

FIGURE 4.1

The MAPS heuristic (continued)

	Explanation	Example 1: Print-Based Persuasive Essay	Example 2: Public Service Announcement Video
Purpose	<i>Purpose</i> refers to the specific action that a writer aims to accomplish with a piece; more than just persuade, for instance, will the piece try to politely influence or thoroughly convince the reader?	In this case, purpose is tied closely to the mode and media in that academic audiences expect texts to be thesis driven and well supported. Thus, the purpose must be made entirely clear early on in the paper in the form of a thesis statement.	By incorporating words, images, video, music, and narration, the writer does not necessarily have to make a clear written statement of purpose in the video. Through the combined effect of multimedia, the purpose can be more implicit than overt.
Situation for the Writer	As writers, we each have particular strengths and weaknesses in terms of our work habits; this ranges from the genres we prefer to write in, to the type of environment we create for writing, to the technologies that we are comfortable composing with.	As writers, our students are exposed to this formal type of writing early in their academic careers. Many recognize the patterns of a thesis-driven essay, even if they are not all able to replicate the pattern in their own writing.	Having been exposed to PSAs in a variety of media—print, audio, and video—students are familiar with the genre, even if they are unfamiliar with the actual skills related to producing a digital video. Commercials, in short, are a part of our culture that students understand.
Situation of the Writing	Particular writing tasks make demands of us, too; deadlines, genre expectations, the implementation of new media such as audio or video, and those with whom we are collaborating can all influence how well we work.	As a standard form of academic writing, the persuasive essay has currency among teachers of writing and is, unfortunately, sometimes conceived of in formulaic ways. Writers must meet these expectations while still attempting to be original with their thesis and supporting details.	Requiring the use of a personal computer, digital video camera, and perhaps other technologies, the digital video demands additional hardware, software, and skills beyond what is typically needed for creating a document with a word processor.

The MAPS heuristic

	Explanation	Example 1: Print-Based Persuasive Essay	Example 2: Public Service Announcement Video
Mode	<i>Mode</i> generally refers to the genre of the text, an essay, for instance; specifically, it helps us differentiate between particular subgenres such as a persuasive essay and an expository essay.	Here, the mode of a text-based persuasive essay typically requires a thesis statement that is supported with appropriate details and examples; page length can vary, but the “five paragraph” theme is a typical model.	In this case, a PSA generally must fit in a thirty- or sixty-second format suitable for showing on TV or the Web; the message must be clear and concise, typically with a slogan used for effect.
Media	<i>Media</i> refers to the way in which the text is presented: for instance, different media are used when creating a standard word-processed text, a trifold brochure on glossy paper, and a digital story with images and narration.	Essays can begin with handwritten notes and are typically composed with word processors. While some use of charts or images may be appropriate, the final product generally is completed as a print document with minimal use of visuals.	Begun on paper with a storyboard, the final product takes the form of a digital video that can be distributed in multiple formats including broadcast TV, DVD, CD-ROM, or web-based video-sharing sites.
Audience	<i>Audience</i> refers to the characteristics of those who are most likely to receive your work and what they value in good writing; the difference in expectations between writing an email to a friend as compared with your supervisor, for instance.	While persuasive essays can be written to any audience, and there are many examples of students writing beyond the classroom walls and having an impact on their communities, essays are typically turned in to the teacher for final grading.	By nature of the media, PSAs are meant to be distributed to wider audiences as well as for evaluation in the classroom. Distribution might come from a public performance of the work at the school level or through sharing the video by the media noted above.

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MAPS for photo-essay

Mode	<i>Digital photo-essay:</i> Photo-essays are composed of any number of photographs that focus on a central theme. Typically, they are at least captioned, and they often have an introduction or conclusion that offers context to the images in the essay.
Media	<i>Digital photos:</i> Images can be scanned from original photos or artwork, and, of course, original images can be taken with a digital camera or cell phone. More importantly, where the images are hosted and shared determines what a digital writer can do with the images. Utilizing a service such as Flickr or Picasa allows the student to easily organize images into a collection and let others add comments. Also, a tool such as VoiceThread can allow the author to record his voice as an audio caption for each photo.
Audience	As with all digital writing, audiences will vary based on the overall goals of the assignment. Yet audiences viewing photo-essays will, in particular, be interested in the visual appeal of the subjects in relation to themselves. Digital writers should consider how they frame shots of human and nonhuman subjects to evoke emotions and convey a particular mood. Whether shots are staged or natural may become apparent to audiences as well.
Purpose	Purposes for photo-essays can vary widely. In the PhotoVoice project, cameras were given to everyday people in order to expose the poverty, corruption, and injustices around them. Students may simply create a photo-essay to document an event at school or in the community, or they may take an angle that leads toward a larger theme, such as courage or community.
Situation for the Writer and of the Writing Context	<p>Digital writers who compose photo-essays will need to consider a variety of factors as they prepare to create their work. Some questions include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I have access to a digital camera, and if not, how can I get one? What additional equipment will I need? • Given the subject of my photo-essay, will I be able to take all the photos that I need on my own, or will I have to rely on other photographers to take images? Moreover, will I have to use stock photo galleries of copyright-free images or Creative Commons images? What images can I use under provisions of fair use? • If I am taking pictures of people specifically for my essay, what kinds of photo releases will I need? • Will my essay be organized chronologically or thematically? (in regard to composing the individual photos and the entire photo-essay) • How can I employ use of color, lighting, angles, zoom, and other effects to enhance the subjects of the photos?

MAPS for podcasting

Mode	As noted previously, podcasts can take a variety of modes, including a personal essay, a book response, a newscast, an interview, a variety show, or any other kind of recording. This occurs with one person reading her writing or a series of writers enacting a drama or creating a show. The National Public Radio program "This American Life" also offers a unique genre that blends human interest topics with compelling storytelling.
Media	Because podcasts are ultimately shared as audio files, often as MP3s, digital writers have to have access to an audio editor, such as the free and open-source program Audacity (audacity.sourceforge.net/). Podcasts need to be hosted somewhere, either as an upload on a blog or wiki site or on a school or personal web server. Some podcasting services exist as well, yet storage capacity for those services varies, so be sure to identify a space that will be able to handle your needs.
Audience	Most likely, the audience members for a podcast will be listening at their computer or through an MP3 player. Thus, as Rozema (2008) argues, the podcast should be compelling and offer the listener a reason to continue listening within the opening moments. Reed, for instance, worked with her students to develop an audio intro modeled after the original This I Believe series so that listeners could identify each podcast in the series and know exactly when information about the author and essay would be presented.
Purpose	Based on the choice of mode, the purpose for podcasts can vary widely from simply sharing an interview to producing a more complex composition such as a newscast, book talk, or other academic style of talk. No matter what the purpose, composers should be aware of the format and be sure to offer introductory information in the podcast that will somehow make the purpose clear to the listener.
Situation for the Writer and of the Writing Context	The writer will need to practice his speaking voice, perhaps adjusting the written text to better match the patterns of the spoken word. In order to compose podcasts, writers will need to have access to digital voice recorders, a microphone and headset, and a computer with an audio editor installed. Since audio files can begin to grow large quickly, they will have to have access to adequate network space for saving their projects or access to a podcasting service such as odeo.com or podomatic.com . Additional music from services like freeplaymusic.com and sound effects from services like freesound.org can enhance the overall effect of the podcast. Finally, they will have to be able to convert their projects into an audio format readable by all media players, such as MP3 or WAV, and to post that file on a publicly accessible website or blog.

MAPS for digital video

Mode	Mode sometimes becomes a point of contention when creating digital video. Porter (2009) worries that many digital video productions are being called digital stories, yet they may be nonfiction texts and lack a narrative structure with a compelling theme. Thus, I encourage you to be intentional in discussing the mode of digital video production with your students. Compare, for instance, the characteristics of fiction or memoir when composing digital stories with the more persuasive characteristics of creating a public service announcement or informational characteristics of creating a documentary.
Media	<p>Creating digital stories is both a bit more complex than composing a podcast and more platform dependent; that is, one must know the video editing software and be able to work within it with media as well as export files to an easily readable format. On Macs, the prepackaged program is iMovie, and on PCs it is Windows Movie Maker. Also, PC users can download the free Photo Story 3 program.</p> <p>Files exported from these programs are generally readable with any media player, although a viewer may need to install extra features (for instance, QuickTime on the Mac requires an extension to play native Windows movies, WMV files). One way to avoid this problem, as well as the additional problem of transferring media with something such as a flash drive, is to use a web-based video editing service such as MovieMasher (www.moviemasher.com/)</p>
Audience	Like photo-essays and podcasts, digital videos of all modes will aim to capture the audience's attention and have a consistent theme throughout so that the audience remains engaged. Care should be taken to use narration, audio, images, and video to create a story that, as Porter (2009) argues, is illuminating for the audience, not simply a collection of video effects.
Purpose	As with other new media, the purposes for digital video production can vary widely. Broadly, it is important to consider whether the purpose will be to create a narrative or poetic video as compared with an informational or persuasive one. Thus, defining a clear purpose for the project before production even begins is crucial, as Sharon Murchie did in her Senior Seminar Final Project, shown in Figure 4.6.
Situation for the Writer and of the Writing Context	Writers will have to be at least basically familiar with the process of creating a movie—importing media, organizing a time line, layering in transitions and other effects, adding voice-overs, and exporting the final file. Beyond these basics, writers will also have to be especially mindful of copyright when creating digital stories, as well as documenting their sources for images, videos, music, and files. Also, if digital writers are taking personal photographs or videos and using sound them in their stories, they will need to be sure to get permission from their subjects.

MAPS for digital video (continued)

Creating digital video is a recursive process, one that requires digital writers to move from the video editing program to searching for images and sounds online and then back to their original narrative or script and revising it as the time line gets adjusted. Moreover, these compositions can take a great deal of time, thus requiring use of a computer lab or laptop cart for a number of days, ideally all in a row. Students' hard drive and/or network storage at school will need to accommodate a large number of audio, image, and video files. Finally, the piece needs to be saved and stored in an accessible format, ideally through a video sharing service such as YouTube (www.youtube.com), TeacherTube (www.teachertube.com), or Viddler (www.viddler.com), depending on the school's filtering policy.