From *Crafting a Family Tradition*, Sonya Borton

CHAPTER 8: Responding and Assessing

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In this chapter, we focus on assessment—maintaining that the instructional process associated with *all* composing tasks, including multimodal projects, should be informed both broadly and deeply by a *rhetorical understanding of composition*. Within this context, all multimodal assignments, all instruction in the use of digital and non-digital composing tools, and all assessment of multimodal compositions, should be tailored to teaching students how to use rhetorical principles appropriately and effectively. Similarly, all multimodal composing tasks should be aimed at producing effective texts appropriate for a specific purpose and audience.

We use the term *composing* self-consciously—as suggested by Geoff Sirc's *Composition as a Happening*—to focus on the rhetorically informed process of producing texts appropriate for a specific purpose and audience. Although the multimodality of texts does *not* depend on their digitality,, and multimodal texts can take many non-digital forms (see non-digital assignment ideas in Chapter 3 and Chapter 10), we believe, as Pamela Takayoshi says, that teachers should pay particular attention to the alternative text-generating capabilities of computers because these tools can be used to help teach writers "that there are no correct or easy answers for writing. Instead, there are rhetorically informed decisions writers make about text" (249).

Especially important to our argument is the important relationship between instruction and assessment: rhetorically-based understandings of composition should *drive and inform* teachers' approach to assessment in multimodal composition classrooms. As Brian Huot and others have argued, assessment is an important component of learning to compose with rhetorical effectiveness. When we help students learn to *assess* their own compositions and the compositions—the texts—that others produce, we are teaching them valuable decision-making skills they can use when *producing* their own texts.

Using assessment to teach about the production—the composition—of texts seems especially relevant in a multimodal classroom, since it is entirely possible that the processes of creating texts that exceed the alphabetic will be less familiar to many students than the processes involved in creating more conventional word-based texts. In such contexts, we need to teach students not only how to compose in multiple modalities, but also how to connect their understandings with the rhetorical principles that guide all language use. In this way, we also heed Cindy Selfe's call for students to be *critical users of technology*, people who understand a

wide range of constraints, demands and principles of effective communication in both digital and non-digital environments.

Our chapter, then, has two purposes. First, we want to outline assessment strategies that help students compose increasingly appropriate—and rhetorically effective—multimodal texts. Second, we want to provide teachers with some effective strategies for assessing texts that are very different from those traditionally associated with composition classrooms, and making sure that such strategies are soundly based in the rhetorical tradition we share as a profession.

Assessing and Teaching

All writing teachers incorporating digital media and the production of multimodal texts into the classroom face important challenges. These challenges are especially crucial if teachers believe (as we do) that assessment is an integral part of rhetorical instruction. The kind of assessment we recommend for teachers assigning, responding to, and assessing multimodal texts can probably best be understood as *instructive evaluation* or *instructive assessment.* Both terms denote techniques that help students learn to assess texts rhetorically—their own texts and the texts of others, *as* they compose and *after* they do so. In this way assessments of student work become part of instruction.

> Instructive evaluation requires that we involve students in all phases of the assessment of their work. We must help them set the rhetorical and linguistic [and multimodal] targets that will best suit their purposes in writing and then help them evaluate how well they have met such targets, using this evaluation to help them reach additional targets and set new ones…. Instructive evaluation requires that students and teachers connect the ability to assess with the necessity to revise, creating a motivation for revision that is often difficult for students to feel. (Huot 170-171)

In an educational context, assessment is often divided into *formative assessments* that provide feedback to students while they are still working on assignments or project, and s*ummative evaluations* like final assignment grades or final course grades that are given only after an assignment or project has been completed. Although summative assessment is a necessary part of the composition course, understanding and incorporating formative assessment in the composition process can remind students of the rhetorical constraints and possibilities involved in any the composing task, and give them the tools to create rhetorically effective compositions in any medium.

In contemporary composition classrooms, it is not unusual to find both formative and summative assessment practices being used by teachers, and to find that such assessments are shaped within rhetorically-informed instructional contexts. It is now a relatively common practice, for example, for composition teachers to work with students to compile a list of criteria for students to use as they compose (Figure 1) and then to use these criteria in creating a related grading rubric for a particular writing assignment—one that takes into account purpose, audience, and the forms that rhetorically effective texts might take.

In the context of *formative assessment*, this kind of approach helps to focus students' attention on a rhetorical understanding of a text as they are in the process of composing it. Such collaboratively composed rubrics can also serve a *summative function*—providing teachers and students a strategy for evaluating the rhetorical effectiveness of a final composition product after they have completed that text.

Because such an approach to instructive assessment offers an effective way to make sure that students understand the role of rhetoric in a conventional composition classroom, it is probably an even more important strategy to use in a course that includes multimodal texts. In these classes, students are likely to have less experience authoring, designing, and thinking rhetorically about

multimodal texts. Creating a collaboratively constructed rubric—or using other similar instructive–assessment strategies—helps to make classroom expectations, including the newer elements of multimodal texts, more apparent for both teachers and students. Such activities also harnesses the opportunity to use assessment to teach composition. Collaboratively constructed rubrics and/or lists of evaluative criteria can be used in various productive ways. As Brian Huot explains,

> In one classroom, students evaluate samples of writing, ranking them and providing criteria for each ranking. The discussion is synthesized on a handout given to students. In another classroom, students create wall charts of features of good writing, revising them throughout the year as their ideas about writing evolve. And finally, students and teachers generate lists of statements about what makes good writing, and this list is used by students selecting pieces for their portfolios. In each of these scenarios, students learn to write by learning to assess. (Huot 171)

Possible criteria for formative assessment:*

- The composition conveys a specific purpose.
- The composition identifies a specific audience—either explicitly or implicitly.
- The composition employs a tone consistent with the designated purpose and audience.
- The composition is organized around an appropriate controlling idea. This idea is clear to readers/viewers/listeners.
- The composition uses transitions to guide the audience effectively from one set of ideas to another.
- The composition synthesizes relevant information from research efforts with composer's own ideas and arguments—in a way that increases the rhetorical effectiveness of the whole.
- The composition uses detailed description, examples, sound, music, color, and/or word choice to convey ideas in an effective and appropriate way to the audience.

*The list will vary depending on the context of each assignment.

Figure 1: Possible criteria for formative assessment.

Making rhetorically based, instructive assessment a more visible and conscious part of teaching—*a formative feature as well as a summative feature of instruction*—helps students produce multimodal essays that are rhetorically effective, while it also harnesses the instructive power of assessment for both students and teachers. Such an approach also keeps teachers and students appropriately focused on rhetorical matters, whether they are composing multimodal essays or essays that are alphabetic-only. In Figure 2, we provide readers some key questions that should help shape assignments within an instructive-assessment context. These questions are broadly applicable to both conventional and unconventional composition assignments.

Shaping Assignments in the Context of Instructive Assessment

- What is the teacher's rhetorical purpose for this assignment?
- Does the assignment allow students to choose a purpose authentic to their own interests? Experiences? Can students effectively articulate and address the purpose?
- How will the media and the composing modalities specified for this assignment help students identify and address the needs of an authentic purpose for their compositions?
- What is the teacher's understanding of the possible audiences for this assignment?
- What options does the assignment allow students for identifying an authentic audience within the context of their lives and experiences?
- How will the media and the composing modalities specified for this assignment help students identify and address the needs of an authentic audience for their compositions?
- How do the assessment criteria for this assignment—both formative and summative—address the composition's purpose and audience in rhetorically informed ways? Have students been involved in identifying these assessment criteria? Do they have opportunities for using such criteria in both formative and summative contexts?
- How do the assessment criteria for this assignment—both formative and summative—address the composition's organization in rhetorically informed ways? Its tone? Its focus? It's use of sound, color, and image—both still and moving? Have students been involved in identifying the assessment criteria? Do they have opportunities for using such criteria in both formative and summative contexts?

*Questions will vary depending on the context of each assignment.

Figure 2: Shaping assignments in the context of instructive assessment.

Learning to Respond to and Assess Multimodal Texts

Charles Moran and Anne Herrington write about evaluating academic hypertexts, noting that electronic hyper-media and their multimodal cousins provide new challenges for teachers who have had to make evaluative decisions primarily about alphabetic documents (although all alphabetic texts, of course, also incorporate a visual modality). Ironically, Moran and Harrington also recommend assessment approaches that involve many of the same characteristics we have already identified—assessment that is formative as well as summative, assessment that is rhetorically based, assessment that is used for instructional as well as evaluative purposes. We believe this situation highlights how instructive assessment of multimodal texts can become an important way to teach rhetorical principles of both composing and producing these texts. As Moran and Herrington read digital texts, they begin to develop criteria inductively for assessment.

> Therefore the criteria that we ordinarily use in judging academic essays of this genre seem to apply across the media: Focus and Central Claim, "Evidence of Constructive Thinking, "Organization /Coherence… "Documentation was also a criterion for us…"Syntax/Style" and Grammar/Proofreading" became criteria for us as well… "Graphic Design…included the visual elements of the hypertexts: choice of fonts, page layout, choice of colors (249).

It's important to note that Moran and Herrington are developing criteria to make judgments about both hypertext and traditional academic essays. In all cases, however, assessment criteria should be developed with an eye toward both instruction and evaluation. Ideally, instructive evaluation in composition classrooms *always* reflects not only the media with which students work

and the semiotic modalities (words, images, sound, color) that they employ to make meaning, but also a course's specific instructional goals, and a contextual understanding of other rhetorical constraints and possibilities having to do with purpose, audience, content, genre, organization, as well.

What does this mean in practical terms and in a multimodal classroom? In addition to more conventional concerns like making sure that students understand and effectively address a composition's audience, purpose, organization, and tone, teachers might want to identify criteria that have to do with students' success in identifying appropriate sound levels for specific audiences or the authors' ability to relate multiple modalities in ways that communicate more than the sum of their parts within a particular rhetorical context. Similarly, an important assessment criteria for a multimodal text might be whether a student has taken advantage of the specific affordances, or capabilities, of each modality in a way that helps to achieve the text's purpose or increase its overall effectiveness with a specific audience.

Ultimately Moran and Herrington see themselves as learners of new forms of composing and expression at the same time they are learning to evaluate students' efforts. This feeling of being a learner *and* a teacher—of learning to teach a multimodal class *while recognizing that we lack* the same certitude and sense of expertise that we bring to more conventional courses—not only helps us bridge the gaps between teachers and students (see Chapter 7), it also helps us to contextualize our assessment. As we struggle to articulate rhetorical assessment criteria for multimodal compositions along with students—for instance, the principles for assessing the effective organization of an audio essay aimed at an NPR audience, the grammatical rules operative in music videos, the extent to which still images are rhetorically sensitive to the needs of a particular reader—we also develop a much clearer idea of the challenges students face as the authors, composers, designers of multimodal texts.

Developing this intimate sense of the challenges involved in composing essays is an essential part of any successful composition course. We do not want to suggest that every composition teacher will want to—or need to—develop expertise in creating multimodal texts. However, we *do* feel strongly that *teachers who want to assign and evaluate multimodal texts need to develop some understanding of the challenges involved in composing such texts.* This insight is not limited, of course, to a particular kind of text. We have observed, for instance, that the most effective teachers of alphabetic composition, have some experience, themselves, in struggling with the complex tasks involved in writing such texts—and that these experiences help them design instructional and assessment strategies that work for practicing writers. Similarly, we have observed that teachers who have learned to design and produce at least one website are more effective in structuring assignments that help students create and evaluate web texts.

But how do teachers know when they have acquired *sufficient experience composing, and understandings of,* multimodal texts to help students? And how do they develop additional understandings and experience without keeping students from experimenting themselves with these new kinds of texts? We think that working within the context of instructive assessment—which encourages teachers to work carefully and thoughtfully with students in identifying and articulating to the challenges that authors encounter when composing multimodal texts—may help teachers close the gap between their alphabetic and multimodal composing experiences.

Using Studio Sessions for Formative Assessment

Given our own experience, we can predict that some students in multimodal classrooms will complete assignments with ease, enjoying the opportunity to use their creativity and incorporate media that they often use for "fun" in a more formal academic setting. It is also true, however, that other students may well be overwhelmed by the number of choices associated with this new type of composition. For these students, getting started or staying in one particular modality of composition may be difficult. Teachers can help both kinds of students through informal

responses to projects—making sure that their responses are both rhetorically-based and formative. This practice can be particularly important for multimodal assignments because students can be afraid to admit that they are overwhelmed by the new demands of composing in multiple media and modalities. Responding and assessing formatively as students are in the process of composing provides teachers an invaluable source of information about how and where students are struggling, and when they most need additional instruction.

Within this context, teachers should plan a regular series of **studio sessions**, during which students s bring their projects to class so that both teachers and classmates can informally review and respond to these texts. In these sessions, teachers should model how to focus on rhetorically-based questions about a text's purpose and audience, a student's sense of the rhetorical situation the effects of various organizational approaches and production techniques. Even students who feel comfortable with the new approaches to composing digital video or audio essays can use these more frequent formative assessment opportunities to make sure they are staying focused—in terms of their rhetorical goals—and that the projects are developing effectively as communicative texts.

Using Progress Journals for Formative Assessment

As students compose complex multimodal texts (and, indeed, complex texts of any sort) they often forget that an audience may lack the same experiences and understandings that they, themselves, have developed. When this situation does occur, and students create author-centered texts that ignore the needs of a readers, revision can become a tedious and time-consuming process. The use of formative assessment activities—particularly when they are consistently informed by an awareness of rhetorical possibilities and constraints—helps give student authors frequent and focused feedback about where they need to develop their ideas in order to communicate effectively with a particular audience for a particular purpose.

As faculty engage in these frequent informal assessments of the multimodal essays, they may want to keep a **progress-assessment journal** in which they jot down notes about the progress individual students are making as well as information from conferences and project observations. A systematic record with dated entries of encounters and thoughts on individual students' projects (Figure 3) can help teachers make more succinct and helpful comments based on past encounters. In Appendix 29, we provide one p ossible template for a teacher's progress-assessment journal.

Some teachers may also find it useful to assign students a **progress journal** (Figure 4) in which they, too, can record their developing assessments of their own composing processes and products. In Appendix 29, we provide readers one possible template for a student's progress log.

In the classroom contexts we have described, instructive assessment can become an even more important tool for students learning to compose multimodality—such approaches can help students become more aware of both their progress and limitations. This awareness has historical antecedents. In part, the power of the process movement in composition studies during the 1970s and 80s, for example, was that it allowed writing to become a more visible activity. Having both instructors and students keep track of their ongoing assessments of multimodal projects, can increase the visibility of rhetorical concerns and our appreciation for rhetorical theory in general—not only in connection to the processes of multimodal composing but in connection to assessment process as well. In other words, highlighting rhetorical concerns and possibilities as students compose *multimodal* texts, can increase their understanding of rhetoric's explanatory for *alphabetic* texts.

Teacher's Progress-Assessment Journal

STUDENT: Sarah Parker

Project: Video essay on dogs and the people who love them.

Purpose: To tell case-study stories of dog owners who have formed a special relationship with their pets.

In telling these stories, to provide people insights about how and why such relationships are important to humans.

Video will be used as fundraiser by the local animal shelter, educational out

Audience: Donors to the animal shelter, potential pet owners, kids.

PROGRESS-ASSESSMENT NOTES:

1/18/04

Needs to complete video interviews with three human-pet pairs and download raw footage onto the computer.

Working on opening sequence of shots (people interacting with their dogs)—needs music that helps convey the tone of the interactions to the audience.

1/23/04

Interviews too long to keep audience's attention in a video. Focus editing on *concise* scenes in which owners identify what they get from their relationships with their dogs.

Show more of the dogs' responses to the humans—audience needs to see why the humans feel as they do.

Use voice over narration to set up the basics of each story. Use owners' words to describe their relationships with pets.

Figure 3: Sample of informal notes from a teacher's progress-assessment journal

Student's Progress Journal

NAME: Sarah Parker

Project (purpose, audience, media, modalities):

Video for the animal Shelter. They want to use it to raise money and educate people about healthy relationships between people and dogs. Audiences are donors and school kids.

PROGRESS JOURNAL (focus on progress *and* rhetorical rationale for changes. Include date, hours spent on project):

1/16/04 1.15 hrs.

For first draft, downloaded first three video interviews. Second one is best. Use #3, but toss #1—won't work for kids. Folder/file name; <Dog Town/CI Drive/Lab/Sarah>

On Thurs.. take some shots of kids at the shelter playing with dogs, show how crowed kennels are. Use this footage at the end

1/18/04 2.35 hrs.

Changed scanned snapshots of Charlie and Fetch from color to black and white, used the aged-film effect to indicate snaps are history not now. Used cloned file to test—folder/file name <Dog Town2/CI Drive/Lab/Sarah.2>. Need to get at least two more like these to use in segment.

Second draft—for Zeke's story about Sarah dying, found sad music to fade in and help indicate sadness/loss.

Reorganized the Sarah-Zeke sequence to clarify storyline for audience. At the end, inserted fade-out on picture of Sarah in her bed to show she died.

1/20/04 .40 hrs.

After studio critique in class, hanged ending to include shelter's address.

Figure 4: Sample page from a student's assessment journal.

One Example

Although we have outlined in general terms how important assessment can be in teaching multimodal composition, we include an example here from a multimodal assignment that Sonya Borton uses for a first-year composition course focused on research and analysis of sources. This assignment is designed to be completed in groups, and each group is allowed to choose a topic from a list of approximately 30 topics, which changes on a frequent basis. Topics deal with subjects such as America's foster-care system, the future of agriculture in the U.S., cyberwarfare, the depletion of oceanic species, wearable technology, etc. Each group in the class is asked to present to the class some brief background on the topic and one possible solution to the problem or direction for the future. Research is a necessity, and a works-cited page is required for each presentation. Groups choose the most effective medium for their presentations, and past presentations have included posters, scrapbooks, PowerPoint presentations, and video essays among other forms of communication. The goals of this assignment are to encourage students to think creatively in a collaborative environment, to help them develop their research and documentation skills, and to provide them the opportunity to present their analysis of research in a group presentation that is rhetorically effective for their classmates.

When the assignment is announced, the class looks carefully at the teacher's goals for the assignment's goals, discusses the rhetorical purpose of the group presentation, and thinks in practical ways about the needs of the audience. The class then uses their understanding of this rhetorical situation to develop a rhetorically-informed rubric for the assignment. (See Figure 5.)

Because these group projects require a great deal of work outside the classroom, formal class meetings are suspended until the assignments are due. During this time, groups are free to decide on the medium and the modalities they will use for their final presentation. Often these choices depend on the digital literacies and understandings that group members already possess and the access they have (or the teacher can help them have) to video and audio recording equipment.

Each group meets with the instructor on a weekly or twice weekly basis—depending on need—to discuss the group's progress, problems, and plans for the time remaining. During these meetings, the instructor and the group members provide an informal, instructive assessment of the group's progress using the first rubric developed as a guide, and someone in the group is required to take minutes of each meeting which are turned in with the works cited page. The summative assessment of all projects is based on the amended rubric. The weekly meetings are also used to conduct formative reviews of the presentations themselves—focusing on a similar set of rhetorical concerns and questions—about the purpose, audience, organization, and tone of the composition, about the effective use of color, words, image, or sound—all of which we have mentioned in this chapter.

Right before the group projects are finished and presented ,the class discusses the rubric again and revises it if needed. (See Figure 6.) The summative assessment of all projects is based on the amended rubric.

This assignment usually proves to be the students' favorite of the semester. Although the rhetorically informed assessment process is fundamentally the same as it is for more conventional compositions, students enjoy choosing the media and modalities that make their presentations most effective, review the ongoing process of the presentations, and the collaborative atmosphere that is enhanced by through the weekly assessment meetings.

Sample Group-Presentation Rubric

1-Poor 2-Weak 3-Average 4-Good 5-Excellent

Content & Organization of Presentation--50%

I. Critical Thinking Skills

A. Analysis of topic assigned is effective for the audience and rhetorical purpose.

B. Summary of relevant details is clear for the audience and rhetorical purpose.

C. Composition demonstrates a synthesis of relevant details with composers' ideas and arguments in a way that makes the text an effective, rhetorical document

D. Composition shows a rhetorically informed understanding of topic, purpose, and audience

Rating 1-5 ____x5=____

II. Organization and Coherence

A. Overall organization supports a controlling idea that is communicated clearly, appropriately, and in a rhetorically effective way for the audience.

B. Coherence

1. The authors use transitions to guide the audience through the composition. These transitions work effectively with the media and the modalities that are used, and the audience's expectations for/understandings of these media and modalities.
2. The authors achieve overall unity for the presentation—given the media and the modalities that are used, and the audience's expectations for/understandings of these media and modalities.

Rating 1-5 ____x5=____

Documentation Style and Source Materials—30%

I. Source Materials

A. Researched sources are appropriate for achieving the rhetorical purpose of the presentation and help make the presentation credible for an audience.

B. Synthesis of researched sources with composers' ideas and arguments help achieve the rhetorical purpose of the presentation and make the presentation credible for an audience.

Rating 1-5 ____x3=____

II. Works Cited page produced is in the current MLA style

Rating 1-5 ____x3=____

Difficulty--20%

I. Level of difficulty represented by the medium and the modalities of composition

II. Level of difficulty associated with the issue

Rating 1-5____x4=____

Total Grade: _____

Figure 5: Sample group-presentation rubric with rhetorically-based criteria.

Revised Group-Presentation Rubric

1-Poor 2-Weak 3-Average 4-Good 5-Excellent

Content & Organization of Presentation--50%

I. Critical Thinking Skills
- A. Analysis of topic assigned is effective for the audience and rhetorical purpose.
- B. Summary of relevant details is clear for the audience and rhetorical purpose.
- C. Composition demonstrates a synthesis of relevant details with composers' ideas and arguments in a way that makes the text an effective, rhetorical document
- D. Composition shows a rhetorically informed understanding of topic, purpose, and audience

Rating 1-5 ____x5=____

II. Organization and Coherence
- A. Overall organization supports a controlling idea that is communicated clearly, appropriately, and in a rhetorically effective way for the audience.
- B. Coherence
  1. The authors use transitions to guide the audience through the composition. These transitions work effectively with the media and the modalities that are used, and the audience's expectations for/understandings of these media and modalities.
  2. The authors achieve overall unity for the presentation—given the media and the modalities that are used, and the audience's expectations for/understandings of these media and modalities.

Rating 1-5 ____x5=____

Documentation Style and Source Materials—25%

I. Source Materials
- A. Researched sources are appropriate for achieving the rhetorical purpose of the presentation and help make the presentation credible for an audience.
- B. Synthesis of researched sources with composers' ideas and arguments help achieve the rhetorical purpose of the presentation and make the presentation credible for an audience.
- C. Works Cited page is produced in the current MLA style

Rating 1-5 ____x5=____

Mode of Presentation--25%

I. Level of difficulty represented by the medium and modalities of composition.
II. Authors' choice of medium and the modalities as means of exploring the issue.
III. Effectiveness of medium and modality in achieving audience engagement

Rating 1-5____x5=____

Total Grade: _____

Figure 6: Sample Revised group-presentation rubric with rhetorically-based criteria.

When is the composition "complete"?

Because students become so invested in multimodal compositions, it may be difficult for them to find a stopping point for their efforts. From our experience, there is always one more thing that can be changed or added or moved Although some version of this problem exists with alphabetic essays, the expanded ranges of choices that multimodal essays present can exacerbate the tendency toward perpetual revision. In addition, students' and teachers' limited understanding of the genre can also makes closure difficult. Finally, the learning curve for some multimodal software can make it more difficult to decide that a composition is, indeed, finished. By the time some students learn an audio or video editing program, for example, they have invested a great deal of time on their composition.

In such circumstances, revising a composition, trying to perfect it, may become even more important to students. Hence, the most important elements of a rhetorically informed, instructive assessment can be the flexible set of in-progress deadlines a teacher sets within the composing process and the final due date identified for a project's finish. Both teachers and students need to remember that effective learning goes on even when every project may not be as perfect as they would like it to be.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have tried to convey the sense of enjoyment and engagement that teachers can get from working with students on multimodal texts. To make these projects as successful as possible we have made a series of recommendations for teachers. Among these, we recommend that teachers understand their own rationale for wanting to use multimodal texts in the classroom. We also recommend that teachers make rhetorically-based, instructive assessment a visible part of every class (Figure 7), and that they remind themselves of the importance of assessing their own decisions and practices associated within every composition class. Multimodal texts can offer important sites in which students learn rhetorically-based composing processes and a rhetorical understanding of the design principles inherent in all effective communications.

In assessing multimodal texts, teachers need not find themselves at a loss, nor should they resign themselves to starting from scratch. Smart teachers will use what they already know about rhetorical theory and practice to assess multimodal texts effectively They will use what they already know about both formative and summative evaluation to help students assess their own work and the work of others. Common pedagogical practices such as compiling and using assessment criteria or creating rubrics for evaluating compositions can work as well or better in multimodal classroom as they do in a more conventional classroom—especially if they are informed by rhetorical theory. In the end, however, we believe that those teachers who have struggled with composing multimodal texts themselves will be the most effective in assessing the challenges presented by such projects, designing assignments and classroom activities that address these challenges, and understanding students' efforts to compose rhetorically successful texts.

Teachers' Tips for Rhetorically-Bassed Instructive Assessment of Multimodal Projects:

- Get experience creating your own multimodal project
- Focus all assessment efforts—both formative and summative—around criteria that are rhetorically informed.
- Make both formative and summative assessment efforts instructive for students and based them on rhetorical criteria.
- Involve students in identifying and assessing these rhetorically-based assessment criteria for multimodal compositions.
- Make yourself available for informal consultations during the composing process.
- Have students bring their multimodal compositions to class on a regular basis during the composing process.
- Spend class time reviewing each project and responding to them with rhetorically-informed questions.
- Help students practice assessing their own and others texts by asking rhetorically based questions about multimodal compositions during class reviews of projects.
- Keep a journal or log of your ongoing formative assessments of students' compositions. Encourage students to keep a similar journal in which they assess their own progress on an ongoing basis.
- Set a series of deadlines for specific parts of each multimodal composing project and a firm due date for finished compositions.

Figure 7: Rhetorically-based instructive assessment in the multimodal classroom.

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