CHAPTER 3: DISCOVERY METHODS

This chapter maps the practical tactics for discovering ideas:

- Identifying the task of a writing project
- Writing to learn
- Writing to communicate
- Practicing with a set of three tools that help name key ideas
- Planning and drafting a paper

Discovery has two meanings. Although "discovery" means the discovery of existing maps, it also means the discovery of the blank spots in existing maps. You can add to the map after discovering information about your topic, your audience, and your purpose. Let's face it: you cannot revise what you know if you do not know anything. A good *discovery* strategy -- what this chapter teaches -- is how to identify the blank spots that can become valuable. The discovery process builds swatches of text, paragraphs, pages, notes, and other written materials that help to organize your thinking. You'll usually reuse this material in the final document, so the discovery and planning process simplifies the construction of the final document.

The best way to understand the discovery process is to see it in action. There is a real payoff to the process because it forces writers to set goals, plan, create tactics, and measure success. Businesses -- both for-profit and nonprofit -- rely on careful discovery processes. The rest of this chapter uses a real world problem to see how the discovery process leads to effective writing. In this case, it is one of the points where education and finance intersect: grants.

WRITING TO LEARN

Let's begin by assuming that you attend a small university in rural Michigan that happens to have a large collection of trinkets, signs, documents, toys, weapons, crockery, and other collectables that tell about American culture between 1876 and 1965. These everyday objects tell about the

world that created and used them. But it is not a particularly cheery set of objects, because it focuses on the degrading images of African Americans that fill the culture. The collection includes everything from "Mammy" cookie jars to axe handles -- used for attacking black voters. This horrifying collection is the heart of Ferris State University's Jim Crow Museum. It is a disturbing and effective reminder of how racism has been part of everyday life in this country. It is honest, and it expects viewers to think about history, race, and social justice. The collection is known around the country for making people stop to think about history, especially the history of racism in America. In short, it is a challenging museum.

Let's say that you are in a class that takes a tour of the cramped little room where these 9,000 artifacts are kept. You come out with a sense of shock and horror but also with a much sharper understanding of our country's history. You spend a couple of weeks mulling the power of the collection, and then decide that it is important for American citizens to think about this part of our history. "Hey," you tell your teacher, "somebody should get that museum a better space for the exhibits." Your teacher agrees that it is a good idea, and the next day, she hands you a sheet that explains how public projects such as museums are financed. You had not really thought about the funding for museums, so you read her notes carefully.

How Do Non-Profit Organizations Fund Their Operations?

The Jim Crow Museum is free to visitors, but it is an expense to the university that supports it. The costs may be almost invisible, but they are real. Money must be found to pay the following bills:

Director: salary & benefits
Secretary (adult part-time)
Curator: salary & benefits
Acquisitions
Travel
Supplies
Postage and Phone
Annual Building Costs
Web Support, Document Publishing

There are probably other expenses, but these would be major ones. Again, visitors seldom recognize that the museum requires a steady stream of income to stay open. Note that income for museums often comes from the following sources:

Income Streams for Programmatic and Capital Projects					
MEMBERSHIPS	EVENTS	EARNED	GIFTS	SPONSORSHIPS	GRANTS
1. Annual goals 2. Mailing List 3. Newsletter 4. Event Announcements	1. Auctions 2. Performances 3. Symposia 4. Reunions	1. Store 2. Textbooks 3. Rental Fees 4. Speaker Fees	1. Immediate 2. Planned Giving	Special Exhibits, Tours, Programs 1. Corporate 2. Institutional 3. Civic	1. Federal 2. Philanthropic 3. Corporate 4. Allied Activites

While the first five columns are important, the museum might benefit most from a careful grant *strategy* that connects the museum's values, beliefs, and mission to the values, beliefs, and missions of government agencies, private foundations, and corporate foundations. As part of this process, the grant writer must go beyond understanding the grant giver and also understand the role of the Grant Officer at each foundation.

Your teacher tells you that if you create a good grant application, you will put the museum closer to a better facility. You have begun the discovery process that *might* work, but this is just the beginning.

You are grimly optimistic, so your teacher reminds you that there is planning work that precedes the actual writing of the grant. You will need to get in touch with Ferris State University, speak with whomever is their fundraiser, and contact whatever departments, colleges, and officials might already have a plan for the museum's future. That is a considerable amount of work right there, but it is part of mapping out the task you face, mapping out your audience, and the eventual audience for the grant. Unless you have prepared properly, your enthusiasm will be of little use. It strikes you that you will need to assign yourself a specific role in the pursuit of grants.

You decide to behave as if you are a small, fund-raising consultancy that provides valuable tools and information to universities. Your task is to *discover* the strategic, planning, and writing tasks necessary to sharpen the funding tactics for a funding request to a major foundation.

You begin by talking with your teacher, reading a simple introduction to grant writing, and thinking about all the people affected by the museum. Your teacher helps you draw up a first list of tasks:

- Learn how to use online research tools such as grants.gov and The Foundation Center's web site (www.foundationcenter.org).
- Learn how to critically read the web sites of foundations
- Identify the key terms, focus, and values of philanthropic and corporate foundations
- Understand how an identity strategy contributes to or inhibits an institution's success
- Assess potential supporters in terms of the foundation administrators (program officers) with whom the museum might interact
- Assess the funding potential of The Jim Crow Museum in terms of specific roles and partnerships
- Create strategic approaches to specific funders

Your teacher's list makes you hesitate, because it is complex and seems to be based on completing many different tasks. In fact, after reading the list, you are not even sure what the task is. You know your own interest in the subject, and you know the need -- money -- of the museum. Everything in between needs to be mapped out.

IDENTIFYING THE TASK

Freewriting

One of the best tools for starting the discovery process is called "freewriting," and your teacher encourages you to give it a try. From what she says, freewriting sounds sloppy, imprecise, and hardly the sort of thing that reasonable and practical people would do. In freewriting, writers record everything that comes into their minds. They do not edit, worry about organization, or worry about spelling and grammar because no one else is going to see this. It produces a cascade of images, ideas, questions, sketches, and notes. It seems awfully messy -- and it is -- but it has an

interesting history. The technique gained attention at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where the technique was further developed and studied by both engineers and writers. The MIT faculty had "discovered" that their engineering students were too rigid and unable to visualize alternative solutions to a problem. In short, students were unwilling to try out ideas, take risks, collaborate, and generally "mess around" to find creative solutions to problems. Freewriting was an escape from that kind of rigidity into the creativity that is at the heart of engineering, psychology, history, and even grant writing.

Freewriting can take place on paper, on chalkboards, in the sand on the beach, or just about anywhere writers can record a momentary thought about a subject. Some students like to freewrite on a computer with the screen darkened. This enables them to plunge forward and not be constrained by whatever they have already said. It points the writer to the future and accelerates the flow of new material. It is an excellent way to *begin* the discovery process because it will reveal both interests and knowledge. Often, the most valuable product is a list of key terms, tasks, and relationships that it identifies. Here is what a former grant officer came up with when asked to freewrite about the project for the Jim Crow Museum. It was interesting to watch her do this work because the first thing she did was to turn off the computer screen. When the screen was turned on, here was the result:

> *Jim Crow Museum? What's that? Sounds horrible. Gross images? Who wants to see that? Who is the audience that benefits? You say it is a college-owned museum? How does the college benefit? Is dealing with race anxiety a fundable project? How powerful is the desire to forget history? What's the benefit of thinking about history? Who owns the stuff? Who would benefit by having their name associated with the collection? Search terms for finding funders? Seems to need a savvy grant officer; maybe a history or political science background? Who wouldn't touch it with a ten foot pole? What's the current political climate for discussing race? Who is funding similar projects? Seems pretty intense. Who else is connected to the project: other schools, k-12, published scholarship? Going to need a big network of outsiders already interested in what it does? What's the web site like? Other publicity? Previous publicity? Used by scholars? What's the budget; give line items? Who else is contributing money, materials, or time? Why would FSU want a student to get involved with this stuff? Name similar projects that have been funded. Have you looked at*

grants.gov? What's the name of the directory of foundation grants? Isn't Ferris out in the boondocks? What measurable effect are you hoping to achieve?

Some of these questions send you to read about foundations, program officers, museums, and the general climate for discussing race. The discovery process has begun with freewriting because it gives direction to the work. It points you to the library, to knowledgeable people, toward a structure through which you will be able to write a proposal. It is called "free" writing for a reason: it is meant for *you* to roam freely among information and begin to link ideas. It helps you locate yourself among the signposts of the map.

Other Freewriting Techniques

Other freewriting techniques can serve the discovery process. Among these are:

- Answer Basic Questions: "who," "what," "where," "how," "why," and "when." These simple terms can reveal underlying issues worth writing about, problems to solve, and claims to make.
- Make a Bulleted List: begin with simple bullets and minimize indentations. When the list seems complete, group similar items, set items in terms of importance, and create headings. The result is not an outline, but it can easily become one.
- Thesaurus: each time you discover a key term, look up its synonyms. Synonyms are substitute terms. They are close in meaning, and these associations can point you in new directions. Think of the synonyms as pathways among pieces of a bigger idea.
- Doodle: many writers draw charts, tables, odd little images, and other visual representations of what they have found, what they are thinking, and what might be their conclusion.

Freewriting takes many forms. The more you write, the more likely you are to develop your own method for freewriting. What is important is that you begin with a focus on your own insights, assumptions, and knowledge.

Recognizing Internal and External Forces

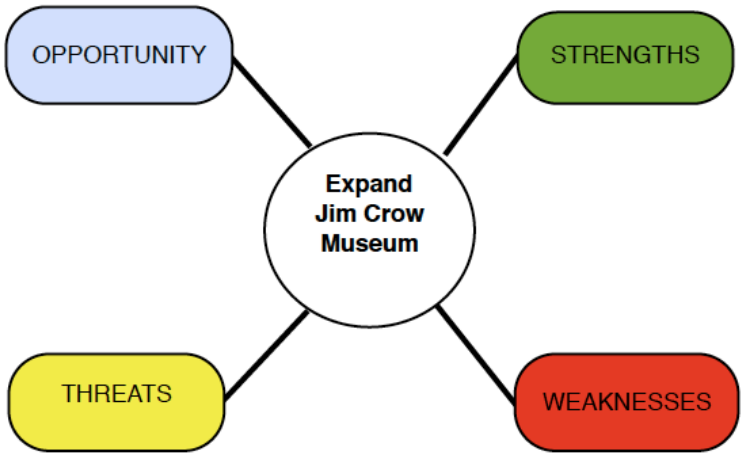
If you compare the freewriting paragraph to your teacher's list of tasks, you see that freewriting tends to focus on more specific versions of some of the questions. If you are really new to the

grant-getting business, you will probably look at the freewriting and decide to create a glossary of key terms. For example, if a "program officer" is important, then you had better know what such people do, their authority, and their expertise. It is a list that will grow rapidly. The glossary is the first step in bridging the gap between you and your topic. It is different from the freewriting because it makes connections between your scattered insights, observations, and questions. In the case of the grant, you are discovering several important things:

1. The limits of your knowledge about race, racism, and American history
2. The limits of your knowledge about getting money from foundations
3. The limits of your knowledge about creating a "fit" between a funder and a project
4. The relatively low level of authority you bring to the project
5. The nature of many audiences -- funders, the college, museum visitors -- for whom you will build documents

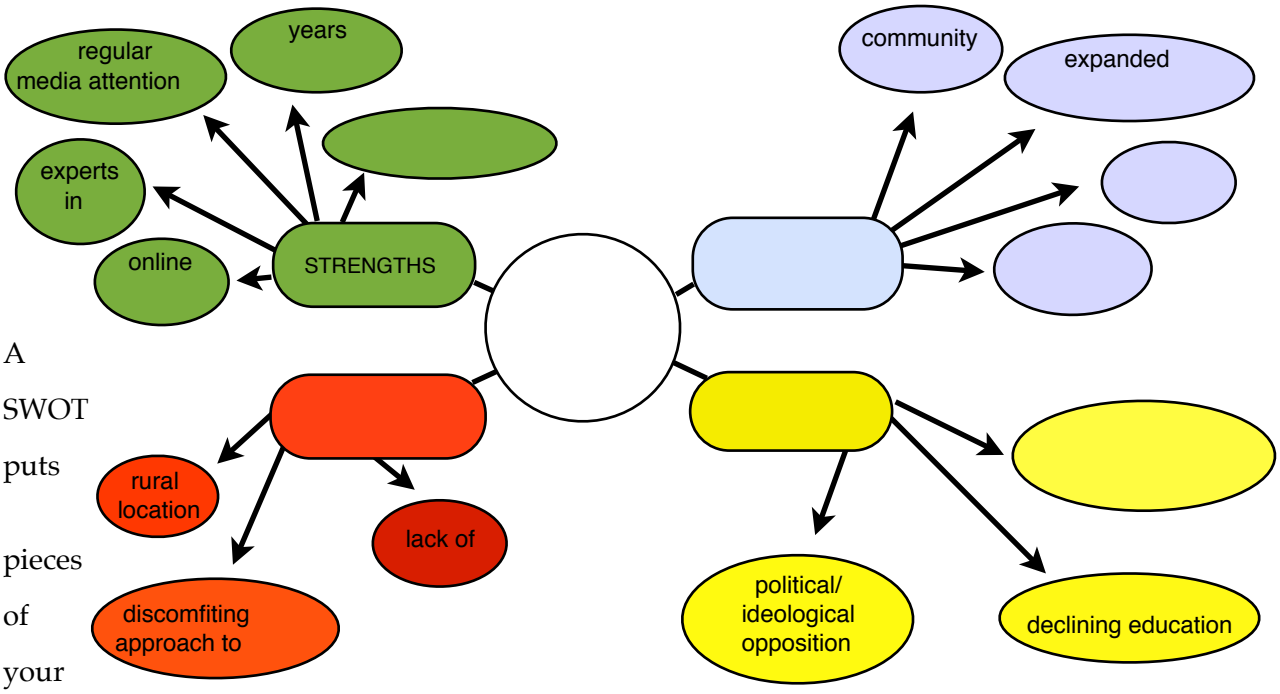
Remember that you began with an enthusiastic belief in the Jim Crow Museum. Now you have to translate that enthusiasm into action. You can see that this *opportunity* faces some *threats* despite its *strengths*, and that it also has *weaknesses*. One of the most useful discovery tools is the "SWOT" analysis. It is an acronym for "**S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats." It is a common business framework for assessing a new project. The **SWOT** goes beyond the "dump" of freewriting to help you make connections between the ideas you uncovered in your freewriting. It points to the sorts of reading and research that you need to do to specify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that affect your idea. The strengths and weaknesses are the *internal* strengths and weaknesses of the idea (what the museum owns, its exhibits, director, and audiences, the university's ongoing support, commitment to justice, etc.). The threats and opportunities are the *external* contexts that might affect the project's outcome: competing institutions, goals of funders, the political climate, etc. Here is a sketch of the basic strategy as a web:

EXTERNAL CONTEXTS FOR THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY INTERNAL ASPECTS OF THE MUSEUM AND COLLEGE



A SWOT analysis is traditionally thought of as a basic business tool, but really it is a critical thinking tool that maps connections and identifies opportunities (gaps) that have not yet been exploited. It is a practical tool for the discovery of new products, services, institutions, and ideas. It helps assess risk and measures the connection between a possible solution and the real world. Thus, it maps, gaps, and proposes a course of action that redraws the map of enterprise. The business world is filled with practical tools, and this one is especially useful to writers called upon to solve a genuine practical or intellectual question. We can redraw the map of our grant-getting problem by redrawing and expanding the SWOT. Our next draft might look like this:

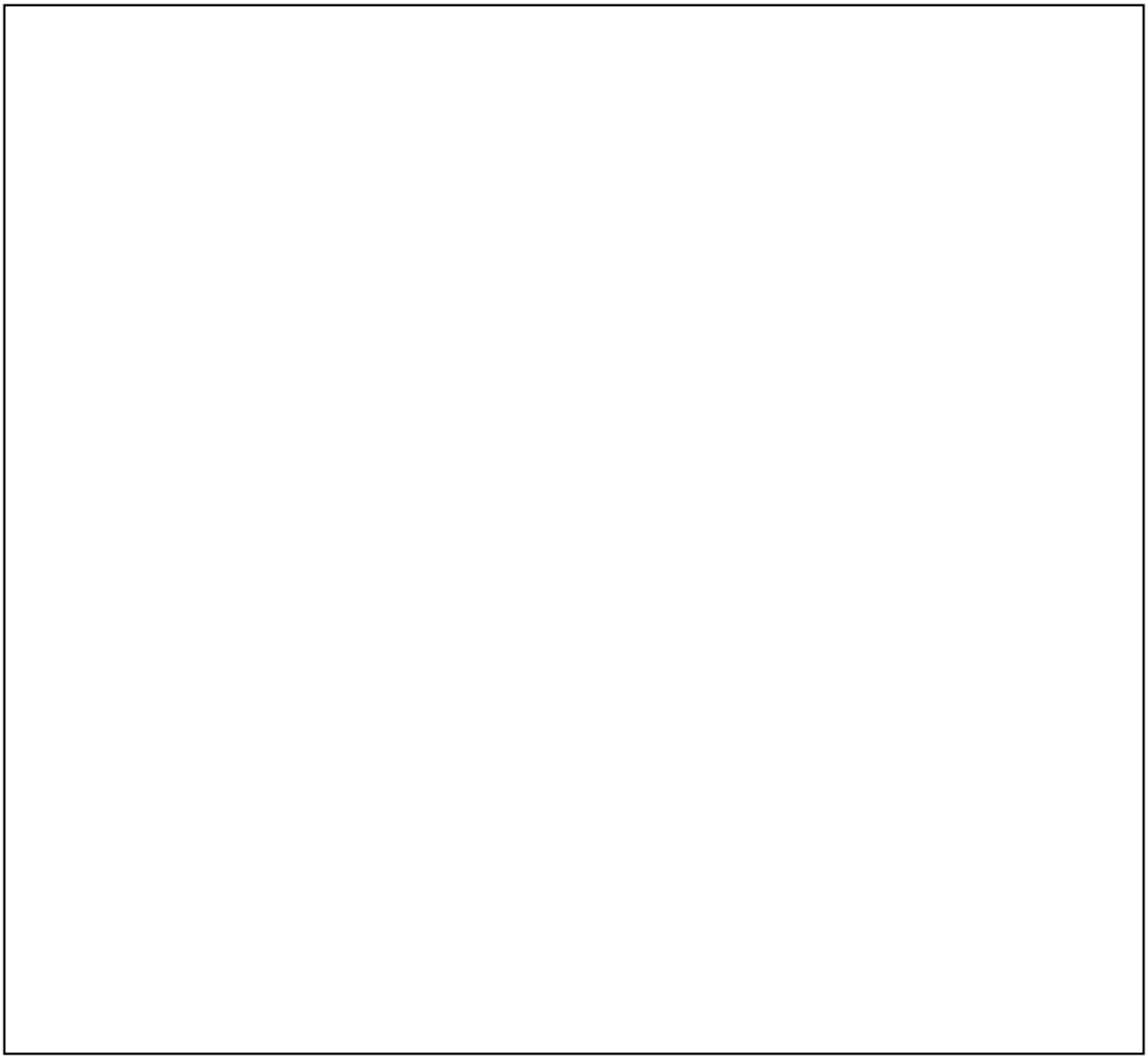
External Contexts For the Proposed Activity Internal Aspects of the Museum and College



A SWOT puts pieces of your thinking into relation with each other. It is also a model for tasks outside the business world. For example, if you were in a history class and were asked to analyze the various causes of the French Revolution, you could put your hypothesis in the center, and evaluate its value by tweaking the meaning of strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats. Suppose that you were inclined to think that the revolution was the result of conflicts between the rising merchant class and traditional nobility. You might identify competing ideas such as personalities, international tensions, religious strife, and political cabals. Your hypothesis would identify internal weaknesses and strengths, and it would assess their strength relative to other ideas. You would chart the complex world of the French Revolution in a thorough and thoughtful manner. The chart would do the same things that the SWOT does for the museum: organize information. Thus, the SWOT itself can be used outside of business. Think of it as an illustration of the more general need to build relations among facts and information.

Terms, Expectations, & Questions: the TEQ Sheet

From earlier chapters, you have learned about TEQ Sheets, the simple reading tool that identifies odd or surprising features of the way people are writing about the topic, asks questions about what's being ignored, and then checks for key terms. For example, the grant officer said, "Some people won't touch this with a 10-foot pole"; if we read what she says, it stands out as extremely odd because it seems pessimistic. Our job is look at each piece of information -- especially readings -- and ask what is odd about them, and then ask questions. Let's begin by reading a newspaper article about the Jim Crow Museum; then we will fill out a Terms, Expectations, & Questions Sheet (TEQ Sheet):



Museum's racist objects meant to stir meaningful exchange

BY CASSANDRA SPRATLING
DETROIT FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

9:27 PM, Feb. 22, 2011|

Some people think hateful racist images should be ignored, kept out of sight. Buried in the past.

But Ferris State University educator, administrator and historian David Pilgrim doesn't see it that way.

He says that derogatory images are not only fixtures from the past, they are being created every day. Moreover, Pilgrim believes that the images can be used to spur productive conversations about race.

That's why he created the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia -- photos, cartoons, artifacts, art and everyday objects that present negative portrayals of blacks and others.

A traveling exhibit from the museum, "THEM: Images of Separation," will be on display at the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit through March 5.

DTE Energy Foundation is sponsoring the local exhibit, and has donated $250,000 to relocate and expand the permanent Jim Crow Museum at Ferris State in Big Rapids.

"We use the objects to stimulate intelligent conversations about race and racism," says Pilgrim, who'll be giving a lecture on the exhibit at a program at the Wright museum Monday.

"There's a kind of naïveté in the thinking that if we don't talk about it, it'll just go away. I don't think the trick is to not talk about them, but really to look at them and really talk about them."

Pilgrim recalls the first negative caricature he came across as a boy of 10 or 11 years old in Mobile, Ala., his hometown. He was at a carnival when he saw mammy salt and pepper figurines for sale. He was so angered, he bought the set and then broke them to pieces.

Today those shakers would be prized pieces in a collection that numbers close to 9,000 items in the Ferris State museum,

which he started in 1997.

A professor at Jarvis Christian College, a historically black college in Hawkins, Texas, convinced Pilgrim of the power of telling a story with objects.

One day the professor came to class and put a chauffeur's cap on his desk. He asked the students if they knew what it was and why he kept one with him.

The professor, a black man, explained that he'd recently purchased a shiny new car. He had to drive through several segregated rural communities to get from home to the college. To do so safely without being stopped or without drawing unwarranted attention, he wore the chauffeur's cap.

"At some point, I came to recognize the power of objects to teach lessons," says Pilgrim, vice president for diversity and inclusion at Ferris State. "A mature nation can have mature conversations about difficult things."

The traveling exhibit is made up of about 35 items, including before and after photos of Emmitt Till, a 14-year-old boy brutally beaten and killed for allegedly whistling at a white woman, makeup used for blackface and redface portrayals, and cartoons about various ethnic groups.

With the mission of promoting tolerance, the exhibit makes an important contribution, says Fred Shell, president of DTE Energy Foundation.

"We feel it is vitally important for all Michigan residents to continue to address issues that divide us along racial and cultural lines," he says. "While some of the images may be disturbing, we believe the exhibit can go a long way to encourage a broader dialogue about the 'isms' that impact our community."

Over the years, the Jim Crow Museum has expanded to include images that provoke conversations about Arab Americans, homosexuals, and other ethnic groups. Pilgrim says it's a fallacy that negative images exist only in bygone days.

"It is in the past and it's in the present and, unfortunately, it's likely to be in the future."

The article seems straightforward, but if we re-read it and think that it might tell us something useful about finding a grant for the museum, we can fill out a TEQ Sheet. Blank sheets are available in the Handbook. Here is a sample of a completed form:

TEQ Sheet:

Title: _____

URL/Citation: _____

Author: _____

Terms and Phrases

To make its claim, the source uses important concepts. These organize the evidence and make sense out of it. **Identify** four key terms or phrases that are especially important to the source's claim. **Explain** why each is important to the source's claim.

1. Race/racism: attributing selected characteristics -- biological, moral, psychological, intellectual -- on the basis of a group's physical appearance. A non-biological category. Wants reader to see race as more than an "us/not-us" categorization
2. Artifacts: the objects of daily life that reflect deeply held beliefs about power, justice, social organization, religion or other values of the culture. Makes reader think of everyday items as tools for understanding big issues.
3. Caricature: a picture, description, or object that exaggerates a selected characteristic of a person or thing to create a comic or grotesque effect. Because these simplify ideas, they are useful for understanding the most basic concepts behind prejudices.
4. -isms: a system for making sense out the world, e.g., communism, capitalism, fascism, sexism, racism, etc. Points the very big ideas that the artifacts lead to.

Expectations:

An anomaly is something different from the normal pattern: a black polar bear, a talking dog; a blood pressure reading of 190/160. Anomalies are opportunities to make your own claim because they often identify unexplained territories that are worth writing about. List four anomalies from the source. These can be facts, claims, or relations, or information that is being ignored. How was each different from what you expected?

Anomalous Evidence or Claims	What You Expected to Read
The museum's founder began his work by destroying some of the items he now collects. His first reaction was disgust and the need to remove such objects from view.	I am not surprised that he thought that they were disgusting, but I did not expect that he hadn't always thought of them as a useful "symptom" of how people think about race.
Simple, everyday objects can tell us about bigger ideas that are widespread in American culture.	I understand this once it has been said, but the idea that everyday objects really "say" much is a surprise.
The museum talks about how race is still a big problem in America and how Americans still have weird ideas about race.	Most of the time, this issue seems like it's something from the past. I think in terms of laws that make discrimination illegal. So is this saying that race is a "way of thinking?"
The museum thinks that it's a good idea to keep this kind of stuff for people to see.	I understand the museum's tactic, but I would have thought it was better to just not think about it.

Questions:

After you have carefully reviewed the source, ask useful questions whose answer might become your claim. These questions should address the source's assumptions, evidence, thesis, or issues that it ignores.

1. How does the museum use these objects to change people's thinking?
2. Isn't there a risk that racists will visit the museum and basically say, "Hey, cool. That's how I think about race"? How does the museum handle that risk?
3. The end of the article notes that the museum is beginning to include artifacts that stereotype Arabs and other ethnic groups, homosexuals, and women. Is this to say that America is based on having groups that can be attacked? When we say that a group "is not us," who is the "us"?

Thinking about these anomalies and asking questions about them is a step forward. It offers a tighter focus on our tasks, especially on the things that will require additional reading. Each reading leads to questions, and the questions lead to more readings and to more questions. At some point you have to move closer to actually drafting the document, and the next step toward that is the creation of a Purpose & Problem Statement (P&P).

Purpose & Problem Statement

The Purpose & Problem Statement (P&P) focuses the student's addition on the existing discourse. It is the place to directly ask about the gaps in the map that you can fill with your own insight. A good P&P has two important components.

1. *Purpose*: the purpose statement first re-states the purpose of the course, and then puts the assignment in relation to the course. It quickly summarizes the assignment (getting a grant for the museum), and then it identifies issues in the specific reading that might be important to a successful document.

2. *Problem*: these are specific questions the student has about the topic. The questions should identify an error in the existing discourse, a contradiction, an important aspect of the topic that has not been discussed, or some other opportunity for improving the discourse or providing an insight into its nature. This part of the P&P begins by reviewing all the Questions from the TEQ Sheet. Then, it frames them as an opportunity for the writer.Let's assume that you have read lots of materials about race, American history, post-Civil War attitudes and laws, and the role of race in our national identity. You might begin your starting point question this way:

Purpose & Problem Statement

Purpose: The assignment uses the problem of raising money for a museum as a means of learning the steps toward a paper. Our general task is to raise money for the improvement and expansion of the Jim Crow Museum at

Ferris State University in Michigan. In order to raise money, we must name the purpose of the museum, find funders with similar goals, and create communications (letters, emails, web sites, phone calls) that enable the funders to see the connection between their goals and the museum's. To accomplish these tasks, we must also do other things: obtain financial and institutional information from Ferris, build a university-approved collaborative role, identify key allies who will write letters of support, and many other tasks.

Problem: So far, we have noticed that Americans like to think of race as a "solvable" or a "solved" problem. They don't like to think about racism as an essential part of our national identity. After all, who wants to hear that our judgments, worldview, and values have some of their roots in racist thinking? This gap in the discourse might be an educational opportunity.

Most of what I've read about race is more optimistic than what I see at the Jim Crow Museum. Would naming the gap be seen as an attack on American values? Would viewers think of this as an attack? How can we make this troubling idea something that funders will back with their dollars?

My other concern is that funders want to spend money effectively. How many people will be affected by the Jim Crow Museum? Who are those people, and is there something special about that group that funders haven't fully recognized?

Note how this section of the P&P relies on having completed detailed readings of important sources. It collects many of the ideas in the Questions and explains that there are blank spots on the map of American racism.

Once you have completed the TEQ Sheet and the P&P, you can make a "to do" list that will guide further work:

Let's assume we are going to approach the Kellogg Foundation, the Caterpillar Foundation, and the Michigan Humanities Council. We need to find their mission statements, find if they have funded similar projects, profile their program officers, prepare a funding strategy that goes beyond grants, and build a file of support letters. Most important is that we present the museum's notion of race in America so that these potential funders understand that it is not pessimistic, not anti-American, and that it has a precise educational value in today's world.

Note that these statements are halfway between questions and answers. The questions contain phrases, ideas, and tactics for dealing with the assignment. These sentences FRAME the response that the paper provides. Note that the writer is willing to remain open to ideas. S/he is willing to leave some questions unanswered, but s/he is clearly pointing toward HOW s/he is going to deal with the question. The discovery of these tasks is much more specific in the Prospectus (below).

Let's review how the discovery process has worked so far. You started with freewriting to build a sort of base camp stocked with ideas, questions, experiences, knowledge, and whatever else you might need to explore your topic; then you used the TEQ Sheet to organize readings and discussions with experts. From the TEQ Sheet, you built a Purpose & Problems Statement that specified your task, your opportunities, your problems, and the path to discover a solution. The discovery process has taken you from your own knowledge and interests into the knowledge and interests of others. The two are becoming connected as you move forward in the process of re-drawing the map.

WRITING TO COMMUNICATE

The Prospectus

You have been gathering information and creating relations so that you can say something useful to a specific audience. Getting from the TEQ Sheet and from the P&P to the rough draft seems like a long leap, but there's a simple steppingstone you can use called the Prospectus. In many ways, the Prospectus is the abstract for your paper. Of course, the paper is not written yet, so the

prospectus is tentative. It almost certainly will change, but it gives you an anchor for developing your insight. It provides a rough map of your response to the task you face by laying out your key landmarks. It is not a part of your final paper, but it is a major step toward speaking to your audience, and you're likely to use chunks of it in the final document.

The Prospectus is the foundation for a useful rough draft. A rough draft does not mean that you write something that can be spellchecked and then submitted. The rough draft takes what you have collected, notes how you have built relations among your facts and insights, and then it proposes an idea . . . an idea that will change as you do even more thinking and more discovery. It is a stopping point on the way to a full redrawing of the map. It is a place where you pause and reconsider your exploration. If you're willing to let the idea grow, your chances of a good paper grow astronomically. The road sharply divides; take the route of further discovery by writing a prospectus, or settle for re-hashing simple ideas. Who is the audience for the rough draft? The rough draft is the beginning of the shift from writing for yourself and for your own discoveries to writing for a specific audience. The shift is gradual, but it has a direction.

The prospectus for a funding strategy for the Jim Crow Museum might sound like this:

Prospectus: first draft

Description/Context: The Jim Crow Museum at Ferris State University is home to more than 9,000 disturbing objects that show the place of racism in America. The objects come from daily life: posters, T-shirts, cookie jars, games, books, toys and other common items. This collection currently fills a single crowded room at the university, but it nonetheless serves thousands of visitors who come to this small university to better understand a history that includes citizens of all races. Others visit the museum's collection via the Internet, and still others see its traveling exhibits. These objects use racist stereotypes and values as part of some other function, and thus they "naturalize" ideas that Americans seem to reject.

Task/Opportunity/Question/Goal: The museum now has an opportunity to expand. With help from many supporters, it is ready to upgrade the facility and move

to a larger space on campus, build better displays, and provide a wider range of educational experiences. To do this, the Jim Crow Museum needs to raise about $1.2 million. Grant writers face unique challenges as they seek support for the Jim Crow Museum at Ferris State University. These challenges range from increased competition with similar organizations to the museum's focus on the persistence of racist thinking in America. In order to simplify the task of grant writers, I have divided my work into five parts:

1. A brief, description of the aspects of the Jim Crow Museum that must be recognized to create support from funders. Recognizing these key ideas, issues, and terms can help shape an application's focus, and I will clarify how the museum offers an optimistic -- if disturbing -- step away from racist thinking.

2. Profiles of foundations that have funded projects similar to the Jim Crow Museum. These profiles will include links to those similar projects, contact information for the foundation, and a snapshot of the foundation's rhetoric that signals its value system, mission, etc.

3. Profiles of the program officer at each of the foundations above. I assume that grant writers will first approach the foundations via discussions with program officers. The materials in these profiles not only identify the most appropriate contact, but also provide information on personal interests, projects, and other professional activities that characterize the program officer.

4. A brief summary of funding trends in the humanities. This brief report sets realistic expectations for the fund-raising project.

5. A partial schematic of the educational and community networks within which the Jim Crow Museum operates will strengthen the readers' understanding of the network of schools, individuals, and institutions that the museum affects.

This project began with the intention of actually writing a grant, but I have discovered that the best service to the museum would be a handbook of

material that would accomplish some of the tasks facing the university's grant writer. I want this document to make that task easier because the first response to the Jim Crow Museum is often a negative one. If my paper succeeds, it will succeed by helping the grant writer. Even though the grant writer is my audience, the grant writer and I have a larger audience: the foundations and grant sources that might fund the museum's expansion.

The Prospectus is not an introduction, but it is a lot like an introduction. It names important evidence, important problems, important sources of information, and the goals of the document. It ends with a prediction: finding support will require a careful explanation of race in American culture. This explanation that can't be mistaken for a complaint, an anti-American sensibility, or a statement of despair about change. At this point, the audience seems to be you, but these steps show how writers write when they start to think about audiences and how to reach them. Note that the Prospectus ends with a shrewd understanding of the two audiences the document will serve.

It is crucial to see that the Prospectus directly uses material from the TEQ Sheets and from the Purpose & Problem Statement. Each step of the discovery process builds upon -- and uses -- material from preceding steps.

Audience Analysis

The most immediate audience is the grant writer for whom you create your document. The audience must be understood in terms of four key issues:

Needs:

The university's development officer probably serves the entire university, and may not have detailed knowledge of the museum. She needs some background information about its audience, reach, and unique qualities. You do not need to persuade her that Ferris is a terrific little school that does interesting things. What she *needs* is a set of documents that simplify the application process. She needs you to anticipate some of the tasks she faces, and you need to think as if you are in her shoes. She needs direct, accurate documents that let her make reasonable requests to grant agencies.

Knowledge/Expertise:

The college's grant writer knows the administrative structure, existing applications, and the larger funding strategy of the institution. She knows that these pieces all affect each other. Because she has a larger map of Ferris' grant-getting strategy, your document must recognize that you understand how important her knowledge is, and that you do not want to interfere with anything that is already in process. You need a voice that recognizes her greater knowledge and power, but also it must courteously convey the information she needs to undertake the process.

Values and Beliefs:

Part of the freewriting recognizes that the museum's approach to racism requires people to look at horrifying objects and realize that there is a value in doing so. The museum argues that racism is a core aspect of American history but it does not despair. The university has already embraced this complex reasoning, but will the grant writer see it as a "fundable" mission? She has to select grant projects with a probability of succeeding, and the judgment about the museum as a fundable project may rely on her values and beliefs. It is here that you will probably have to ask to meet her and chat her up about exactly this problem. The values and beliefs of the Ferris community are clear, but the tactics for supporting the museum *might* have to find a route other than a direct grant application.

Unrecognized Needs/Opportunities

Ferris is a small university with a main campus in a rural area. It recruits diverse students, but its setting can work against recruiting African American, Latinoa, Asian, LGBT, and other identity groups. The college knows this, but it may not have recognized the museum as a tool for demonstrating its concrete commitment to diversity. The college may not recognize the need to represent its commitment through public education resources. Further, the university may not know that many education grants seek to integrate community, curriculum, and students.

You can ask some simple questions for your audience analysis. The following may be useful:

1. How much power do I have in relation to my audience?
    a. How willing is the audience to listen?
    b. What will the audience gain by listening?

2. How much expertise do I have compared to my audience?
    a. How do I signal my limitations?
    b. How do I signal my understanding of the audience's expertise?
    c. How do I signal my respect for the audience's expertise?

3. How do I clarify the unrecognized opportunity?

4. How do I discover the audience's values and beliefs?
    a. How do I use terminology, facts, tactics, and history to signal that my proposal fits with the audience's way of thinking?

Remember that you have two audiences: 1) the people at the museum and 2) the people to whom the museum will make applications. Each audience requires its own analysis.

Gathering Support

Planning and drafting a paper begins with a focus on your own interests and knowledge, but it gradually transforms into a focus on the existing knowledge about the topic, the needs of the audience, and the tactics for successfully bringing the new information to the audience. As you make this transition from writing-to-learn into writing-to-communicate, some of the standard tools for writers start to make their appearance: bibliographies, notes on key documents, lists of key terms, profiles of readers. You have already built pieces of the document that you will create. Now, it is time to set up a sort of assembly process that puts them together. This is primarily a matter of creating a folder (electronic or paper), providing useful labels for materials you have generated, and tagging key phrases and ideas by underlining or highlighting. You need to make visible the bones of what will be fleshed out in the paper.

Paragraph Development

Your job is to start assembling a skeleton for the paper. Setting up sequences of ideas is probably the most important step toward completing the work. Your sequence of ideas will become a sequence of paragraphs, but first you have to decide if you want to start with the "big picture" and work down toward the specific case, or if you want to start small and build to the larger picture. It is not only the general/specific sequence that needs to be determined, but also the sequence of how you will address your audience. Will you begin by recognizing their power and authority, their needs, their values, or will you begin by naming the unrecognized opportunity? These decisions depend on your topic and your sense of your audience's receptiveness to what you will say. Here, it might be useful to go back to Chapter 2 and review some key terms: ethos, pathos, and logos. They are similar to these issues about audience. Just as the good writer looks around at other sources of related information, so also should you look around at related topics for the discovery process.

Developing and Sustaining a Claim

Unless you have a worthwhile idea, there's really no point in writing. The discovery process enables you to discover the complex web of problems, power, and needs that connect with any proposed solution. A good discovery process recognizes your own biases and strengths, and it embraces the biases, strengths, knowledge, expertise, and power of others. The transition from a focus on yourself to a focus on the topic and specific readers requires a carefully developed idea. The revised Prospectus becomes more focused, and it tends to sound like an introduction to a paper:

Prospectus: revised version

Ferris State University should undertake a grant campaign that will enlarge and improve the Jim Crow Museum. The university's development office can develop this campaign with the help of students' work. The students' work will focus on five problems (see first draft of Prospectus) so that the college can raise more than $2,000,000 to complete this project. While the project will improve education and preserve a valuable collection, the consequence of a successful project will serve an even larger issue: enabling Americans to think about race in ways that strengthen our culture.

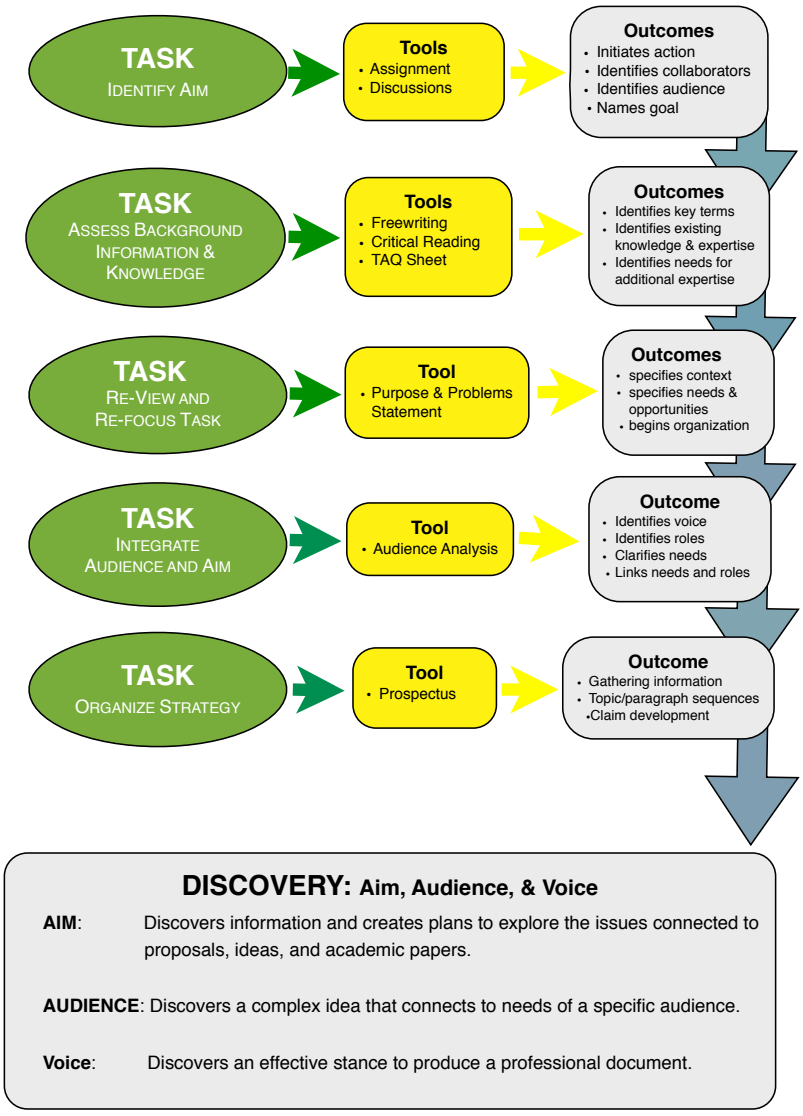
The last sentence, "While the project will improve education and preserve a valuable collection, the consequence of a successful project will serve an even larger issue: enabling Americans to think about race in ways that strengthen our culture," is the "boost" of the major idea. The boost steps back and sees the very largest framework for the project. It openly states the larger values and intentions of the document. By doing so, it opens the document to further revision and improvement.

Discussion Questions

1. Each writer has a specific version of the discovery process. Some writers do not use any freewriting, others find an outline necessary, and still others develop elaborate descriptions of the audience. This is good. Look at the flow chart below and do two things:
   a. Identify which parts of the discovery process you *already* use. What do you find useful about them?
   b. Identify which parts of the discovery process you do not use; what do you do that substitutes for those you do not use?

2. This chapter says that there are two audiences for the proposal that is being written. The first is the Ferris State University grant writer, and the second is the grant officer who will read what the document you send to her. List five questions about a foundation officer that you would want answered so that you could help the grant writer appeal to her audience.

A Flow Chart for Discovery Methods



Summary

The "topic" of a paper offers a starting point, not a thesis. It simply names what you will be writing about. On the other hand, the thesis is what you have to say *about* the topic; it states your claim about the topic. Thus, the topic leads to a thesis only if it is developed.

The tools in this chapter take that starting point and transform it into a useful focus for a paper. They enable writers to identify existing knowledge (the TEQ Sheet), to recognize opportunities to add their own insight (Purpose & Problem Statement), and to propose an idea (Prospectus). College papers and professional documents require complex ideas, and by taking the development task seriously, you are much more likely to succeed.

Looking Ahead

The next chapter will show you how to move the paper into a draft. It takes the material from the development process and transforms it into the final paper. Separating the discovery process from the drafts puts a strong emphasis on the claim. You will see tactics for taking the discovery material and refining it into the kinds of writing valued by employers and professors.