

GRASSROOTS WRITING RESEARCH JOURNAL

Issue 14.2 – Spring 2024

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G W R J C A L L F O R S U B M I S S I O N S

The Grassroots Writing Research Journal welcomes submissions from all writers investigating how people, tools, and situations influence our everyday writing and literate activity practices in the world.

We invite submissions of texts in our newly published genres in GWRJ 14.2:

- **GWRJ Shorts**
- **Documenting Literate Activity**

Visit our “Writing for the GWRJ” webpage to find descriptions of these new GWRJ genres and their evolving genre conventions—and check out examples published in this GWRJ issue 14.2.

Visit our GWRJ webpage to find

- Past issues archive
- Resources for writing
- Submission requirements
- Editorial team members



www.isuwriting.com/grassroots-writing-research-journal

Have questions? Article ideas?
Want to talk? Ready for feedback?
Email us at grassrootswriting@gmail.com

GWRJ Mission

The *Grassroots Writing Research Journal* (GWRJ) is dedicated to publishing writing research by everyday writers like you—like all of us.

Who we are

We are committed to publishing GWRJ authors who are undergraduate writing students, graduate student teachers, university faculty members, high school teachers and students, middle school teachers and students—anyone! Because we are all writers and writing researchers.

What we do

We encourage people to write about any range of subjects that intersect with writing research. You might describe how you practice writing in your lives, how writing works toward specific writer and community goals, how you're learning writing as a complex activity over time, or how writing makes things happen in your worlds.

What we publish

We look forward to receiving submissions for genres we often publish (like full-length GWRJ articles), and we are always excited to experiment with new genres and media whether they're some we've created recently (GWRJ Short, Documenting Literate Activity) or ones we hope you might create and share with us.

Visit our GWRJ webpage for more information and an archive of past issues since 2010.

www.isuwriting.com/grassroots-writing-research-journal



GWRJ Writing Facts

We have all learned stories about what writing is and how we learn and practice writing. Since our GWRJ mission is to publish complex, messy, different kinds of stories about writing and writers, we hope these GWRJ Facts make clear how we think about writing.

GWRJ Fact: Everyone is a writer.

More than privileging any one kind of writing, we think it's important to publish accessible writing content, style, and everyday grassroots research from a wide range of writers.

GWRJ Fact: All kinds of writing are valuable.

We encourage writers to use a more informal, conversational tone and style without privileging formal or overtly “academic” language to be more accessible to readers.

GWRJ Fact: Writing advice doesn't work for everyone all the time.

We know there is no one piece of writing advice that works for all writers and all writing situations because people learn and write differently across different writing situations.

GWRJ Fact: Writing is a messy activity.

We know that writing doesn't have neat formulas for success because writing is a complex activity that involves challenges that change over time.

GWRJ Fact: Writers learn from other writers.

We encourage writers to show readers how we learn about writing and specific genres through research and practice, not by being told what to do in school.

GWRJ Fact: We are always learning about writing.

We know that no one is simply a “novice” or “master” writer because we are all learning writing in progress as we encounter different writing situations.

GWRJ Fact: We don't all learn writing in the same way.

We know that learning writing is not universal (or unique) because we learn writing in specific ways, moments, and genres that work for us—until they don't.

GWRJ Fact: Writing is never general.

We encourage writers to show how writing is specific all the time and related to the genres we write in, the languages and tools we use to write, and the cultures and communities we write for.

From the Editors

Janine Blue

With this issue, the *Grassroots Writing Research Journal* has wrapped up its fourteenth year of publication, and we are thrilled with what 14.2 has to offer our readers. We feature a variety of articles from undergraduates, graduates, and writing research instructors. These authors include new and returning voices whose articles and interviews provide an inclusive and compelling look into embodied writing practices, professional literacies, multimodality, P-CHAT, and more. The Writing Program at Illinois State University (ISU) uses a version of CHAT specifically aimed toward pedagogy called P-CHAT or pedagogical cultural-historical activity theory. Our pedagogical version of CHAT includes seven terms that provide a framework around which students interrogate texts and genres as they exist out in the world while accounting for such texts' nuanced and dynamic structures. In addition, with this new journal issue comes the return of two specialized genres—Picturing Literate Activity (PLA) narratives and a co-authored transcript from the Writing Program podcast, *Conversations with GWRJ Authors*—as well as the introduction of two new *Grassroots* genres. The *Grassroots Writing Research Journal* is proud to present Documenting Literate Activity (DLA) narratives, which are articles in which authors talk about creating cool projects and learning new things, and GWRJ Shorts, which are brief pieces that provide snapshots of literate activity and writing research in action. With these different genres included in this issue, 14.2 continues to expand our collective understanding of the diverse nature of literacy.

The articles in issue 14.2 range in subject matter from writing identity and self-expression to the various forms of multimodal communication. As we continue to expand the scope of the journal, these articles include nuanced conversations about designing productive writing spaces and how we engage with writing literacies based on our career paths and hobbies. These articles take a closer look at what literate activity means and the different ways we engage with it in our daily lives. What we continue to find so interesting and crucial about these articles is their continued focus on writing identity and community. They remind us that while writing is a unique and personal journey, no one ever truly writes alone. These articles

also include discussions of a range of concepts related to the study of literate activity through topics as diverse as navigating translanguaging in graduate school, the transformative relationship between writing and ADHD, the literacies of being a certified nursing assistant (CNA), and considering how blankets can be read as texts.

With this latest issue, we had the opportunity to bring back former Grassroots authors Edcel Javier Cintron-Gonzalez and Alyssa Herman for the series *Conversations with GWRJ Authors*, which includes a transcript of their interview as well as a reprint of Alyssa Herman’s article “The Danger of Filter Bubbles and Digital Isolation: Exploring Ethical Research Practices” originally featured in issue 10.1. 14.2 also includes contributions from the Grassroots staff, including Jennifer Coe’s and Rachel Gramer’s PLA narratives, along with Piper Coe’s and Jessica Kreul’s *GWRJ Shorts*. Certainly, the contributors’ work in this issue demonstrates the multifaceted nature of literate activity and the work of writing and researching in the world. We hope you enjoy this new issue as much as we do.

To start issue 14.2, we’ve included some new front matter sections ahead of this letter: “GWRJ Mission” and “GWRJ Writing Facts.” The hope is that these brief sections will help to frame and contextualize our view of writing and the work of the journal for readers, contributors, and any other writing researchers engaging with this issue.

To bring us to the heart of the issue—the articles—the first four pieces offer unique perspectives on connecting embodiment and literate activity. These articles are highly personal and detailed conversations about how the body and mind work together to accomplish writing. First, **Janine Blue’s** article examines her embodied literate activity of brainstorming and drafting. She analyzes how the state of her body plays a crucial role in her progress and creativity. Using images, narrative, and Writing Program terms, Janine guides us through her writing process and how she nurtures all five senses in unique, specific ways to create a positive and generative writing experience. Our second article is an interview transcript written by **Emad Hakim**. He interviews his friend, scholar and activist **Ahmed Hamdy**, who leads us through the multimodal genres he engages with as someone with a visual impairment. Ahmed describes his everyday literate activities and the accessibility tools he uses to aid him, such as Braille and screen readers. Following, **Jennifer Coe** shows us her writing spaces in her PLA narrative. The two images included in the article allow us to step into her writing world. As someone who lives with a disability that sometimes makes writing and focusing at a desk a difficult experience, Jennifer explains how her specified desk configurations help her literate activities be more

comfortable and manageable. The last article that explores embodiment and writing is **Ali Bazzi's** piece. He speaks frankly about how his ADHD affects his writing and literate activity, along with misconceptions about writing and research being universal development processes for everyone. At the same time, Ali articulates how having particular symptoms of ADHD intersect positively and productively when engaging in literate activity.

14.2 then shifts to professional writing literacies and how antecedent knowledge plays a pivotal role in learning new literacies. **Abantika Dhar** discusses her writing researcher identity and how it's evolved from being a young student in Bangladesh to a Master's student in Missouri to a graduate student and teacher at ISU. As someone with an academic history in Bangladesh and the US, she dissects how her antecedent knowledge has impacted how she has viewed writing from a stern and strict practice to a more fluid and individualized process. Abantika further speaks on how translingualism has bridged writing cultures for her and evolved her ideas of what it means to be in graduate school. Next, **Lauren Kendrick** uses the concept of activity systems to explore working with young people with disabilities at a leadership gym. She steps us through obtaining a position at the facility, why she loves her job, and how her antecedent knowledge and relationship with a neighbor helped prepare her for working at the gym. Our seventh article, by **Hannah Davis**, details her life as a certified nursing assistant and patient care technician, or a CNA and PCT for short. She shares how her passion for her work stems from her antecedent knowledge and personal experience with hospital care involving a loved one. Hannah then talks about the many conventional and emotional literacies she had to learn for the two professions, claiming that being in health care is as much about emotional connection as it is about scientific practices.

The journal then turns to the reprint of **Alyssa Herman's** article about filter bubbles. Algorithms dictate what a person sees online based on search history, identity, and other factors, which create our own personal filter bubbles. Alyssa walks us through the function of filter bubbles and how they can lead to biased content and feelings of isolation on the internet, using the ads she sees on her Facebook page compared to a friend's page to demonstrate this theory. She also explores how to combat filter bubbles when researching online to create a more ethical and inclusive process. The transcript of her interview with **Edcel Javier Cintron-Gonzalez** for Conversations with GWRJ Authors is featured after the reprint article, and their discussion focuses on how Alyssa came up with the idea for her article and the different forms of research she implemented to fit her writing researcher identity.

The remaining five articles center on multimodal expression and communication, with each author offering visual media to help explore their topic. First, **Rachel Gramer's** PLA narrative features her current workspace. Employing the PLA theme "Writing After Dark," she invites us to see her literate activity when the sun goes down and it's time for her to turn on her lamp. Rachel describes the items on her desk that are a part of her nightly writing routine, how they help her process, and how each piece is a small part of her personality and personal life. Next, **Piper Coe's** GWRJ Short discusses knitted and crocheted temperature blankets, providing images and QR codes to webpages depicting temperature blankets throughout the article. Piper educates us on what temperature blankets are and explains how these blankets can be remediated for scientific purposes. Piper also discusses the culture and community surrounding temperature blankets and how they can be read as visual, multimodal texts and used as a research tool to publicize climate change. Following, **Amelia Heinze** explores K-pop music and her love for the South Korean boy band BTS. She uses P-CHAT in her article to delve into the discourse community devoted to BTS and how translation is vital for fans not fluent in Korean. Through genre analysis, Amelia also examines how an album cover is an effective communication tool and includes QR codes to webpages for specific BTS album covers. Afterward, **Jessica Kreul's** GWRJ Short analyzes popular texting styles. She investigates this multimodal form of communication, including abbreviations and spacing choices, to demonstrate how complex and fascinating texting has become in recent generations. Jessica also presents different texting techniques used to stand in for verbal speech. She includes screenshots of texts between her and a friend, highlighting the modes they use to do this work. Finally, the last article in issue 14.2 is a DLA narrative by **Sofia Link**. Here she explains how she turned a research assignment for ENG 101 into a journey of discovering her passion and skill for stop-motion animation. She walks us through using P-CHAT and genre research to learn how to produce this digital, image-based artform while relying on antecedent knowledge to figure out where to begin. In addition, Sofia highlights how multimodal composition is an intricate, slow process and a fun and liberating experience. She includes photos of her final project, as well as a QR to the full project on Canva, which became a stop-motion journal tour.

Our spring issue concludes with some new ending segments: "Researching for the GWRJ," "Writing for the GWRJ," and "Submitting to the GWRJ." Altogether, these segments seek to encourage prospective writers to conduct and submit their own rigorous investigations of how people, tools, and situations affect writing in complex ways. As we complete our fourteenth

year of publication, we continue to receive a wide range of articles from writing researchers interested in publishing their studies in the journal. In the coming year, we hope to continue to receive submissions that reflect diverse perspectives, explore various distinctive genres, and provide a richer understanding of the culturally and historically bound spaces in which those genres are embedded.

Notes

Making Sense of All the Writing: My Embodied Literate Activity

Janine Blue

Janine Blue discusses how writing is a complex literate activity and an embodied experience. Blue examines her literary practices as a creative writer and takes a deep dive into how she uses and nurtures her five senses as she engages with writing.

I'm a creative writer and have been all my life. We are all writers who write creatively, but it's more than a hobby or pastime for me. I want to be a storyteller as my career. Teach creative writing as a job. Get my PhD in the field of creative writing. My journey started with constructive response assignments in elementary school. It progressed to book reports in middle school. Essays, research projects, and fanfiction in high school. More essays and original fiction and workshops in undergrad. Thesis, more workshops, essays, and more fiction in my MFA (Master of Fine Arts) program. And now, all of those things, times a hundred, for my PhD program, including a dissertation and writing exams. Throughout my writing journey, I've realized how much goes into different types of writing—whether for assignments, creative publications, or simply for myself to enjoy reading on my computer from time to time. There are various strategies, tools, research, and deadlines to follow for these types of writings as well. At this point in my life, doing all of this work, I understand that I've got the **literate activity** of my writing down to a science.

Literate activity refers to all the activities we do in creating and using texts across space and time (“Literate Activity Terms”). It includes writing, reading, listening, speaking, thinking, and feeling, but it also includes all our social practices that influence how we make meaning and communicate. Our histories, bodies, emotions, relationships, resources, tools, and social interactions with other people and the world shape our literate activity.

Embodiment is the idea that the mind and cognition are deeply interconnected with the physical body. Our perception, thought processes, and consciousness are not isolated functions of the brain but are intricately tied to the body and its interactions with the environment and outside stimuli (Clark and Chalmers).

When I think about my literate activity as a writer, I’m not only including things I’m doing consciously, like planning, researching, writing, and editing, but what my body is doing while I’m engaging in these practices. It’s not just what we do but *how we are* as we engage in an activity that matters. There’s an **embodiment** to literate activity that I have become very aware of and do my best to nurture. I engage with all five senses in the literate activity of my writing because I don’t write without my body being present. None of us do. I’m simply hyper-aware of my embodiment during the process, and it shapes my progress. If my embodiment is in balance, I can write when I’m sick, tired, stuck, or feeling lazy. That’s how my creativity sparks and how I can get excited and focused, whether it’s a short fiction story or a literature review I have to write. This awareness and balance are not something that happened overnight. It’s taken me years to see how my senses coexist with my writing and creativity and how it’s progressed. In this article, I will take you on my writing journey, showing you my embodied literate activity and all its components as I think

about writing, begin writing, do the actual writing, and finish writing. It’s obsessive, strange, particular, random, and honest. It’s how I’m able to write this article.

A Sense of Taste, A Sense of Memory

My hunger level is one of the most significant impacts on my writing capacity. At this stage in my creative process, I use my **antecedent experience** to prepare for writing sessions and carve out brainstorming periods. I often found myself creatively sluggish after lunch in elementary and middle school. I felt full, relaxed, and ready to go home. It was harder to brainstorm and engage with writing assignments. I would get fed up and bored, or my mind would slip away to other things. I could taste the pizza, stromboli, or chicken sandwich and just wanted to bask in the flavors and think about going home to watch TV or hang out with my friends. I took this past embodied knowledge to college and deliberately chose not to eat big meals before

outlining my projects—definitely wasn’t going to attempt the process after dinner. I’m not as comfortable and relaxed when I’m not full and content, so there’s a slight edge and alertness to my creative spirit. I’m more focused, and there’s a faint rush in me to get things right, along with an impatience to finish outlines. So, I tend to brainstorm in the early morning, deep into the afternoon, or right as the evening starts—the transition times of existence between meals. I’m a person who honestly plans better when I’m slightly hungry. I outlined this article before breakfast.

On the other hand, when drafting, I can’t give it my all unless I’ve eaten and feel hydrated. The antsy feeling doesn’t work for me when I’m writing. I must be relaxed and slightly sluggish to do my best work—which I know might sound odd. I tend to write in a better frame of mind after dinner (Figure 1). This understanding of when to write in conjunction with my meals is another part of my embodied literate activity that relies on my antecedent experience. Being an adult who teaches and takes classes and doesn’t always have a set schedule makes it tricky to know when I’ll eat and how much I’ll be able to. Whenever I feel “I’ll get started. I’ll be fine,” I have to remember when I tried making progress on an empty stomach or possibly dehydrated and felt lost or frustrated. It’s worth it creatively to have food in my stomach and a full water bottle before I hunch over my desk and start drafting. On weekends, when I go through long multi-hour writing sessions, I always take eating and water breaks. It’s so easy to forget to eat and especially to stay hydrated when cramming a writing assignment or 120 pages into a novel.

“**Antecedent experience** refers to embodied experiences that we each bring with us into familiar and new-to-us writing situations. When we talk about antecedent experience, we include our feelings and embodied responses to particular kinds of writing and prioritize articulating responses that we are often not required to describe or unpack explicitly” (“Uptake Terms”).



Figure 1: My dinner the first night of drafting this article.

A Touch of This, A Touch of That

In my creative works, I always have a character who fidgets, has a repetitive movement, or some sort of tick for when they’re nervous, embarrassed, or zoning out. Often, it’s something that runs in their family. I do this because I

My sense of touch might be the most important aspect when I'm knee-deep in the creative weeds and feel lost, confused, frustrated, or self-conscious. I look away from my work and click, squeeze, throw, snap, and pop. It truly does help me focus, pull me out of the funk, or guide me through the murky unknown and the feeling of being overwhelmed by the words and blank pages. Writing sometimes requires so much, and I write about so many things simultaneously while different emotions run through me. The literate activity of my writing has to include multimodality to keep me organized. I need diverse outlets and ways to soothe and flourish my creativity. This need is also why I always draft on paper. No matter the assignment or creative piece, I use hand to pen to paper first—either on printer paper or in spiral notebooks. I need to be able to feel the words as I write them to better my connection to what I'm trying to say. I need to feel the inevitable ache and soreness in my fingertips to know when I'm on a roll or need a break. I love cracking my knuckles during writing breaks. It gives me proof that I'm doing a lot of work. I also just love the physical aspect of flipping through pages. There's a sense of accomplishment seeing a huge stack of paper.

Smells like Progress

Some might wonder, “How is smell connected to your literate activity?” Well, much like multimodal touch, I incorporate scents into my writing process that come in various fragrance **genres**, meaning these fragrance items are distinguishable by their conventions and features. I often have dryer sheets on my desk when I'm outlining. I find the fresh scent of clean linen inspiring, a “beginning” smell that gets me in the frame of mind to start something. I get the same feeling from freshly brewed coffee, which many people can relate to. It's sunrise—up and at 'em. It gets me excited to start my writing process and brainstorm ideas, so I have coffee-scented candles I light in the morning. Both dryer sheets and candles are scented items, but they are obviously not the same genre due to their characteristics and functions. I am also a huge fan of citrus. Orange, lemon, lime, and grapefruit are fragrances I find incredibly energizing. There's just something about tang and zest that keeps me sharp and focused. I have scented oils to keep these fruit scents around me and connecting my love of citrus to my taste sense, I also have citrus gum I like to chew when outlining and brainstorming. As you can see, just for the brainstorming and outlining process, I might engage in three different fragrance genres!

Genres are described by the ISU Writing Program as “typified responses to recurring social situations” (“Genre Research Terms”). Alternatively, a **genre** is a text or production that is recognizable by its conventions, features, or characteristics.

Writing can be daunting or even a bit lonely when you're in the thick of it, churning out an essay or trying to finish the last few pages of a short story. I've found that dessert aromas—vanilla, icing, toffee, sugar cookie, cinnamon, birthday cake, buttercream—are highly relaxing, welcoming, and simply make me happy. I feel encased and less alone. Smells are closely tied to memory, so antecedent experience connects to my sense of smell. When these cake aromas are under my nose, I think of holidays, parties, and happy events. I have lotions and body sprays that I use (in small doses) when I need a pick-me-up.



Figure 4: Lotion and mouthwash.

I also have random fragrances across random genres. I have lavender, rose, and cocoa butter soaps. There are a few tropical-scented erasers on my desk organizer. I have travel-sized mouthwash bottles that are spearmint or peppermint scented. I even have old books I like to put my nose in. Depending on how I'm situated in my body and where I am in my creative process, I use these random scents for creative kicks, guidance, calming effects, or to energize my body and mind. Figure 4 shows a couple of scents I have right in front of me: Lavender + Vanilla and Whisper Mint.

See It to Believe It

I do this odd thing where I'll put on a movie or TV show and mute it, and then I'll just watch the actors do their thing. I like the slideshow feature on Netflix that kicks on when you're idle for too long, highlighting things you're currently watching or featured content. I'll stop writing and look up, then closely study the still faces and postures. **Semiotic resources** play a crucial role in my process, and specifically for me in a writing context, **gestural and body language semiotic resources** are key. I gather meaning

“**Semiotic resources** are all the resources people use to organize how we understand the world and to make meaning for ourselves and in communication with others” (“Literate Activity Terms”).

from watching people express themselves with their faces—eye movement, eyebrow-raising, nostril-flaring, lip movements, and how they move their bodies and conduct posture. Body language helps me craft my fictional characters' personality, movements, emotion, and motives. When writing an argument between loved ones, I find movies or TV shows that show great examples

of what that looks like. I do the same for hugs and conversations in kitchens or as I'm describing people driving or contemplating hard decisions. Even how people do laundry or shop at grocery stores is something I study in actors' movements and facial expressions. If I'm writing academically, I often watch game or competition shows (Figure 5). The constant movement, color changes, and expressions translate into me making meaning of the assignment I'm trying to complete. Watching people compete or complete challenges, seeing their victory or defeat in their facial features, motivates me to find success in my writing and fully understand what is being asked of me.

Gestural and Body Language Semiotic Resources

Non-verbal communication is an important semiotic resource. Gestures, facial expressions, body posture, and movement can convey meaning, emotions, and intent. These non-verbal cues are particularly important in face-to-face interactions (Hinnell and Mittelberg).

I use this semiotic resource with the sound off. I don't want to be influenced by the music, tone of voice, or sound effects. I want to focus on the raw emotions and bare humanity of expression. Yes, as a writer, I can craft these states of being in my head, but I find it so much more authentic and more manageable when I see what it looks like on real people. Describing someone coming to terms with loss at a funeral is so much easier to do when I can see those expressions and take in the body language in front of me. It also helps that the actors convey specific expressions and meaning from the scripts they read and the direction they are given (Figure 6). It is helpful as a



Figure 5: A family expressing both excitement and panic on Netflix's gameshow "The Floor is Lava."

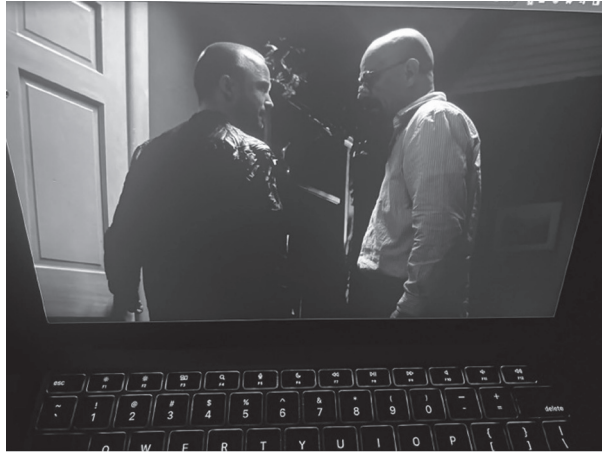


Figure 6: Walter White and Jesse Pinkman sharing an intense conversation during AMC's "Breaking Bad."

writer to see how people interpret words and make meaning with their facial expressions and body language. It guides me to see the expressions people create with concepts I share with scriptwriters and directors.

Do You Hear What I Hear?

I am a part of a writing group comprised of graduate students, recent graduates, creative writing teachers, creative writing professionals, and people with a deep love and commitment to storytelling. We try to meet at least twice a month over Zoom. Our group has an overall length of time we meet, depending on circumstances. Within that period, we set a time to silently write, ask for help or opinions, let people know about upcoming publication opportunities and contests, and share work. We never do anything else outside the specified time slots, and there is total silence during our writing period unless it's someone's turn to provide the background sound. It wasn't until I came to ISU and learned and taught in the Writing Program that I understood that what I am a part of is a **discourse community**. We have members and rules and use specific genres such as Zoom, laptops, books, Submittable, and Spotify. We share language when discussing our writing styles, such as prose, experimental, flash, poetry, or historical fiction. We reference books and adapted screenplays. We have members who join who are referred by current members, and we have people who leave our community when our group is no longer something they want or can keep up with. Some people in our discourse community are married partners or parents. Their families, who are outside of our community, know to let

them be during our meeting because this group time is important to us. Our goal is straightforward: to get some writing done for work, publication, or school. Also, to share pieces aloud to get more comfortable and familiar with our work.

Something else I realized about our community is how much sound plays a role in our meetings. Our quiet writing time is sacred. We either mute ourselves or make sure people can only hear faint typing, writing, or page-turning. When it is time for deliberate sounds, everyone has to agree that it's the right time, but we also have to follow the rules on the background sound. The only music allowed is lofi, mellow beats, or chill-hop, and nothing that involves singing. Our preference is environmental realism: busy street soundscapes and coffee house rumblings (Figure 7). Thunderstorms or heavy rainfall. Crackling fireplaces or ocean waves. Another essential part of the audio of our meeting is a group discussion about pieces or someone sharing their work. They can have their camera off, and listeners aren't required to look at the person speaking. We can close our eyes and listen to the cadence of delivery. In our discourse community, it's so much more about what we're hearing than what we're seeing, even though it's a writing group.

“**Discourse communities** are collections of people or groups that work toward collective goals through specific genres. Often, when we talk about discourse communities, we describe their communication practices, shared knowledge and language use, and the power structures that shape community features both to people who participate within the discourse community and others” (“Genre Research Terms”).

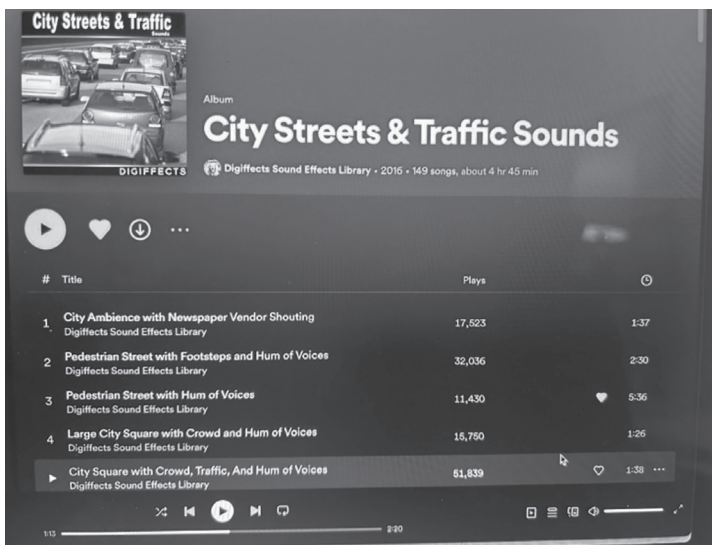


Figure 7: A popular Spotify playlist my discourse community listens to.

I always encourage writers of all kinds to read their work aloud or have someone read it to them. You can hear things that you can't always see. It's an entirely different kind of writing, drafting, and editing process. When I teach for the Writing Program, I create playlists with the people in my class to listen to during in-class writing and group work time. When I teach creative writing, people listen to their playlists during in-class prompt writing time. Listening is crucial to any writing process.

Janine, Party of Five (Senses)

When my five senses are in balance, it allows for an enjoyable and smooth writing process. My best work comes from my embodiment being in harmony with my literate activity. Of course, it is often that I am out of balance. Sometimes, I'm in a writing space without my scents. Sometimes, I have no choice but to draft while hungry. Occasionally, the grass is mowed while I'm knee-deep in the creative process. I also can't always access a fidget spinner or visual media. However, I'm still able to plan, write, and get things accomplished. I succeed without sensory harmony. My embodiment just feels off, and I know I'm not performing at my best.

The literate activity of my writing process is much more than my fingers gripping my pen or my fingertips pressing keys. It's more than reading the words or Googling resources. I often think about the **trajectory** of my literate activity. It's not a static practice; as a human living in this world, I will change, and time will change me. I'll always need to be mindful of what works for my body and creativity and what negatively impacts my writing performance. Future technology could influence my semiotic resources or my discourse community. Graduating might change my eating habits in connection to writing. Simply getting older will affect what I want to smell or use as my multimodal fidgets.

“**Trajectory** is a way to understand how literate activity changes across places, times, people, and artifacts. When we talk about trajectory, we might refer to how texts move through the world and change as people adapt and take them up, how writers change over time and across writing situations, and how our learning also transforms as our motivations, goals, and identities change too” (“Literate Activity Terms”).

We all have routines, traditions, and rituals to get into our preferred headspace for productive writing. Even if you don't think you do, you do. It's merely a matter of pausing in the middle of your writing process to see how you're doing it. Being more conscious of your body and understanding its needs helps with creativity and writing progress. The next time you write and feel stuck or uninspired, note where you are. What are you hearing? Are you

hungry, thirsty, or full? If you find yourself in a groove, concentrate on the state of your body and how it's being nurtured. What's around you that's helping you progress? What can you see in front of you? Take an inventory of your five senses and if you're creating a positive, productive embodiment. Literate activity is intricate, as is the writing process. You might as well make things as easy as possible for your body.

As I'm drafting this article, I certainly feel in balance. I'm finishing my hearty bowl of tomato soup. I've got this vanilla bean cake lotion on. I'm listening to babbling brook nature sounds. I've been rolling my cushion ball around my palms, and I've got Netflix's *Glow Up* playing on mute on my laptop. Hopefully, this is a winning combination for me in writing a great article!

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Since writing “Left-Handed Literacies” for the 13.2 GWRJ issue, not much has changed for **Janine Blue**. She’s still learning, teaching, and writing. She still uses her weighted blanket and enjoys simulation games. She did win a couple of writing contests and gained a few more publications. She also bought some new pens, highlighters, and a better pair of headphones.