### **Justly Assessing Student Writing**

Williams (2021) presents a Framework for Raciolinguistically Just Literacy Instruction that includes strategies for fair assessment of student writing. This approach separates grades from instructor feedback, meaning that students are evaluated based on their effort and engagement with both instructor-assigned and self-determined goals, rather than how well they conform to the instructor's personal preferences or standards. The focus is on students' linguistic and rhetorical thinking, assessing how well they explore and justify their linguistic choices, address potential pitfalls, and stay true to their chosen approach. This framework also emphasizes student ownership of their work, incorporating their voices in both goal setting and evaluation.

To support a transparent, community-oriented, and conversational assessment process, students respond to four reflective questions for each assignment:

* What personal goals did you set for this assignment beyond the basic requirements?
* How did your language choices help you meet these goals, particularly in relation to academic writing conventions?
* Which aspects of your work on this assignment are you most proud of?
* What challenges did you face, and where might you need additional support from your instructor?

Instructors use these responses to offer feedback that helps students align their work with both assignment guidelines and their personal goals. After receiving feedback, students have the opportunity to revise and resubmit their work to earn points for "additional labor." They reflect on their revisions by answering:

* Which feedback areas did you address in your revised version, and why?
* How did you implement this feedback in your revisions?
* Which feedback areas did you choose not to address, and why?

Fair assessment of writing that deviates from traditional academic English norms requires intentional and reflective reading. Inoue’s (2020) work on antiracist reading encourages faculty to consider questions such as:

* What specific details or words in this text am I evaluating or reacting to?
* How might my response reflect habits of White language?
* In what ways might my response embody these habits?
* What personal biases or experiences influence my response?
* Where did these habits originate in my life, and how do they shape and limit my perspective? (Inoue, 2020, p.153)

Engaging with these questions helps faculty recognize and address how their reading and assessment practices might perpetuate white language supremacy. By reflecting on their own biases and habits, faculty can strive to evaluate student writing in a more linguistically just manner. As Inoue (2020) notes, “In these mindful moments of attending to ourselves, to our biases and fast thinking, to our habits of language, to the structures and systems around us that make us and that we make, to the small but important ways we make sense of words and our world, we can do antiracist work” (p. 154).

Williams, J. L. (2021). A framework for raciolinguistically just literacy instruction. Williams Higher Ed. <https://williamshighered.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Raciolinguistic-Justice-Framework.pdf>