



Robert Brooke

## “Rhetoric: The Essay”: The Teaching Unit

Design, with a teaching partner or at most two partners, a teaching unit centered around a writing concept or approach to essay writing, grounded in the reading of one or more essays. Plan to develop this work in three stages:

*Before your Teaching Day:* Develop, with your teaching partner, a rough plan for the concept/approach you are exploring and a guided writing activity that emerges from that concept/approach (and, most likely, the reading of one or more essays). At least ten days in advance, hold a conference with me about your developing ideas. Let class know at least a week in advance of any reading/writing assignments to complete before class.

*On your Teaching Day:* Lead us, as a class, in a run-through and brainstorming session for your developing unit. Take us through your guided writing activity (aim for 50 minutes) and lead us in an open discussion of the concept/approach you are highlighting, its relation to other concepts we’re discussing, and our thoughts on how best to teach these new concepts and our experience participating in your activity.

*By the end of the term:* Using what you’ve learned from your teaching day and conversations, complete a pedagogical essay that develops a full teaching unit for the approach you’re exploring. This essay should be 3000-5000 words (roughly 10-15 double spaced pages), and should explain your teaching goals, activities, resources for the unit. Think of the unit as at least 4-6 class meetings (2 undergraduate college weeks, or one secondary week), including a mix of your chosen concept/approach, writing, reading specific essays, peer response, and assessment. For those interested in potential publication, I recommend reading some of the pedagogical essays in *College English*, *English Journal*, *Rethinking Schools* and *Composition Forum*.