

Generative Strategy Assignment (25% of the course's learning opportunity)

Learning to “think like an Educational Psychologist” and being “open to learning” requires ***a new approach to reading and preparing for class sessions***. Educational Psychologists generate ideas in writing *while* they read and prepare. Why? Because concretely generating ideas helps them *organize* the content in the reading; *integrate* content with personal experiences, ideas, beliefs, and/or values; and *elaborate* on content by connecting it to other ideas. When you combine reading and writing, you are, in essence, explaining the content to yourself in your own words.

The following bullet points **explain the generative strategy assignment**:

- Each generative strategy is guided by a specific handout of required prompts, instructions, criteria, etc. Each handout (PDF, HTML, or RTF documents) will be available at least one week prior to it being due. Each handout will be located in a folder under “Assignments” in Blackboard. In short, these handouts “tell you” what to do.
- While some handouts of prompts and instructions will include additional criteria, most of your generative strategies will meet expectations and communicate gains in your learning if you . . .
 - (a) create connections between a reading and your *specific* and *detailed* experiences, thoughts, and life moments.
 - (b) demonstrate the connections with *your own* words (copying words from a reading serves no purpose).
 - (c) address the required content as defined in the handout for each generative strategy.
 - (d) computer generate your strategy, as that’s the only way that you can show advanced preparation for class.
 - (e) submit your strategy (stapled, if more than one page) as a hard copy during the class session in which it is due, unless instructions specifically ask you to submit it in another format.
- On most generative strategies, you will receive a marking that indicates quality: + for a superior generative strategy, √ for one that meets expectations in communicating your learning, — for one that does not meet expectations. Also, on most generative strategies, you will receive written or oral feedback from classmates or me.
- It is best to bring a hard copy of your generative strategy to class—we will discuss them, and you will revise them during class. If you aren’t going to be in class (or you have printer problems), however, you can submit the generative strategy via an e-mail that is “dated” prior to the start of class. You can paste your writing into the body of the email or you can attach it using one of the formats discussed in the course syllabus. I will give those generative strategies the same consideration as I give ones that are submitted during class. Submitting a generative strategy after the due date misses their point; still, I will give ***some*** consideration to ones that are submitted up to one week late.

The following bullet points offer **suggestions for maximizing the educational benefit** of generative strategies:

- Do **not** treat generative strategies as formal papers of a certain length that must be revised, edited, and polished. Length and correctness are irrelevant. Simply “think on paper”—get your ideas “out there” in ways that meet the requested criteria, show quality thinking, and indicate a true attempt to “grapple” with difficult ideas.
- Use Generative strategies *during* class to build your own ideas. Write on them; make them “yours”! To this end, while writing generative strategies, you should (a) leave space or large margins so that you can revise your own ideas during class and (b) highlight parts of your generative strategy that you are not confident with so that you can focus on those highlights during class. (“Learning Log” credit sometimes is based on your own margin comments and corrections.)
- Use feedback on previous generative strategies (regardless of the form of that feedback) to improve future ones.
- I’m happy to sit down with you and discuss your generative strategies. If you ever feel that you are not getting enough high-quality feedback on your generative strategies, then make an appointment with me. If after receiving three minuses, you aren’t sure why you are receiving those minuses, we should definitely sit down and discuss ways to improve the quality of your generative strategies. If you don’t make an appointment with me, I can only assume that you understand why I struggle to find evidence that you are “showing me” your learning.