**Genre Worksheet by Penn State GWC & EPPIC**

**Step 0: Name the *genre*** (standardized type of writing)

(Abstract, cover letter, CV, dissertation, lit review, proposal, research article, teaching statement…)

Name of genre I’m working with:

**Step 1: Find guidelines**

Research common characteristics of the genre. Check the materials on [gwc.psu.edu/resources](https://gwc.psu.edu/resources), such as the “Academic Genre Guide.” You can also try Googling terms like “genre conventions for [*your* *genre name*] in [*your field*: *humanities, science, social science, engineering*].”

Record these common features in the Genre Analysis Chart (below) by filling out the relevant cells in the third column.

When Jade presents, consider: what are some strategies for finding genre guidelines besides looking online?

**Step 2: Consider the rhetorical situation**

Reflect on why you’re writing, who your audience is, and what they need to know. In particular, will your readers be specialists in your discipline?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Topic of Project | Purpose | Audience |
|  |  |  |

**Step 3: Gather and analyze samples**

Find samples that align with your planned writing project in terms of purpose and audience. These will be models for your own writing.

Information about the model you brought today:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Author | Date | Title | Purpose | Audience |
|  |  |  |  |  |

Analyze your model, filling out as much of the Genre Analysis Chart below as possible. The aspects listed here go from a macro level (like “moves”) to micro (“features”). Feel free to alter this chart to suit your needs.

**Genre Analysis Chart**

| Category | Element | What do the guidelines say about this element? | What do you notice about this element in your sample(s)? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Overarching concepts: What does a piece of writing in this genre need to accomplish? What defines this genre?(e.g., a scholarly article usually must present an original research contribution; a CV must depict professional experience in certain categories)  |  |  |
| Organization, arrangement | For lengthy genres, organization of sections (e.g., Intro 🡪 Methods 🡪 Results 🡪 Discussion) |  |  |
| Organization of points or paragraphs (e.g., in intro section, point 1: establish territory 🡪 2: establish niche 🡪 3: occupy niche) |  |  |
| Organization of sentences within a paragraph (e.g., topic sentence 🡪 evidence 🡪 analysis 🡪 transition) |  |  |
| Other element? |  |  |
| Syntax | Subjects (personal pronouns, “this study”) |  |  |
| Verbs (tense, active/passive voice) |  |  |
| Other element? |  |  |
| Citations | Integrated/non-integrated |  |  |
| Style (APA, CSE, MLA, etc.) |  |  |
| Other element? |  |  |
| Word choice | Specialist vocabulary (jargon) |  |  |
| Key terms (“theory,” “implications”) |  |  |
| Word choice (cont.) | Repeated words, especially verbs and nouns |  |  |
| Other element? |  |  |
| Other category? | Element? |  |  |
| Element? |  |  |
| Element? |  |  |

**Step 4: Get feedback**

Form a group with one to two peers in your field. Tell them about what you found regarding your genre and ask them whether these findings align with their observations about the genre.

**Step 5: Reflect**

Based on your analysis, consider:

* What information does my field value?
* What is considered essential, persuasive, authoritative?
* What is the role of data, research, and researchers in my field?

Understanding the genres within your field helps you understand your field.