

Student Name

Professor Name

Class

Date

Nelson, Jennie. "Reading Classrooms as Text: Exploring Student Writers' Interpretive Practices."

*College Composition and Communication* 46.3 (1995): 411-29. *ERIC*. EBSCO. Web. 28

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Nelson's article "Reading Classrooms as Text: Exploring Student Writers' Interpretive Practices" considers the understanding that students have regarding the culture of school when they arrive in the classroom. Nelson makes the argument that students are already very knowledgeable regarding navigating the classroom and that this learned knowledge can in fact hinder them from engagement in the writing process. She also says that "as members of the culture of school, students learn the routines of school work, including lectures, seat work, tests, and homework. [And] [t]hey learn acceptable patterns of behavior, such as when and how to ask questions, and what kinds of responses are expected in class discussions" (412). Nelson considers how students have become professionalized within the classroom walls, and this ability for students to professionalize is not necessarily helpful to students. She does this in order to look more closely at how students navigate the classroom. Nelson "reminds us that students are already insiders, long-standing members of the culture of school who may be "possessed by" certain assumptions about how to approach school writing assignments" (413). Nelson uses case studies of students in hopes to understand how students interpret writing assignments. Nelson considers the role of classroom literacy and how that either hinders or helps students in their writing. Looking at the relationship between student, assignments, and instructors and how those relationships influence the writing classroom she sets up a way for instructors to better understand how students struggle with their assignments. Nelson's work also allows for instructors in the writing classroom to look at their assignments from the viewpoint of the students which is valuable insight for instructors to have.

"Jennie Nelson is an associate professor of English and the director of writing at the University of Idaho, where she teaches undergraduate writing and graduate courses in composition theory, pedagogy, and research methods. Her most recent publications reflect her continuing interest in examining writing from the students' side of the desk" (Nelson 411). Nelson has a viewpoint that seems extremely valuable for instructors to consider. Her case studies come from her own classes and her examples are clear as she brings together material from other classes to substantiate her findings.

One way that I am planning to use Nelson's work is by using her ideas in order to contextualize the writing classroom experience in order to consider student engagement. I would like to use Nelson's ideas of the professional student and the knowledge that they bring when they come into the classroom in order to argue how instructors should attempt to look at their assignments from the student perspective