Arkansas Tech University

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Bad Ideas about Writing

Regina St. John

OER Review: An OER – is an Open Educational Resource that allows a faculty member to deliver a course without expense to students. Please refer to the Library Guide to find OER Resources: https://bit.ly/oersources   By adopting an OER, you could have your course identified as ZTC-Zero Textbook Cost.

Faculty Member Name: Dr. Regina St. John
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What OER Book are you reviewing (Title) Bad Ideas about Writing
Location/ Link where it can be found: https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/bad-ideas-about-writing

Does the author have appropriate authority of standing to release a book? (Professor associated with a university etc..) Yes. This text has two authors, Cheryl Ball and Drew Loewe. They are both college professors, and this text is catalogued in the Open Textbook Library. Tech promotes this resource as a credible site in which to find OER materials.

For what course are you reviewing this book: ENGL 1023: Composition II

What is this course's average enrollment:
Fall---Twenty-two students per section. (Fewer sections than in the spring)
Spring—Twenty-two students per section.(Largest number of sections each year)
Summer—Twenty-two students per section.(Just a few sections usually)

What are the current resources used for this class and how much does it generally cost?
The Norton Introduction to Literature, Short (Inclusive Access Ebook)--$50.00

What are your course objectives for this course? (copy and paste)

• Students will refine their ability to listen and read attentively and critically, and to write and speak clearly and effectively.
• Students will grow in their skill to integrate their original ideas with those of others.
• Students will hone flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading.
• Students will use collaborative writing processes.
• Students will understand the nature and function of the arts, explore and learn to enjoy the possibilities of artistic creation, and discover how the full range of human experience is given expression in works of art.
• Students will develop ethical perspectives by understanding and respecting multiple possible interpretations of a literary text.

Which chapters or sections align to each course objective.

Course Objective	Section or Chapter that addresses it.
Students will use language skills clearly and effectively.	*Chps. 1,2 & 4*
Students will Integrate original ideas with those of others.	*Chps. 1,2 & 4*
Students will hone flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading.	*Chps. 1-4*
Students will understand the nature and function of the arts, explore and learn to enjoy the possibilities of artistic creation, and discover how the full range of human experience is given expression in works of art.	*Chps. 5 & 8*
Students will develop ethical perspectives by understanding and respecting multiple possible interpretations of a literary text.	*Chps. 5 & 8*

Table of Contents for Reviewed Text (Below is the key to chapters listed above in the table)

Which Course objectives are not covered in the book.

Course Objective
Students will use collaborative writing processes.

If you were to use this book, what would be your plan to find material to meet the uncovered objectives? (One option is to find another OER to meet it. Multiple Open Educational Resources can be used for a course) I would need to supplement other OER materials that focus on collaborative writing, its benefits and how to successfully do it.

Are there additional materials available (power points, test questions, etc.) No.

Is the author contact information available to contact if there are more materials? Yes. A brief biographical statement is listed for both authors.

What are the strengths of this book? (Think: writing style, citations, currency, diagrams etc..) This is a reader about what not to do when one writes and what opinions not to hold about writing that ironically teaches students how to be better writers. The textbook writers create a text about writing that can be used as the subject of freshman writers' essays. The students can write arguments and or analyses of the articles they read about on the subject of writing myths and misconceptions. What a cool focus for a writing course! This OER text really can be used to meet all course goals of our Composition II course at Tech except one.

What are the weaknesses of this book?
It does not focus on the collaborative writing process at all which is one of the current objectives of Composition II at Tech. However, it would not be hard to bring in a supplemental OER writing text that addresses this subject. Actually, the focus of this book on bad writing seems like a strange choice to think about using in a college composition class. We want to teach students to be good writers not bad ones. However, by teaching students about what bad writers do and what bad writing looks like, we can ironically make them stronger writers. They will know what not to do when they write. This is part of the journey to becoming a better writer—knowing what mistakes to avoid.

To be able to use this book – what will you have to supplement? I will need to bring in some OER materials on how to become a better collaborative writer. It should not be too difficult to find this type of supplemental reading.

Compared to your previous purchased book – is the effort required to use this OER worth it _ why or why not? I do not know. I think the approach of reading about bad writing is unique, and I would like to try it at some point in a freshman classroom. However, after I think about using this text as a stand-alone writing textbook in a freshman composition classroom, I have reservations. Mainly, I think this type of text would work better as a supplemental one. It could, for example, be used as a reader in Composition II. It could accompany a writing as process text that does not include readings designed to be written about.

If you were to use this book, would you also use a homework system? If yes, which one would you use (LibreTexts and Lumen learning are some examples) No.

Please submit the completed review to: oer@atu.edu