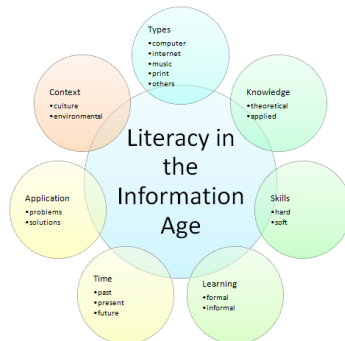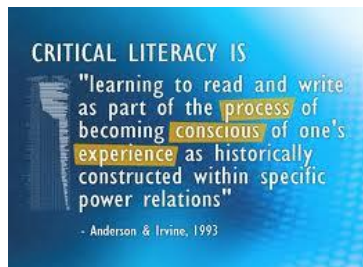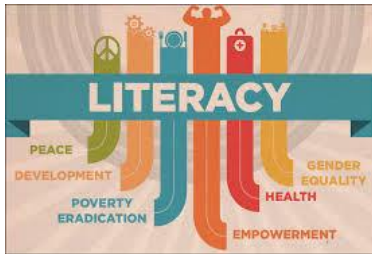# Digital Literacy Autobiography

College students are fairly literate people. By that, I mean, most of us hanging around a college campus can read and write and study and do academic kind of things. The road to that literacy that allows us to go to college, though, is a long, sometimes arduous, journey. And, that journey is unique to you. This assignment asks you to chronicle that unique journey, your path to literacy—specifically, to create your own literacy autobiography. Your primary focus for this assignment should be: What literacy experiences have made me who I am today? Tell your story.

Literacy has two standard definitions: the ability to read and write, or knowledge of a specialized or technical field. For example, as a college professor, I am highly literate in the traditional sense: I can read and write like it ain't nobody biznus (enough so that I can "break the rules" of standardized written English for effect pretty dramatically). As a mostly well-rounded individual, I am also fairly literate in a few "specialized" areas that you might not recognize until you get to know me: I can "talk" muscle cars and motorcycles; I'm pretty fluent in parent-speak; I could intelligently talk to you about roof design or replacement. I am not, however, literate in wine (unless strawberry-flavored bottles that sell for under five bucks are on the discussion list), nor could I have much to contribute to a conversation about classical music. For this assignment, I am asking you to really focus on your traditional literacy (your ability to read and write) and how you acquired it, though it may be possible to incorporate some of your specialized literacy if relevant to your journey.

Your format for this assignment will be a digital scrapbook, utilizing the social media site Pinterest. "Pinterest is a tool for collecting and organizing the things you love," according to their website at about.pinterest.com. Basically, Pinterest is an online collection of bulletin boards organized around particular themes or ideas (for example, I have a Board for recipes, one for teaching, one for crafts, etc.). Once you create a Board, you then "pin" items to it that you want to remember or find again. The "pins" must have a visual aspect (text-only formats are not pin-able), but otherwise, you can pin just about anything (a video, a website, a photograph of you at age 5, etc.). The details of the assignment and its grading are below. Following that, you will find a list of possibilities / ideas to "pin" and technical instructions for Pinterest.

Digital Literacy Autobiography

- You must create a free Pinterest account for this assignment (pinterest.com). If you already have a Pinterest account, you may use it for this project (or create a new one specific to this course), but please see the caveats in last two bullet points below.

- You may have whatever boards you like on your Pinterest account, but you must create a unique board for this assignment / course.

- Title the Board "Literacy Autobiography."

- The Board description should be personalized and should represent the "theme" or main idea of what you want us to learn about your literacy experiences.

- The Board should have a minimum of 25 pins.

- The pins should represent a variety of experiences; there should not be repeats (i.e., a bunch of pins on a single experience).

- Each pin should have an original description (that means written by you, 100% in your own words) explaining what the picture, video, image, web page, etc. is and WHY it is part of your literacy autobiography. Pinterest allows no more than 500 characters per pin, so you should aim for about 50 words in each description (that makes this assignment equivalent to about a 1300-word essay, counting the title, board description, and 25 pins with descriptions of about 50 words each).

- Pin descriptions should use complete sentences and standard, edited (grammatically-correct) American English.

- Pins CAN BE original images; you can take photographs and upload them to your board.
  You may add to this board at any time throughout the semester, but remember to "edit" the pin and write your own description (no minimum word count for pins above and beyond the 25 required).

- Gaining the technological knowledge to complete this assignment is part of the assignment. If you do not understand how Pinterest works, it is your responsibility to learn it.

- Your privacy in this course and at this institution are protected by law. It is okay for you to "out" yourself, but you DO NOT in any way have to use your real name, kctcs email account, or any identifying information on your Pinterest account / board. You can choose a non-identifying user name and generic gmail / Hotmail / yahoo email to set up your site.

- The Pinterest board for this assignment must remain available all semester. You will need to remember your log-in information and be prepared to add to this board during the last two weeks of the semester.

Requirements Above: Read Carefully!

Possibilities / Ideas to pin

★ Who were your earliest influences as a reader or a writer or even as a student in general? How were they positive or negative? What role did parents, peers, and other adults play in your development as a literate person? What specific incidents are vivid for you?

★ How have you felt about reading or writing? How have your feelings varied, depending on the types you're doing? How have your feelings changed as you've grown older? How would you like to feel about reading / writing / schooling? What stops you or holds you back? To what extent is reading or writing an activity that you do for pleasure and stimulation? To what extent is it work or drudgery? What kind of reading or writing do you find boring or difficult? Why do you think this is so?

★ What kind of kid were you in middle and high school? With whom did you hang out? How did the norms and expectations of your group of friends relate to literacy activities and/or school? Do you still identify with the norms of this social group or are you now moving on?

★ To what extent does reading / writing really help you learn? What kind of learner are you? What's your learning style? In a perfect world, how would you learn new things?

★ What particular reading and writing assignments (for school or pleasure) had the most impact on your literacy (impact can be positive or negative). Why?

★ Did you have a specific experience in which being able to read and / or write gave you the opportunity to overcome a difficulty or created an opportunity for personal growth?

★ Are there particular events or people or social expectations that have challenged you / encouraged you / discouraged you from taking your education seriously?

★ How will you use your literacy skills in college? How will you use your literacy skills in the future (employment?)?

★ Are you sufficiently literate for the tasks you've taken on (college courses) and will take on in the future (employment?)? What else do you need to learn or to develop more in your literacy repertoire to be successful?

★ What other kinds of literacy do you have or wish to acquire or need to acquire?

Pinterest

★ What is Pinterest? http://about.pinterest.com
★ The Basics: http://about.pinterest.com/basics/
★ Video instructions: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lia0HR_duJU
★ Hour Long Tutorial: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNd9o_WoaSw .
★ You should also check out MY Example: http://pinterest.com/professorstacy/literacy-autobiography/ .

Important Notes

- ★ If you are new to Pinterest, you should begin on the computer. While Pinterest is available in apps for many personal devices, it is easier to use and to edit pin descriptions on the computer.
- ★ Make sure to install the "pin it" button into your internet browser so that you can pin anytime you are on the internet.
- ★ Remember, this assignment requires that you write your own original descriptions for your pins. When you pin from a website, the "description" will usually populate itself, and when you "repin" directly from Pinterest, the description will be populated. So, you must return to the pin on your Board and edit those descriptions if you do not write them as you pin. To edit a pin, go to your board, find the pin, and hover your mouse over the top right corner of the pin. A pencil will appear. Click on the pencil to edit the pin.
- ★ Pinterest's help site is at https://help.pinterest.com/home .