Designing Writing Assignments with Learning Gaps in Mind

Tip: Be mindful of the learning gaps that students have when designing your writing assignment.

I. Common Learning Gaps that Impact Writing Assignments

Knowledge: What do the students need to know?

Skills: What do the students need to learn how to do?

Motivation: What attitudes or beliefs do the students need to have or overcome?

Environment: What contexts, resources, and tools do they need to complete the assignment?

Communication: Is the assignment sufficiently clear and detailed?

II. Solutions to Common Learning Gaps

Knowledge → Curricular Materials, Research, Discussion, Informal Writing

Skills → Practice, Scaffolding, Sequencing, Review, Revision

Motivation → Choice, Competency, Relevance, Support

Environment → Instructor, Peers, Tutors, Learning Centers, Labs, Library Resources, Online Resources (e.g., Excelsior OWL), Tools, Technology, Reasonable Time Expectations

Communication → Clear Instructions, Templates, Models, Rubrics