

Lesson 2.4 – The Believing Game—Online class session

“This means playing what the writing theorist Peter Elbow calls the ‘believing game,’ in which you try to inhabit the worldview of those whose conversation you are joining – and whom you are perhaps even disagreeing with – and try to see their argument from their perspective.”

- Graff & Birkenstein, They Say, I Say

Rationale: This lesson is designed to return to the subject of the academic conversation. Following the Question Analysis, students will have a focus question for their persuasive essay. The online discussion will give them practice in writing out their argument, then switching their focus to the *counterargument*.

Goal: Students will actively participate in both sides of an online academic conversation.

Objective: Students will be able to

1. Rehash a subject from The World of the Image, and participate in an online dialogue about the issue.
2. Make at least one statement from the perspective opposite from their own, on the issue being discussed.
3. Write out a one-page summary of both sides of the online discussion.

Assessment:

1. The instructor will be supervising the chatroom conversations, moderating as needed.
2. The students will be receiving participation points for the first and second half of this activity. The instructor will supervise the chatrooms to assess whether or not each student is participating.
3. The homework will be submitted for points, and will demonstrate that the students have participated in the online discussion.

Preparation: E-mail readings to students after the previous class session (TSIS 26-27, 30-40; The World of the Image, selected articles), include chatroom assignments and select moderators.

Process/Procedure:



1. In lieu of an on-campus meeting, every student must sign into www.meebo.com at the regular meeting time, and remain in the chatroom until the end of the session (50 minutes).
2. Prior to the lesson, the instructor selects 2 students to moderate one chatroom each. (The role of the moderator will be to initiate and manage the conversation, based on a topic from the homework readings. (Trudy Smoke, The World of the Image, selected articles.))
3. In an E-mail from the instructor, the remaining students will be assigned to begin the class session in chatroom A or chatroom B.
4. The moderators will begin their chatroom discussions by presenting a question on the reading, and the conversation will commence.
5. The instructor will supervise both chatrooms at once, and all students will be graded on participation.
6. After 25 minutes, the students will each try and continue the conversation from the standpoint of the argument with which they *disagree*. They must play the “believing game.”
7. Just before the end of the class session, the instructor will advise all students to check their E-mail accounts for their homework assignment.
8. Homework: Each student must E-mail instructor a one-page double-spaced summary of the chatroom conversation. Students are asked to use the template at the bottom of page 26 to the top of page 27 of the They Say, I Say reading. They may use the verb suggestions from page 39.

Materials: Digital copies of readings

Accommodations: Depending on the class size, this lesson may require two or three chatrooms.