

“Give All Thoughts a Chance”: Writing about Writing and the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy*

Sandie Friedman and Robert Miller

ABSTRACT

The Association of College and Research Libraries’ Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education offers librarians new ways to approach information literacy instruction. Because of the potentially important role of the Framework in the writing classroom, we surveyed first-year writing students to gauge their reactions to a specific section of the Framework, the dispositions (habits of mind) put forth in the Framework under the heading “Research as Inquiry.” Survey responses showed that the Research as Inquiry dispositions spoke to the students’ experiences and their self-images as beginning academic writers. We posit that the students’ affinity to the Research as Inquiry dispositions stems in part from the work they did in a first-year writing class that used a writing-about-writing (WAW) approach. WAW fosters the type of metacognitive self-reflection valued in the Framework; the students’ involvement with WAW enabled them to use the concepts and language of the Framework to help articulate their development as researchers and writers. We further suggest that the Framework can enhance WAW pedagogy, serving as a heuristic within the WAW curriculum to foster productive dispositions toward research.

INTRODUCTION

By adopting the *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) opened new pathways for librarians to conceive of and practice information literacy instruction. Ideally, when working with students on critical approaches to information, librarians will be in close collaboration with writing instructors: scholarship is emerging that attests to the complementarity of the ACRL *Framework* and heuristic models already in place in writing-studies

communities (see Albert and Sinkinson, "Composing Information Literacy"; McClure; McCracken and Johnson). Indeed, the *Framework* applies to information literacy the theory of threshold concepts, transformative habits of mind that, once acquired, enable a student to enter into and gain fluency within an academic discipline (Meyer and Land 1). A parallel movement is taking place within the field of composition pedagogy, evidenced by Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle's edited volume *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies*.

Given the ACRL *Framework's* potential importance within the writing classroom, we surveyed a group of first-year writing (FYW) students to gauge their reactions to a specific "frame," or section, of the *Framework*, entitled "Research as Inquiry." We wanted to know if the "dispositions" (a researcher's habits of mind) as put forth in that frame resonated with the students' own experiences and self-images as beginning academic writers. (Our survey, which contains the "Research as Inquiry" dispositions, is included in the appendix.)

Although the ACRL *Framework* was not taught in the students' FYW class, their responses to our survey showed a receptivity to and understanding of the "Research as Inquiry" dispositions: the language of the document struck a chord with the students. We believe that this is due not only to the *Framework's* ability to speak to the intellectual and affective experience of the student researcher: we would argue that the content of the students' FYW class, writing about writing (WAW), prepared the students with metacognitive skills that enabled them to reflect on themselves as beginning researchers and writers. Students taught in a WAW classroom to think critically about their own literacy narratives, to analyze the rhetoric of a discourse community, and so on, were apt to see the value in dispositions such as "maintain an open mind and a critical stance." A WAW class prepared students to examine their own minds and stances as developing researchers and writers. Such metacognition or self-reflection is a value that permeates the *Framework*, as explained in the following synopsis of the *Framework's* history and purpose.

THE ACRL *FRAMEWORK*: A BRIEF GUIDE

The *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* was formally adopted by ACRL in January 2016, replacing a former document, *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*, that had been in place for the previous sixteen years. The introduction to the *Framework* explains its *raison d'être*: the information landscape in which college students conduct research had changed so radically since the year 2000,

when the now superseded *Standards* were published, that librarians needed a new model, based on pedagogical theory, to transform their practices surrounding information-literacy instruction. Thus the *Framework* was drafted and adopted.

In a departure from the prescriptive-sounding “standards” used in the title of the earlier document, the new model’s operative word, “framework,” bespeaks openness and flexibility, encouraging librarians to rethink their instruction practices around six key frames, or concepts, within the broad field of information literacy. Thus, the librarian-educator seeking to help student researchers understand and use information effectively may direct her class to the following ways of conceptualizing and working with information, each being a frame in the *Framework*:

- Authority Is Constructed and Contextual
- Information Creation as a Process
- Information Has Value
- Research as Inquiry
- Scholarship as Conversation
- Searching as Strategic Exploration

The *Framework* breaks down each frame into two subcategories, knowledge practices and dispositions. Knowledge practices may be thought of as behaviors exhibited by a student who is gaining competence with regard to a frame. For example, one of the knowledge practices attached to the frame “Research as Inquiry” is that information-literate students will “formulate questions for research based on information gaps or on reexamination of existing, possibly conflicting, information.” Dispositions speak to attitudes or mindsets that librarian-educators may want to inculcate in student researchers. The “Research as Inquiry” frame includes dispositions such as, “consider research as open-ended exploration and engagement with information,” and “value intellectual curiosity in developing questions and learning new investigative methods.” Indeed, each frame offers a variety of knowledge practices and mindsets, giving the information-literacy instructor a rich set of evocative topics to address in a class discussion or exercise.

The *Framework* explicitly draws on a number of theoretical projects, including:

- **Threshold concepts**, which are ways of thinking, of approaching a problem or topic, that a student must master before he or she can fully engage in the work of a discipline (Meyer and Land). The *Framework* can be said to represent threshold concepts that the student researcher must gain fluency in, to be able to find, evaluate, and use information effectively. For example, the student ought to conceive of research as

inquiry to be able to produce research and writing that are suitably nuanced and complex.

- **Metaliteracy**, which is a rethinking of information literacy that centers on the student researcher as knowledge producer and encourages students to engage in critical reflection with respect to the research process. Metaliteracy includes metacognition: the student reflecting on his or her own attitudes as a researcher (Mackey and Jacobson). The *Framework's* dispositions especially encourage metacognition, as they draw the student's attention to his or her habits of mind. In the "Research as Inquiry" frame, for example, the student is taught to consider and value cognitive dispositions such as "intellectual curiosity . . . an open mind and a critical stance . . . persistence, adaptability, and flexibility . . . [and] intellectual humility."

The *Framework's* emphasis on threshold concepts, dispositions, and metacognition aligns the practice of information literacy instructors with the work of educators who employ those theoretical constructs in teaching other disciplines. We would argue that the *Framework* helps bridge, specifically, information literacy and writing studies by giving the two disciplines a common language for their pedagogy.

FRAMEWORKS AND COMMON GROUND

The *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing*, a precursor to the ACRL *Framework* from within the field of writing studies, was unveiled in 2011—a collaboration among educators from the CWPA, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the National Writing Project. The CWPA et al.'s *Framework for Success*, like the ACRL *Framework*, focuses on habits of mind, including curiosity, openness, and creativity; the two frameworks share values, as well as other features of the heuristic genre of the "framework." In fact, work has been done to elucidate the common ground between frameworks in writing studies and information literacy.

Barbara D'Angelo and Teresa Grettano have mapped the confluences between the ACRL *Framework* and parallel documents developed by the CWPA. They see the ACRL *Framework* as extending the *WPA Outcomes Statement 3.0* (adopted in 2014) by acknowledging the rhetorical nature of writing and research. According to D'Angelo and Grettano's detailed mapping, the ACRL *Framework* and the *WPA Outcomes Statement* share a number of key learning goals for students, including a more sophisticated understanding of how authority is constructed; a recognition of writing and research as complex processes; and an approach to research as "strategic exploration."

D'Angelo and Grettano also mapped correspondences between the ACRL *Framework* and the CWPA et al.'s *Framework for Success*. Comparing these two documents, D'Angelo and Grettano note that the "habits of mind" identified in the *Framework for Success* run parallel to the "dispositions" of the ACRL *Framework*, and they lay out the shared values between the two. For example, D'Angelo and Grettano see a resonance between the "Research as Inquiry" frame, and the CWPA et al.'s habits of mind: curiosity, openness, creativity, and persistence.

Building on D'Angelo and Grettano's work, Michelle Albert and Caroline Sinkinson describe their efforts to develop a FYW program that unifies information literacy and rhetorical pedagogy. In newly envisioning their FYW curriculum, Albert and Sinkinson were able to take advantage of conceptual parallels among the CWPA documents (both the *Outcomes Statement* and the *Framework for Success*) and the ACRL *Framework*. As these parallels show, the fields of information literacy and writing studies are drawing closer in our thinking about productive dispositions towards research and writing, potentially strengthening partnerships among librarians and writing studies faculty. D'Angelo, along with several colleagues, recently co-edited the collection *Information Literacy: Research and Collaboration Across Disciplines*; this volume demonstrates a growing interest in synthesizing information literacy and writing instruction.

Both the CWPA and the ACRL frameworks are heuristics that push us to focus on teaching habits of mind, and especially the skill of metacognition. Our survey drew on the highly reflective pedagogy of WAW; that is, students came to the survey having already developed a facility for reflection through the WAW curriculum.

STUDENTS RESPOND TO THE ACRL *FRAMEWORK*

We valued the approach of the ACRL *Framework* and appreciated the principles it set out. But would it actually make sense to students? How directly does it speak to their needs as beginning researchers? In order to answer these questions, we created a survey that introduced students to the *Framework* and asked them to respond, drawing on their experience in Sandie Friedman's FYW class in George Washington University's writing program. We received IRB approval for the survey from our respective universities. To conduct the survey, we asked for volunteers from Sandie's FYW classes held in fall 2015 and spring 2016. Nine students volunteered and sent us their responses in fall 2016.

We analyzed the responses by examining how students used terms from the *Framework*. Because of the relatively small data set and the close match

between survey questions and responses, we were able to analyze the data rather informally. It was essentially a close reading process; however, it could be characterized as a "utilitarian" or "structural coding" method. As Saldaña describes it, such a method "applies a content-based or conceptual phrase representing a topic of inquiry to a segment of data that relates to a specific research question" (84). The *Framework* itself provided our coding terms: *exploration*, *curiosity*, *persistence*, *openness*, and *humility*. Because of the nature of the survey, at least one of these terms appeared in every segment of the data.

Students naturally responded in what Peter Elbow and Patricia Belanoff would call "believing" mode—not only affirming that the *Framework* spoke to them, but also adding their own language and reasoning, and attesting that their experience resonated with the *Framework*. We were certainly pleased to see these positive responses, but they also raised questions: to what extent did the students' receptiveness to the *Framework* depend on the FYW curriculum? Would they have embraced the *Framework* if their experience in FYW had been different? These questions suggested that our study evaluated not only the *Framework*, but also how well FYW had prepared students to encounter such a metacognitive heuristic.

WAW AND THE ACRL *FRAMEWORK*

In their responses, students—aware of their audience—praised the work Sandie had done with them in class: how she had helped them develop an open-minded and exploratory approach to research. However, we want to argue that students' readiness to respond to the *Framework* depended in essential ways on the curriculum, more than the individual teacher's work. Specifically, we will argue that the WAW curriculum, with its emphasis on threshold concepts and metacognition, primed students to embrace the *Framework*. Given the powerful resonance, we make a case for the *Framework* as a tool for extending the WAW curriculum, as well as for strengthening ties among the discourse communities of writing studies scholars, composition practitioners, and instruction librarians.

It has been more than ten years since Doug Downs and Elizabeth Wardle's landmark article on WAW, "Teaching about Writing, Righting Misconceptions," appeared in *College Composition and Communication*. Although Downs and Wardle were not the first to suggest making writing the content of a FYW course (see Kitzhaber; Russell; Dew), their 2007 piece presented the case for a writing-focused curriculum with new force. Since that time, they have followed this piece with several others, elaborating and clarifying the WAW approach, as well as editing a WAW

reader for FYW. As Cristina Hanganu-Bresch notes, programs across the country have adopted a WAW curriculum, and a network supporting writing program administrators (WPAs) and instructors in these programs has developed.

WAW curriculum is best understood as a response to concerns about transfer of writing knowledge. In her 2007 article, Wardle presents a fairly bleak picture of the possibilities for transfer from FYW to upper-level courses: writing is so context-specific that students have very limited opportunities to use writing knowledge from FYW. Given that, Wardle and Downs (“Reflecting Back”) recommend focusing on two key elements in FYW: first, teaching students *about* writing or, as they put it, giving them declarative knowledge of writing, rather than only procedural knowledge or *how* to write. To that end, Wardle and Downs advocate making writing studies content the focus of the course. Second, they recommend enabling students to become more flexible and self-aware writers by fostering habits of metacognition. Wardle concludes her study of transfer by suggesting that metacognition might be the central skill we teach in FYW:

meta-awareness about writing, language, and rhetorical strategies in FYC may be the most important ability our courses can cultivate . . . What FYC can do . . . is help students think about writing in the university, the varied conventions of different disciplines, and their own writing strategies in light of various assignments and expectations. (82)

Beyond metacognition and writing studies content, Downs and Wardle (“Teaching about Writing”) also offer basic practices for WAW, including assigning readings “centered on issues with which students have first-hand experience”—getting “blocked” in the writing process, for example, or struggling to make sense of differing expectations about writing in various academic contexts (560). In concert with the readings, which give students a new perspective on their experience as writers, Downs and Wardle give students many opportunities to reflect on their own attitudes and practices related to writing.

The most important practice is the chance for students to conduct primary research in writing studies. Students in their writing seminars develop research questions about writing, and they use interviews, surveys, and observations to gather data in response to these questions. They go on to analyze this data and present it both as a formal paper and an in-class presentation. Beyond these key principles and practices, WAW pedagogy is flexible and can take many forms (Downs and Wardle, “Reimagining the Nature of FYC”; Wardle and Downs, “Reflecting Back”). Sandie’s course

makes use of Downs and Wardle's central principles and key practices, and, of the three types of WAW curricula they name—literacy/discourse, language/rhetoric, and writing/writers' practices—Sandie's course would best be categorized as focusing on literacy/discourse, although it also addresses writers' practices.

Sandie was not an early adopter; in fact, as an instructor in theme-based FYW writing programs since 2002, she was deeply skeptical. Her main concern was about student engagement: she worried that students in a FYW program that offered only WAW, who were deprived of the ability to choose the content of a course, would naturally resist. In addition, Sandie doubted whether first-year students would find writing studies content interesting. There was also the issue of her own expertise; like many instructors in writing programs, her formal training was not in rhetoric and composition (her PhD is in American Studies). She was both eager to work with writing studies content and hesitant about her own authority to teach the material. But Sandie's anxiety and skepticism were mixed with deep curiosity, and she also found Downs and Wardle's research compelling. Further, as a WPA, she felt a responsibility to understand—from the inside—the most recent approach to teaching FYW. She decided to try teaching a WAW course and to be forthright with students about learning along with them—not to present herself as an authority on the material, but as a learner alongside them.

In fall 2015, Sandie embarked on teaching the WAW course with a mixture of excitement and fear, partly born of her long experience teaching with cultural studies content in FYW: would students find the readings too difficult, or just boring? Would they detect her lack of expertise and dismiss her authority? The experience of teaching a WAW course offered many surprises, including students' generous willingness to share literacy experiences, both good and bad; their fortitude when faced with difficult readings; and their ambitious and creative approaches to the research project. Class discussions of readings were not just interesting—they were even, at times, thrilling, because the readings elicited a new level of work from students. The instructor felt she could almost see the threshold concepts rearranging students' ideas about writing.

Wardle and Downs's *Writing about Writing* course reader introduces students to threshold concepts, defining them as ideas that "literally change the way you experience, think about, and understand a subject. . . . Every specialized field of study . . . has threshold concepts that learners in that field must become acquainted with" (6).¹ Each chapter in the reader focuses on one or two threshold concepts, including: "Writing mediates activity"; "Writing is completely dependent on the situation, readers, and uses it's

being created for”; and (a favorite of Sandie’s) “Writing is not perfectible” (7–8). Students in the class, then, not only were familiar with the term “threshold concept,” but also had worked with threshold concepts that are closely related to those in the ACRL *Framework*, and particularly to the frame “Research as Inquiry.”

Students often enter FYW with misconceptions about the research process, and especially the notion that the purpose of outside sources is to “back up” claims. In fact, students frequently are hobbled by the belief that they can only put forward a claim if they can find an authoritative source to “back it up.” The effect is that they are prohibited from making their own, original claims; another implication is that they approach the process of seeking sources with a pre-established thesis in mind, looking for articles that will confirm that idea. Students with this mindset may be stymied when they cannot find sources to plug into a pre-set argument. It takes a radical reorientation for these students to, as the ACRL *Framework* puts it, “formulate questions for research based on information gaps,” problems, or conflicts in the literature. Yet that is one key reorientation WAW tries to encourage.

NEW DISPOSITIONS, NEW PRACTICES

Although we didn’t choose the frame “Research as Inquiry” because it was the one that related most closely to students’ experience in FYW, in retrospect, we might have. In fact, students learned several of the “knowledge practices” described in this frame—especially how to develop questions based on a gap in the research. The *Writing About Writing* reader includes a short piece by John Swales, “Create a Research Space,” in which he presents three “moves” academic writers make in introductions: defining a “territory,” establishing a “niche” or gap, and filling that niche. Sandie’s students worked with the “Swales moves,” both as readers and as writers, and most of them moved well beyond the habit of looking for sources to “back up” pre-existing claims.

One student, Ben (we’ve used fictitious names in reporting all students’ survey responses), explained this shift in his approach to the research process with simple clarity. Before taking Sandie’s class, he observed:

I would stick with the original research questions that I’ve come up [with] in the early stage. Then, I would assume an answer of that research question and looking for relevant sources to be the evidence. After Prof. Friedman’s class, I always remember that the research question could be adjusted and changed through the research process.

Because the question can shift in response to his discoveries, it no longer makes sense to "assume an answer" for the original research question. The sources Ben finds can alter both the question and the answer. This student did come to adopt the ACRL *Framework* disposition: "Consider research as open-ended exploration and engagement with information."

All of our survey participants responded positively to the "Research as Inquiry" frame, and many of them singled out the dispositions of open-mindedness and curiosity as being especially resonant for them. But there was no overarching consensus about which dispositions within the frame were most relevant. Rather, the responses reflected students who had become quite self-aware about their diverse approaches to research and writing. In other words, particular self-portraits began to emerge as each student weighed the language of the frame in relation to his or her own experience.

In her response, Helen turned back to a concept from the *Writing About Writing* reader: Stuart Greene's term, the "framing concept," which Helen explains is "a guiding tool for the researcher. It allows the individual to look at their research from a particular perspective (though not remaining closed to others)." Helen brought in her own project as an example of how to use a "framing concept"—a sign of her sustained investment and pride in the project, as well as a desire to show how she applied Greene's term. An example of a researcher using a framing concept, Helen writes,

might be a student researching the effects of masculine stereotypes on female rugby players using a framing concept of gender conflict. In this way the student may delve further into the idea of gender conflict as relating to women's rugby without being overwhelmed entirely by questions stemming from stereotypes and women's athletics.

This passage reveals several layers of self-awareness about the writing/research process. First, Helen recalls how she consciously made use of a framing concept as she crafted her paper on women's rugby. At the same time, she acknowledges the potentially overwhelming nature of the process, the risk of being pulled in too many directions at once—for instance, by broader questions about gender and sports.

In her astute translations of each point in the "Research as Inquiry" frame, Helen suggests that the dispositions helped her to see research as a pleasurable task; she entered into the exploratory spirit of the process. In her rewording of the third disposition—"value intellectual curiosity"—Helen offered: "Interact with the work in a playful and investigative manner that fosters new learning and dynamic approaches." Helen chose a topic about

(athletic) play, and deliberately cultivated a “playful and investigative” mindset as she developed the project. In summing up her response, she reflected that if she were presenting the “Research as Inquiry” frame to college students, she “would emphasize having fun with the process, remaining open-minded, and seeking help when needed.” “Having fun with the process” reflects Helen’s particular orientation towards research. We even see touches of humor in the survey response itself, as when she remarks about the *Framework*’s fourth disposition—“maintain an open mind”—with a slightly British primness: “I quite like this disposition as it is.”

In contrast to Helen’s deliberately playful approach, Lindsay acknowledges her anxiety about research, and especially around her efforts to remain open-minded during the process: “I at first was frightened by the idea of my original idea or topic changing and transforming into a whole different paper.” Part of that anxiety may have to do with the difficulty of relinquishing the mindset Ben described: embarking on the process with an answer already formulated, and looking for material to “back up” the prefabricated claim—an approach that allows students to remain in familiar territory and avoid challenging their own ideas. With admirable self-awareness, Lindsay observes that she must grapple with the uncertainty that accompanies a more exploratory process. As further evidence of this emotional awareness around research, she assesses each disposition according to how easy or difficult it was to practice it. For example, she found it especially hard to practice “flexibility” and to “recognize that ambiguity can benefit the research process.”

Through reflective writing for the class, Lindsay discovered that in order to manage this anxiety, she liked to think of the research process as an adventure or a journey. She describes the process to herself as a “metaphorical journey. Going down different paths, turning around,” persevering despite obstacles—she tells herself these are all natural parts of the journey, and not signs that she has gone off course. If she had stuck with the mindset Ben described, she certainly would have feared these detours.

Similar to Lindsay’s response, Paula’s reflection highlights the ways that cognitive and emotional elements might be intertwined in students’ experience of research. While many of us struggle with critical internal voices that may inhibit the writing process, Paula recalls an actual interaction with her mother that could have discouraged her from pursuing her research project on “the uses of language and literacy in dance.” Reflecting on the “Research as Inquiry” concept that simple questions might yield unexpected complexity, Paula writes:

I remember talking to my mother about my project and hearing her tell me that it seemed like an unimportant question which could easily be answered without needing a full research paper. This made me think long and hard about my question, wondering if it were really relevant and if I would be able to find enough information about it.

Despite the doubts her mother raised, Paula did persist and, through the process, "realized that my topic was quite rich." Paula's response suggests that the dispositions she had begun to adopt in the course enabled her to keep going and ultimately write a "rich" paper, one that she found intellectually satisfying.

HABITS OF THINKING: FLEXIBILITY

We'd like to conclude our analysis of the surveys with a discussion of Joan, because her response most clearly embodies the habits of metacognition fostered by the WAW curriculum and encouraged by the ACRL *Framework*. In Joan's answer, we glimpse a young researcher who approaches the process primarily as an activity of *thinking*, and for whom the encounter with outside sources is an occasion for creative and critical intellectual work.

Joan's favorite point in the "Research as Inquiry" frame, the one she returns to several times, was: "value persistence, adaptability, and flexibility and recognize that ambiguity can benefit the research process" (*Framework*). "Flexibility" is the term she focuses on:

For most of the research papers that I have written, I almost always change my thesis at least three times. Most of the time it is because I find new interesting information or I have thought of the research prompt in a different way and a new idea emerged.

In contrast to Ben, who approached research with a pre-set answer, Joan practices flexibility—a willingness to change her thesis "at least three times." For Joan, being "flexible" means allowing her central idea to change with new information or because she has discovered a new way of thinking about the assignment.

Joan also offers a set of translations for the points in the frame, and here is where she is most explicit and forceful in advocating, not just for thinking, but for metacognition in the research process. She begins her translations in the third person: students "should think of research as interaction with the information" (as opposed to merely gathering information). But she quickly shifts to the second person, addressing the reader as "you": "That simple question might help you find the puzzle piece you have been searching for." At this point in the response, she assumes the mantle of the experienced researcher, speaking not to her former professor, but to a fellow

college student who is less experienced, and offering friendly advice. Playing off the disposition about humility, she tells her imaginary novice: “Don’t act like a know it all.” And while she is advising her fellow student not to put on a show of knowledge, she also genuinely embraces the stance of *not knowing*—not assuming an answer.

Her most important advice is not just about thinking creatively, but about the metacognitive skill of noticing and entertaining various ideas. Joan counsels her friend to have an “idea/vision,” but to deliberately remain open to the shifts that might happen when you discover new information: “Entertain any thoughts or ideas that may pass through your mind regarding your topic. Don’t discard or ignore a thought because you think it might be irrelevant, give all thoughts a chance.” In keeping with this principle, Joan offers several other axioms related to awareness and respect for one’s own nascent ideas: “It is important to let your mind wander and explore”; “Don’t be afraid to tread on unfamiliar ground. Try something new”; “Don’t be afraid to try and examine information from different angles and perspectives.” Given her emphasis on overcoming fear, Joan might well be talking to Lindsay or someone like her—to students who may prefer to stick with their first idea, rather than explore the “unfamiliar ground” of new sources, new angles, new claims.

CONCLUSION

We set out to evaluate the ACRL *Framework*, hoping to understand how well it spoke to beginning college researchers: would the language make sense to them, and would the dispositions align with their experience of doing research during their first year of college? However, as the “Research as Inquiry” frame itself recommends, we were open to a shift in our investigation, and as we read the data, new questions arose: What enabled these young researchers to embrace the *Framework*? How did their survey responses reflect their learning in FYW?

We have argued that a WAW curriculum, with its focus on metacognition in relation to research and writing tasks, primed students to respond positively to the *Framework*. Overall, our survey participants enthusiastically affirmed that the language of the “Research as Inquiry” frame resonated with their experience in FYW. Their responses showed they had moved beyond the typical approach, which one student described as “sticking with the original research question,” “assuming an answer” for that question, and looking for sources to “back up” that answer. Instead of this familiar, circumscribed process, students had learned to remain open to shifts in their questions and to allow their thinking to develop in response

to new data. In order to manage the anxiety that accompanied this more open-ended process, Lindsay adopted the metaphor of the "journey" or the "adventure" of research. Joan came to see research as an activity of thinking, one best conducted with an awareness of the welter of ideas that offered themselves for consideration.

Based on students' responses, we can see the *Framework* as a natural—perhaps even essential—extension of WAW pedagogy: a heuristic that can be used in tandem with the WAW curriculum in order to foster productive dispositions towards research. With the emphasis on metacognition in WAW, students become ready to embrace the *Framework*, in spite of its somewhat recondite language, and to regard it as resonating with their own experience.

At the same time, we would also suggest that the metacognitive elements of WAW could be integrated into other FYW curricula. A theme-based writing seminar—one that focused on content other than writing studies—could also make space for the kinds of self-reflection that prepared students to encounter the *Framework*. In fact, the *Framework* might become a motivation to revise FYW curriculum in order to bring out some of the benefits of WAW pedagogy, including familiarity with threshold concepts of writing studies. Not every student would emerge from FYW with Joan's intellectual flexibility—but we hope that many of them might develop a willingness to "give all thoughts a chance."

NOTE

1. When Sandie taught her WAW course in academic year 2015–16, she used the most recent edition of Wardle and Downs's reader then available, the 2nd. The expanded 3rd edition (2017) offers students an even more developed and effective introduction to threshold concepts, including writing and thinking activities in response to each concept.

APPENDIX: SURVEY

We would like you to review a brief set of library learning goals and tell us how they match (or don't match) your experience in Professor Friedman's class and your image of yourself as a researcher and writer.

Librarians nationwide have developed a set of learning goals for college students doing research-based writing. The goals, published by the Association of College and Research Libraries, are called the *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. The *Framework* describes various skills and dispositions (attitudes, mindsets) that librarians want college students to have when they conduct research.

In one part of the *Framework*, about “research as inquiry,” librarians list a set of dispositions (again, attitudes or mindsets) that a student hopefully will have—or learn to have—when doing research-based writing.

Here are the dispositions as listed in the *Framework*. Please read through them and, as you do, reflect on how they relate (or don’t relate) to your experience in Professor Friedman’s class.

Librarians believe that students, when conducting research for a paper, should:

- consider research as open-ended exploration and engagement with information;
- appreciate that a question may appear to be simple but still disruptive and important to research;
- value intellectual curiosity in developing questions and learning new investigative methods;
- maintain an open mind and a critical stance;
- value persistence, adaptability, and flexibility and recognize that ambiguity can benefit the research process;
- seek multiple perspectives during information gathering and assessment;
- seek appropriate help when needed;
- follow ethical and legal guidelines in gathering and using information;
- demonstrate intellectual humility (i.e., recognize their own intellectual or experiential limitations).

Now that you’ve reviewed the list of *Framework* dispositions, please answer the following questions. Please write one to three paragraphs in reply to each question.

1. Overall, do the *Framework* dispositions align with your experience as a researcher/writer in Professor Friedman’s class? Are there one or two items in the list that jump out to you as being especially relevant? Please explain why and give examples if you can.
2. The words and phrases used in the list of dispositions: do they match words and phrases you would use to describe your own attitude as a researcher/writer? Would the language used in the dispositions help you describe your self-image as a college student doing research-based writing? Please explain why or why not.
3. How would you “translate” the list of dispositions for other students who are going to do research in a writing class, or in another class? Are there certain dispositions in that list you would

emphasize? Would you use different language? Please explain your choices.

WORKS CITED

- Adler-Kassner, Linda, and Elizabeth Wardle, editors. *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies*. Utah State UP, 2015.
- Albert, Michelle A., and Caroline Sinkinson. "Composing Information Literacy: A Pedagogical Partnership Between Rhet/Comp and Library Faculty." Georgia International Conference on Information Literacy, 25 Sept. 2015, Savannah, GA, digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/gaintlit/2015/2015/24.
- . "Sharing an Information Literacy Curriculum." Conference on College Composition and Communication, 16 March 2017, Portland, OR.
- CWPA, NCTE, and the National Writing Project. *Framework for Success in Post-secondary Writing*. CWPA, 2011, wpacouncil.org/framework.
- D'Angelo, Barbara, and Teresa Grettano. "Sharing Outcomes and Goals: Mapping the Documents." Conference on College Composition and Communication, 16 March 2017, Portland, OR.
- D'Angelo, Barbara J., Sandra Jamieson, Barry Maid, and Janice R. Walker, editors. *Information Literacy: Research and Collaboration across Disciplines*. The WAC Clearinghouse / UP of Colorado, 2016, wac.colostate.edu/books/infolit.
- Dew, Debra Frank. "Language Matters: Rhetoric and Writing I as Content Course." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 26, no. 3, 2001, pp. 87–104.
- Downs, Doug, and Elizabeth Wardle. "Teaching about Writing, Righting Misconceptions: (Re)Envisioning 'First Year Composition' as 'Introduction to Writing Studies.'" *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 58, no. 4, 2007, pp. 552–84.
- . "Reimagining the Nature of FYC: Trends in Writing-about-Writing Pedagogies." *Exploring Composition Studies: Sites, Issues, and Perspectives*, edited by Kelly Ritter and Paul Kei Matsuda, Utah State UP, 2012, pp. 123–44.
- Elbow, Peter, and Patricia Belanoff. *A Community of Writers: A Workshop Course in Writing*. McGraw-Hill, 1999.
- The Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. Association of College and Research Libraries, 2016, ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework.
- Greene, Stuart. "Argument as Conversation: The Role of Inquiry in Writing a Researched Argument." Wardle and Downs, *Writing*, pp. 27–38.
- Hanganu-Bresch, Cristina. "Quo Vadis, Independent Writing Programs? Writing about Writing and Rhetorical Education." *A Minefield of Dreams: Triumphs and Travails of Independent Writing Programs*, edited by Justin Everett and Cristina Hanganu-Bresch, WAC Clearinghouse / UP of Colorado, 2016, wac.colostate.edu/books/minefield/chapter9.pdf.
- Kitzhaber, Albert R. "Death—Or Transfiguration?" *College English*, vol. 21, no. 7, 1960, pp. 367–73.
- Mackey, Thomas P., and Trudi E. Jacobson. *Metaliteracy: Reinventing Information Literacy to Empower Learners*. American Library Assn., 2014.

- McClure, Randall, editor. *Rewired: Research-Writing Partnerships within the Frameworks*. Association of College and Research Libraries, 2016.
- McCracken, I. Moriah, and Brittney Johnson. "Sustainable Partners: Librarians and Instructors Using Threshold Concepts to Reinforce Information Literacy." Georgia International Conference on Information Literacy, 25 Sept. 2015, Savannah, GA. digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/gaintlit/2015/2015/40.
- Meyer, Jan, and Ray Land. "Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge: Linkages to Ways of Thinking and Practising within the Disciplines." *Enhancing Teaching-Learning Environments in Undergraduate Courses Project Occasional Report*, no. 4, Universities of Edinburgh, Coventry, and Durham, May 2003, www.etl.tla.ed.ac.uk/docs/ETLreport4.pdf.
- Russell, David. "Activity Theory and Its Implications for Writing Instruction." *Reconceiving Writing, Rethinking Writing Instruction*, edited by Joseph Petraglia, Routledge, 1995, pp. 51–77.
- Saldaña, Johnny. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. 2nd ed. SAGE, 2013.
- Swales, John. "'Create a Research Space' (CARS) Model of Research Introductions." Wardle and Downs, *Writing*, pp. 12–14.
- Wardle, Elizabeth. "Understanding Transfer from FYC: Preliminary Results of a Longitudinal Study." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 31, nos. 1–2, 2007, pp. 65–85.
- Wardle, Elizabeth, and Doug Downs. "Reflecting Back and Looking Forward: Revisiting 'Teaching about Writing, Righting Misconceptions' Five Years On." *Composition Forum*, vol. 27, 2013, compositionforum.com/issue/27/reflecting-back.php.
- Wardle, Elizabeth, and Doug Downs, editors. *Writing about Writing: A College Reader*. 2nd ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2014.
- WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (3.0)*, Approved July 17, 2014. CWPA, 2014, wpacouncil.org/positions/outcomes.html.

Sandie Friedman is assistant professor of Writing at George Washington University, where she served as Director of First Year Writing from 2014 to 2017. Her research focuses on curriculum design for first year writing, particularly the role of disciplinary knowledge in writing courses. Her current project is a comparative case study of multidisciplinary first year writing programs. Her work has appeared in *Currents in Teaching and Learning*, *Enculturation*, and *Writing on the Edge*, and her personal essays appear online at *The Nervous Breakdown* and *The Rumpus*.

Robert Miller is a reference and instruction librarian at University of Maryland University College. Robert has previously published and presented with Sandie Friedman on the intersections between information literacy and writing studies. He has contributed to library publications such as *College and Research Libraries News*, *American Libraries*, and *Journal of Library and Information Services in Distance Learning*.