

TEACHING ELEMENTS

WIKI ACTIVITY: RESEARCH & WRITING

VERSION 1.0 | 7/3/14

DESCRIPTION:

This activity describes a blend of collaborative research with independent writing. Divide students into teams to research a broad area in the discipline. Assign each group their own wiki page for posting research sources and ideas for topics, and for getting feedback from their teammates. Through this process, each individual can develop a focus or specialty area within that broader topic that they wish to investigate further and write about on their own.

PURPOSE:

Students are able to:

- Develop their skills as writers and critical thinkers within various academic disciplines they are studying at RIT.
- Develop their opinions and ideas about topics they investigate and discuss with one another
- Construct a deeper conceptual understanding of topics by discussing and exploring relationships between one another's findings.

ACTIVITY STEPS:

Part 1: Collaborative Research Among Students

1. Student are divided into small teams and assigned a broad topic for exploration through online research.
2. Students use the wiki to post, comment, and collaborate on ideas or areas of interest they discover while investigating the broader topic. Throughout this phase, students within the research teams are encouraged to comment on each other's findings and offer ideas and suggestions as they each determine what specific areas they are interested in writing about for their individual papers.
3. Each student refines their focus or specialty area within the broader topic through discussing and obtaining feedback on their findings with their group members.

Part 2: Independent Writing Activity with Peer Review

1. Each student drafts an independent writing project which will go through several revisions.
2. Students post their drafts at each phase for peer review and critique before submitting for review by the instructor.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- The instructor will need to fill out a [Wiki Request Form](#)
 - The RIT Libraries' [subject-specialist librarians](#) and [online resources](#) can provide guidance to students on how to use the library resources for article searches and citation.
- A [myCourses Dropbox](#) can be set up for each formal document submission to the instructor.

TIPS FOR THIS ACTIVITY:

- Consider setting up the wiki space so that each group has their own page for the research component and each student has their own page for their independent writing activity drafts. Students can use the Add Comment option to communicate feedback and ideas at the bottom of these pages in both cases.
- Early in the academic term, consider reaching out to your college's [RIT librarian](#) to set up a workshop for students on how to use the Wallace Library databases and other resources for focused research.

Implement the use of the Plagiarism Detection Option in a [myCourses Dropbox](#), and make its reports visible to students. As students submit their drafts, they can check their work to make sure they are citing sources properly and refining their own original thoughts and ideas with each edit.