

Great Ideas for Teaching Proposal

CMoS Word Jumble

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This activity was developed for my tutorial section of VAH 1041A: Art, Visual Culture, and Power.

Introduction:

Students new to art history or new to writing at the university level quickly find themselves having to write papers with proper footnotes and bibliographies. Many times how to properly write footnotes and bibliographies is not taught or completely unknown by the student. Therefore I developed a game that would allow the students to get hands on experience with the Chicago Manual of Style (CMoS) in an interactive way.

Learning Goals:

1. Learn the notes and bibliography (NB) system of the Chicago Manual of Style.
2. Learn how to properly write notes and bibliographies in the Chicago Manual of Style format.

Key Concepts:

- Group work encourages students to work together to correctly solve the puzzle.
- Each activity builds on the last.
- Actively engages the student through group work.

Description of Activity:

Resources: coloured index cards, something to attach them to a surface (tape, pins), and handouts with Chicago Manual of Style NB system for reference.

Activity Time: 20 minutes to 50 minutes depending on the number of CMoS jumbles assigned.

Activity Description: Here's how it goes down.

-Students are divided into group of four to five persons.

-Each group is given one handout with NB system with examples.

-Each group is then given a package containing different coloured index cards and a piece of paper with all the pertinent information (Book title, author, publication information) for creating a footnote or bibliography.

-The colours of the index cards correspond to different elements:

Blue index cards
for punctuation

Green index
cards for book
title

Orange index
cards for the
author

Red index cards
for publication
information

-As can be seen each colour has a corresponding element: blue for punctuation, green for each word of the book title, etc.; one word or punctuation for each card.

- The students then have about five minutes to put the information in the proper order.
- Working together in a group means that each student in the group contributes to the solution and has an interest in getting it right.
- At the end of five minutes that groups put their answers on a wall, white board, or whatever is handy. The result is a multi-coloured answer with each element of the footnote or bibliography highlighted in a specific colour.
- The CMOs Word Jumble game continues with a new package given to the groups. But, this package contains a more complex footnote or bibliography, for example a journal article. It could also contain one less coloured index card. The idea is that as a colour is removed (replaced by a plain white card) from each round the students should become more confident in the order of the index cards. The final colour remaining is the colour for the punctuation as that is where most students have problems. This serves to reinforce how footnotes and bibliographies are punctuated.
- Finally, at the end of the game each group is given the information for a footnote and bibliography plus plain white (unmarked) index cards which they now have to fill in the information correctly.
- Each round builds on the last. By the end, if all goes as planned, the students should be able confidently write the footnote and bibliography on the index cards or white board.
- Longer versions of the game can be adapted so as a coloured index card is removed it can be replaced by a blank white card that the students have to write the proper word or punctuation to fill in the blank.
- I have found that this game is highly adaptable to different systems and methods.