

**ENG 500 RESEARCH METHODS: RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION**  
Fall 2008

***Issue Report Assignment***

For your Issue Report, you will examine several of the *most recent issues available* of the journal you have selected to study. Your goal will be to provide an overview of the current topics and methods that are published in this journal (i.e., to introduce those not familiar with the journal to what it offers).

First, study the submission guidelines and editorial policy of the journal. (These are usually located near the front cover, although sometimes these are printed in the back.) Examine what kinds of topics and methods are recommended to potential contributing authors.

Second, skim several issues of the entire journal to get a feel for the topics and methods published in that journal.

- Consider how many articles are typically published each issue. What departments the journal has (e.g., Are book reviews published? Comment and responses? Annotated Bibliographies, etc.)
- Note the range of topics and methods used in the published articles. What are the objects of study that the articles focus on (people, texts, theories, practices, material artifacts, etc.). In terms of methods, how would you classify the publications: theoretical, historical, empirical, hermeneutical, practical, or some other category?
- Consider the audience targeted for the journal. Is this published for scholars? Researchers? Teachers? Or some combination?
- Consider the purpose of most, if not all, of the articles. Are these contributing to new knowledge? Applying knowledge to a practice (pedagogical or other)? Extending or challenging other research? Integrating scholarship (e.g., reviews of literature or annotated bibliography)?

The suggestions listed above are meant as guidelines but not straightjackets. You may well come up with other questions or aspects of the journal to examine as you begin your analysis. Your goal is to familiarize potential readers (scholars and/or teachers) with the journal.

**Issue Report:** You will have 10 minutes to present your issue report. In this time, briefly introduce the journal, describing the kinds of articles (topics and methods) it calls for and the range it published in the issues you examined. (Help us to understand the nature of this journal.) Remember that 10 minutes equals approximately 4 typed pages double-spaced. You need not write a formal paper (and probably shouldn't because you might be tempted to *read* rather than speak to us). However you decide to structure your time, be sure to practice, practice, practice so that you can cover the points you want to cover within the allotted time.

**One-Page Summary:** Write a one-page summary of your findings about the journal (the kinds of articles it publishes, how often it is published, and any other information you think we will find useful to know about this journal). Bring 15 copies, one for each person in the class.