What Are They Writing?
Balancing 21st Century Social Media Writing with Traditional Academic Expectations

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

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Abstract

When thinking about the types of writing with which students in secondary English language arts classrooms engage, the genres that often come to mind are analyses, both literary and rhetorical, as well as research papers. With the rise of social media, students are becoming further removed from these genres of writing, engaging instead with writing that on the surface appears to be more fragmented and interactive. By thinking about the roles audience, context, and interpretation play in the composition of traditional academic writing as well as tweets on the social media platform Twitter, teachers can rephrase some of the questions about composition in a way to which 21st century students are more likely to relate. Because I presented my research at a roundtable session at the 2013 National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Annual Convention, I include reflections that detail how I arrived at my final idea for the presentation and that document the feedback I received from the roundtable session.

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