

NCTE PRESENTS...

Genre Theory: Teaching, Writing, and Being

Deborah Dean

Contemporary genre theory is probably not what you learned in college. Its dynamic focus on writing as a social activity in response to a particular situation makes it a powerful tool for teaching practical skills and preparing students to write beyond the classroom.

Although genre is often viewed as simply a method for labeling different types of writing, Deborah Dean argues that exploring genre theory can help teachers energize their classroom practices.

Genre Theory synthesizes theory and research about genres and provides applications that help teachers artfully address the challenges of teaching high school writing.

Knowledge of genre theory helps teachers:

- challenge assumptions that good writing is always the same
- make important connections between reading and writing
- eliminate the writing product/process dichotomy
- outline ways to write appropriately for any situation
- supply keys to understanding the unique requirements of testing situations
- offer a sound foundation for multimedia instruction

Because genre theory connects writing and life, Dean's applications provide detailed suggestions for class projects—such as examining want ads, reading fairy tales, and critiquing introductions—that build on students' lived experience with genres. These wide-ranging activities can be modified for a broad variety of grade levels and student interests.

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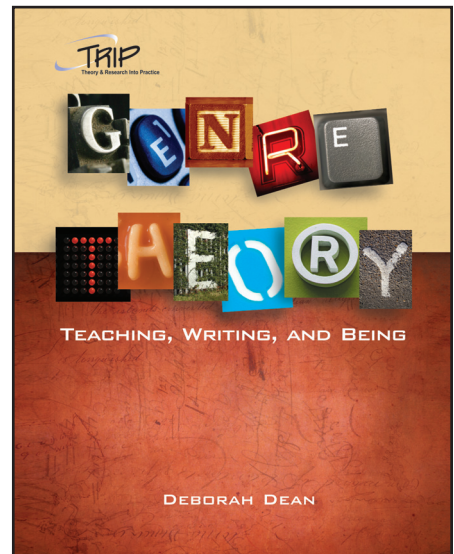
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