to? How is each thinker responding to the other thinkers in the conversation, if at all?
	+ “the next step…is to speak, and thus add to the critical conversation” (424) i.e. What (original) perspective do you have to offer? How is your perspective different from yet related to other thinkers in the conversation?

*Crafting Introductions with Authority* (25 mins)

* In small groups or pair, students are assigned one of Gaipa’s eight strategies for opening a space in the conversation. Prompt:
	+ What might a student writer need to summarize, quote, or reference in the introduction of an essay that uses this strategy?

Each group/pair shares its responses with the class.

* Instructor turns class to their introductions for Essay 1. Prompts may include:
	+ Since these moves are geared toward essays dealing with critical works about a text, how can we think about acquiring authority in our introductions for the close reading essay? Might any of Gaipa’s eight strategies be useful in Essay 1? Why or why not?
	+ Is there still a sense of “entering the conversation” when it seems to be only a conversation between you and the text? [The instructor may emphasize that Essay 1 should challenge how another reader may understand (or misunderstand) rhetorical choices in *Citizen*. Therefore, in the absence of published criticism, considering and acknowledging how others might understand (or misunderstand) your selected interpretive problem and topic (before challenging their understanding with your own insight) is a potentially effective introductory strategy. This is essentially a “They Say/I Say” move.]
	+ What might a student writer need to summarize, quote, or reference to clearly introduce his or her selected interpretive problem to the intended audience? Ex: summary of *Citizen*, quotation of text that reveals the interpretive problem, etc. Instructor lists these on the board.
		- How might each of these help establish a student writer’s authority?

*Introduction workshop* (30 mins)

* In small groups, students spend no more than 5 minutes reading each introduction from the members of the group.
* While reading each introduction, students take notes directly on the page, commenting on whether the writer summarizes, quotes, or references sources (like *Citizen* itself) to establish authority. Students also circle and comment of parts where authority is weaker, trying to explain what makes them weaker.
* Groups share insights with the class.

*Thinking toward Essay 2* (10 mins)

* Review the description of Essay 2 in the syllabus.
	+ Prompt: The next assignment asks you to use one text to point out the limits as well as the usefulness of another text. Which moves from Gaipa might you be using? Why? (This can be done either as an open discussion or a think/pair/share activity in which students brainstorm/freewrite briefly on their own, discuss their thoughts in pairs, then share their conversation with the class.)

**Homework**

* Reading: Lila Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Need Saving?”
* Writing: Blog #4: Identify an interpretive problem in the text, using at least one quotation from the text.