

# Writing's Places: An Exploration of Immediate Environment and Student Perceptions of Writing

Elana Cutter

Edwina Helton, Faculty Mentor

## Abstract

Through reflection, descriptive observation and knowledge of writing process the author describes the space, intention, trends, and other variable that impact student writing and writing environments. The practical and research knowledge about writing environments described in the article identifies a missing piece of research related to the student experience. This literature review yields planned and potential research in the classroom to extend the scholarship on student writing environments.

## Keywords

writing environments, student perceptions, writing's situatedness, place, writing space, student trends, writing process theory

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## Introduction

The hum of the HVAC system reverberates around the corners of my classroom as I look from face to face, curious about the extent to which my students are engaging with their writing. Within two weeks they will submit the most intellectually challenging and lengthiest piece of academic writing of the semester, and so it is a high-stakes and intimidating obstacle for many of them. They are all the type of student who value grades and who want to achieve some level of success in their academic writing; and yet, I see indifference among a handful of my students as they wrestle with their priorities. Some are chit-chatting about show choir, others are looking for early Black Friday deals, and some are seduced by the continuously connected and entertaining universe within their cell phones.

Informally, I have noticed this same trend throughout my years of teaching. Specifically, when it comes to providing in-class time for an out-of-class writing assignment, there are those students who seem to hunker down and allow their ideas to flow with ease, and there are those students who actively avoid it. No doubt, a host of variables play into the causes of such behaviors, but most recently I have wondered about the role in which immediate environment plays in writing's challenging and complex processes. What is happening in the environment to discourage some of these students from actively engaging with their writing in that moment? Emilie Siddle Walker writes that there is "a belief that students' expectations about learning do not substantially differ from those of their teachers" (323). Walker addresses an essential assumption about writing process theory, one which aligns with the kind of assumptions I would like to consider when looking to my students. She notes that such a belief, the idea that students and teachers match in how they understand learning, is inaccurate. We can apply such a thought to our understanding of writing and its processes.

Though I have my own professional knowledge, habits, and understandings of how writing works (or does not work, on some occasions), this does not mean my students' understandings align with my own. As a result, I must check my assumptions about when and where students choose to write, then strive to understand what their preferences are and why those preferences exist.

There are certain habits that we form as writers, especially those of us who must sit down and write consistently; we tend to choose our locations with care, knowing what kind of environment might impede our success and what kind of environment might encourage it. For me, I tend to seek out a quiet atmosphere where there are few to no other people present. Right now, I am sitting in my living room with the washing machine whirring back and forth in the background. Beyond that, there are no sounds, and there are no people in my immediate vicinity. I sit on the couch with my legs up on the ottoman, which is generally the pose I strike when writing, and I have a glass of water that I tend to ignore when I find writing's "flow" and that I tend to consistently nurse when my thoughts seem to halt. I seem to be nursing my glass of water pretty consistently today. Because I notice this habit in myself and the habits of my students when in the classroom, I cannot help but wonder: what are the spaces that they choose to write in, and what do their habits look like when they write in them? Surprisingly enough, especially

considering how instrumental location inherently seems to be to writing, there is not much research in writing studies or process theory that unpacks the happenings or significance of the immediate places and spaces that writers choose to compose in.

As Hannah Rule determines in her 2018 review of writing's rooms and immediate writing environments, "writing's situatedness is most often theorized on expansive networked, social, and ecological scales" (404). Rule discusses the same issue that I had when first exploring this topic. Despite extensive searching through databases, I could find few pieces of scholarly literature that spoke directly to the issue of immediate writing environments. The foci of writing process, postprocess, and post-postprocess literature delved into more expansive understandings of writing environments at cultural, geographical, and global levels.

To demonstrate a leading example of this, let us look to two researchers who are entrenched within the study of writing environments. Sidney Dobrin and Christopher J. Keller describe "how different models of place and space limit or expand our understandings of diverse, texts, disciplines, peoples, cultures, and the world in general" (2). Here, their content alludes to greater components of space and environment while exploring the more abstract sociocultural environments that surround a writer. Dobrin and Keller ultimately demonstrate the trend in analyzing the forest as opposed to the trees when it comes to writing environments. There is value in this, but to ignore the trees of which the forest is composed is to ignore the immediate experience of the metaphorical trees.

Within the study of broadened writing environments, however, we can occasionally find discussion of more narrow, immediate writing environments; researchers in writing studies and writing environments recognize the need to perform research over immediate places in which writing occurs. Lynn Worsham, for example, distinguishes the concepts of "space" versus "place" when considering the whens and wheres that writers choose to write. "Space" refers to a cold construction of an environment that "actively creates and perpetuates alienation, apathy, and thoughtlessness," and she contrasts this with "place," which consists of an environment that is "meaningful, habitable, and therefore memorable" (Worsham 32). In considering these thoughts from Worsham, I am

reminded of the importance of language, and so I now must consider the idea that my students prefer a “place” rather than “space” when writing.

Ultimately, Worsham speaks metaphorically about physical spaces and architecture in order to draw comparisons between how “the contemporary world of actual buildings and landscapes have not been crafted with wisdom and care,” making it more “space than place” (32). She argues that such a perspective undermines how we might consider the reciprocal relationship between environments and writers as well as how these places’ create an “impact on human life and imagination” (32). Though Worsham’s concerns are on a grander ecological scale by the time she evolves her thesis, the immediate environment and physical place in which a person chooses to write also bears significance on the creation of a writer’s content. Though writing is not solely a process of cognition, the sort of considering and reconsidering that goes into the writing likely attributes some of its form to the immediate places surrounding the writer.

In a continuation of the discussion of “place” as a space with meaning, Christopher Schroeder surveys environmental and spatial contexts. Schroeder’s overarching concept that he explores within the text has to do with larger geographical contexts and their impact on writers and their voices. He declares that “place figures significantly in the selves we construct and the narratives we tell ourselves,” which is a difficult comment to disagree with (99). I imagine that many of us are of the opinion that we have been and continue to be shaped by the geo-cultural contexts we surround ourselves with, and so our understanding of the world around us is shaped by the stories that are told both to us and by us according to that context. Within the narrow scope of planning my research project and its focus on immediate physical and virtual places, I find my focus becomes more of a review and analysis of several microcosms of the greater context of which the writers are a part. Schroeder then proceeds to state that “place is also important to meaning, as meaning is contingent upon the meaning-maker’s position in time and space” (100). In response to this, I propose that it’s only through an understanding of immediate time and space that broader, more abstract understandings of meaning-making can occur, and other scholarship supports this.

Within these conversations of large-scale writing environments, some scholars state that a narrower focus on immediate elements of environment

is essential to studying writing and its processes. Jody Shipka notes that elements which contemporary researchers are failing to observe are “the technologies that students use in order to create and sustain the conditions for engaging in [writing and its technologies]--turning on lights, arranging themselves at desks, on chairs, on beds, and so on” (10).

Though Shipka’s own research works with abstract environmental systems, she recognizes the need for explorations of immediate environments and what they show about writers and their processes. Nedra Reynolds aligns with this comment and states that “writing’s materiality begins with where the work of writing gets done, the tools and conditions and surroundings . . . [that help] to trace the threads or remnants of literacy practices” (167). Here, Reynolds identifies the need to archive how writers interact with their surroundings while writing, and Margaret Synerson furthers this by noting the physical-material dimension of writing processes. She declares that “texts emerge through writers’ and readers’ physical interactions with material structures . . . Writers and readers are physical beings, too” (Synerson 18). Each of the aforementioned scholars recognize how necessary it is for writing studies researchers to study the elements within immediate environments, yet little research exists that delves into such content.

In planning the logistics of how I will approach data collection from my students, however, I must also address the limitations of writing places and immediate environments. In her essay “The Ecology of Study,” Martha Cooper speaks to the abstractions of rhetorical situations which surround a writer. When considering the rhetorical situation of any written piece, a writer’s immediate environment would be but one of the several elements that falls within the context of the rhetorical situation. Bearing this in mind, Cooper integrates the words of James Reither, who states that “writing and what writers do during writing cannot be artificially separated from the social-rhetorical situations in which writing gets done” (367). Her purpose in citing Reither is to note that her topic of study cannot holistically account for every minute detail that could be found within the infinite complexities of the rhetorical situation because to attempt to isolate factors within the writing’s situation can result in one-dimensional and potentially problematic findings. Reither speaks here of the context of the writing, and to an extent, I must bear this limitation in mind. Each element of the rhetorical situation

surrounding the writing does impact how and why students approach academic writing in a certain way. By attempting to isolate and study my student's perceptions of how their immediate physical environment affects their writing, I must be wary of artificial misrepresentations of what's happening with my students' choices in writing environments and their perceptions of how those environments affect their writing.

As a result of my observations of my students and our biweekly routine of in-class writing as well as the clearly identified need to research this subject area further, I now find myself traversing this little-explored subject of study. I argue that we cannot separate our corporeal selves from the process of writing, and thus a writer's immediate surroundings are an essential and necessary part of understanding the complexity of writing's composition.

## **Planned Methods**

Through my observations of student behavior while writing in a classroom environment and the study of scholarly literature over writing environments, my controlling research question becomes, "What kinds of environments do my students choose to engage with when writing for an academic purpose? And how do those environments, specifically the physical places that surround students when they write, affect the perceptions my students have of academic writing?" To explore ways of understanding potential answers to these questions, I must begin with the stories of my students because the data that I seek from my students are essential components of their lives as writers. This consists of their perceptions of writing and its environments to the selection of when, where, and how they choose to write; thus, as I plan to collect information from them, I recognize that I am here to both tell their story and my own as I use these narratives to influence my methods of teaching composition.

To start, my plan is to study my own students. They consist of high school seniors who have, for the most part, grown up in an affluent suburban high school just outside of a sprawling urban setting. These mostly motivated students elect to take W131, a dual-credit class through Indiana University, during either the fall or spring semester of their senior year. Their backgrounds in reading and writing vary, however. Some of these students experience the richly analytical yet AP-test-dominated curriculum

of Literature & Composition their junior year of high school, and the remaining students enroll in the stimulating yet general-track curriculum of English 11. Much of their previous English / Language Arts coursework also involves literature that's been analyzed through the lenses of literary and rhetorical strategies. W131: Reading, Writing, & Inquiry, alternatively, is composed entirely of nonfiction reading with analytical and argumentative writing. Also, the demographics of my students in W131 tend to be reflected by the school's overall statistics: about 83% of the school is white, and about 5% of students receive government-subsidized funding for lunch. I note these characteristics because they have the potential to indicate nuances in understanding my students' perceptions of writing.

These demographic background elements affect "the thoughts and actions of the human narrative agents," the description provided by Karri A. Holley and Julia Colyar in their essay "Rethinking Texts: Narrative and the Construction of Qualitative Research" (682). In the story of this planned research project, the "human narrative agents" will be my W131 students, whose perspectives and behaviors I choose to study in order to better understand their habits, choices, and perceptions. The term "agent" works especially well to describe these students because it conveys their activities in such a way that demonstrates their active involvement within the research. Without their actions and recordings, the research would not be possible.

The story these students will share reflects the writing environments they choose, their perceptions of writing, and the way in which their environment affects their perceived productivity and inspiration while writing. I plan to collect information about how they think the classroom environment affects their perceptions of writing and its processes, how the digital environment affects their perceptions and processes, and how alternative physical environments, such as their home or other public spaces, affects their perceptions and processes. Though I have some theories and anticipatory thoughts on their perceptions, I am curious to see the nuances that their data will reveal as "the plot begins with [my] unresolved question or issue" (Holley and Colyar 683).

In the quest to seek out data and learn more about immediate writing environments, I plan to collect information as these agents begin their

second major paper for the semester, a 4-5 page comparative analysis. This is one of the most challenging and comprehensive analyses that they will be asked to write, and many of them might feel overwhelmed and intimidated by it, which I have noticed from my past observations of students.

Prior to beginning a draft, I plan to ask students to consider a series of 25 Likert-Scale statements via questionnaire. These statements were created as a result of trending behaviors that I have noticed of all students when they write, not just my W131 students. The questionnaire includes five statements that ask for students' perceptions of how levels of writing inspiration and productivity are affected by listening to music, being around other people, being in the classroom / school environment, during the afternoon or evening hours, and being in public places other than school (see Appendix A). In addition to the Likert-Scale statements, there will also be three open-ended response questions. Instructions included with the open-ended responses attached to the questionnaire request that students reflect on what their ideal and less than ideal environments for writing are. Together, these two forms of data collection will constitute my preliminary data that help me more accurately gauge how my students think about their own interactions with writing and its processes in a variety of environments.

After collecting the preliminary data, my subjects will begin drafting their second-to-last academic essay for the semester, and during this drafting process, I will ask them to complete a time-use diary over the course of four days (see Appendix B). This time-use diary will function as a self-reporting log where they will track the periods of time in which they write, the main activities they complete while they write, up to three parallel activities that they participate in as they write, and their general and specific locations where they write. Requesting students to describe their parallel activities while writing is my way of asking what other activities they actively work with as they construct their draft. Throughout my career, I have observed students frequently participating in supplemental activities that relate with the process elements of writing. For example, when drafting during class, I often see students texting about pieces of their essays, using a thesaurus to find synonyms, or reviewing the contents of their source materials. Other students also participate in activities that are unrelated to the drafting process, e.g., snapchatting with their friends, shopping online, having Netflix on in the background, or listening to music. Beyond these parallel activities, the final

forms of data that they will log include ratings on a scale of 1-10 that strive to capture their perceived physical levels of comfort while writing as well as their perceived levels of productivity.

I plan for the time-use diaries to capture elements of students' real-time environments while they work to compose. This work includes scenes that capture the classroom's physical space. This type of student writing also includes scenes that capture physical spaces outside of academic settings. Such scenes demonstrate Journet's concept of "boundary negotiation" as students interact with the physical spaces around them and virtual spaces found within their compositional tool (53). My hope is that the intersection of these spaces will make for interesting explorations, especially as students target and describe their parallel activities that exist within their virtual space as well as their physical space.

The final form of collected data will be that of a recorded interview with one randomly selected student. The interview itself will be open-ended, though there are some questions that I have generated in order to guide the conversation should it veer off course (see Appendix C). Though I plan for the voices of several of my subjects to play a role within the discussion of the results, this one student will be the controlling agent of the conversation as I narrate the stories that my writers have to share about immediate writing environments, their writing processes, and the perceptions that lie therein.

In divulging their thoughts and in attempting to make sense of them, I recognize that I will need to morph the story of my students in such a way that it reflects their experiences and shows that the "knowledge [learned from them] is constructed rather than discovered" (Journet 52). These will be my students' words and insights on their own experiences of writing, and by exploring them, I seek only to learn more about them and their writing processes in order to understand and to use the information to improve ways in which I approach writing instruction and writing environments.

## Discussion

In her argument that defends the study of immediate writing environments, Hannah Rule declares that we “upend [the] image of disembodied writing processes, reflect upon the infinite particularities of everyday writing rooms, and see how writing processes iterate differently through material staging and physical moves” (428). Through the exploration of my students’ interactions with writing environments and the choices therein, I certainly will garner a sharper understanding of how and why they are guided by certain perceptions of academic writing, and I hope to explore the nuances through more substantial data collection and data dissemination.

Based on informal discussions, observations, and reflections on writing that I’ve reviewed from my students, patterns emerge that illuminate some of the choices that they make when selecting and reflecting on their immediate writing environments. First, it seems that secondary students are generally aware of what kinds of environments suit them best when seeking to write, even if those environments are not entirely the same. Though there may be trends in how they attempt to find their focus, be it through isolating themselves from others or by listening to music via headphones, it ultimately rests on how the student understands his or her own mind and how the mind copes with levels of attention, motivation, and inspiration while writing. Such information indicates the value and importance that students place on individualization and autonomy when selecting writing environments: they want to choose when, where, and how they will interact with writing’s processes.

In addition to this abstract autonomy, students also demonstrate a clear preference for a flexible setting that allows for the physical manipulation of themselves and their writing materials. Such settings might provide them room to organize their materials in such a way that makes sense to them, or they might also have the need to control the ways in which their bodies are positioned. This, then, demonstrates the need for autonomy at both an abstract and concrete level; in order to enhance their state of mind, they perhaps first require a sense of choice in where they locate themselves and how they locate themselves within that space.

Because I have heard students discuss among themselves and with me the

sorts of environments that they perceive to be effective for their writing, it seems that they do have some basic understanding of how to self-regulate; and yet, as demonstrated by my informal observations multiple times over the course of the semester, it also seems that several do not follow through or take preventative measures to actively construct their writing environment in such a way that allows them to be optimally effective. For example, though students recognize that social influences generally hinder their writing progress, students still choose to seat themselves next to their more social counterparts. A seemingly easy fix is for the instructor to require that students sit in seats away from their friends, yet I am curious about their levels of self-regulation and about how my seat selection further removes their agency in the classroom setting. It's already a somewhat stifling environment because of the 50-minute, 7-period, 5-day grind of which we all partake. If I were to take on my authoritative role and control where they sit, to what extent might my assigned seating further impact their ability to engage with their writing?

The same lack of self-regulation seems to also apply outside of the context of the classroom, however. Several students this semester have explained to me that they do not effectively write in their bedrooms because they are prone to distraction, yet many have shared with me that the primary location of their writing is, in fact, their bedroom. Considering this, there seems to be a level of cognitive dissonance when it comes to selecting when and where to write. Though instinctually they are aware of the locations that would suit their writing, they still do not consistently choose to write in an environment that they perceive will work best.

To write the previous sentence makes it sound as if I blame my students for their choices, but I argue the contrary. Instead of determining that students lack self-regulation, I instead propose that it is my students' ultimate lack of autonomy that affects their behavior and habits when it comes to writing. Secondary students experience limited ways in which they can control the environments around them, from the spaces in the classroom to the spaces in their home. Perhaps it's because of the limitation in choice and limitation in adequate location that impede these writers in actively engaging in their processes. By exploring the data collected in the process above, I hope my

findings will allow me to gain a clearer understanding of how students think about their own sense of agency and the effects it has on their perceptions of writing.

## **Conclusions**

Consider the “space” that is school, which is comprised of largely institutional aesthetics that are made for function rather than fashion: square rooms, beige paint, standardized chalkboards, and fluorescent lighting. Such descriptions speak to Worsham’s sharp conceptual contrasts between “space” and “place.” What we have here is a space that perhaps “[has] not been crafted with wisdom and care” and thus it does not “impact human life and imagination” (32). Writing is, admittedly, a creative and complex process, and without the vitality of rich surroundings, how well can we expect our writers to engage with their cognitive processes? If a student’s focus becomes, if just for a moment, enchanted by the screen of the student sitting next to them and overwhelmed by another’s writing fluidity, how can we blame them for not being able to engage with the process?

As I anticipate results of this planned research, one outcome I hope to include is a call for teachers to reconsider their assumptions about the spaces that are their classrooms, spaces where students are coerced into writing despite the inanimate lifelessness of an environment that strives to stifle. This will be a call for teachers to seek out “places” rather than “spaces,” for them to look outside their classrooms and to seek out an environment that stimulates rather than stifles, that liberates rather than subjugates. Then, perhaps, the reticence of our writers will decrease just a little more than before.

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## **Appendix A: Writing Environments Questionnaire and Survey**

Preface: Through the following series of statements and questions, you'll be asked about your perspectives on writing environments when writing for an academic purpose. When asked about your attitudes and perspectives on writing, this is always in reference to academic forms of writing. Also, within the context of this research, a writing environment can be understood as both the physical and virtual spaces in which you choose and/or prefer to write.

### **Part One:**

#### **Questionnaire Statements with Likert Scale Responses**

1. In class during the school day, I feel unmotivated to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

2. In class during the school day, I feel compelled to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

3. In class during the school day, my mind feels stimulated enough to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

4. In class during the school day, I feel that I am able to write productively.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

5. In class during the school day, I feel uninspired to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

6. At home in the afternoon or evening, I feel unmotivated to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

7. At home in the afternoon or evening, I feel compelled to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

8. At home in the afternoon or evening, my mind feels stimulated enough to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

9. At home in the afternoon or evening, I feel that I am able to write productively.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

10. At home in the afternoon or evening, I feel uninspired to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

11. In a public place other than school (such as a library or Starbucks), I feel unmotivated to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

12. In a public place other than school (such as a library or Starbucks), I feel compelled to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

13. In a public place other than school (such as a library or Starbucks), my mind feels stimulated enough to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

14. In a public place other than school (such as a library or Starbucks), I feel that I am able to write productively.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

15. In a public place other than school (such as a library or Starbucks), I feel uninspired to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

16. When listening to music, I feel unmotivated to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

17. When listening to music, I feel compelled to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

18. When listening to music, my mind feels stimulated enough to write.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

19. When listening to music, I feel that I am able to write productively.  
Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

20. When listening to music, I feel uninspired to write.  
Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

21. When surrounded by other people, I feel unmotivated to write.  
Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

22. When surrounded by other people, I feel compelled to write.  
Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

23. When surrounded by other people, my mind feels stimulated enough to write.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

24. When surrounded by other people, I feel that I am able to write productively.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

25. When surrounded by other people, I feel uninspired to write.

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

## **Part Two: Open-Ended Survey Responses**

1. In what kinds of environments do you feel you are the most productive?  
What elements of those environments make you feel more productive?  
In other words, why do you think you're more productive in those environments?
2. In what kinds of environments do you feel you are the least productive?  
What elements of those environments make you feel less productive?  
In other words, why do you think you're less productive in those environments?
3. Describe your ideal writing environment. Include descriptions of the physical space, descriptions of the virtual space, the time of the day, the people who are with/near you, the secondary tasks you have going on (music or Netflix in the background, a messaging app open, etc).

## Appendix B: Time-Use Diary for Tracking Writing Environments & Activities Appendix B:

### Appendix B: Time-Use Diary for Tracking Writing Environments & Activities

**Preface:** Complete the following chart to the best of your abilities over the course of the next four days. Share as much detail as you are able to during the times that you choose to write.

#### Day One: Tuesday, November 19th

Start Time	End Time	Main Activity	Parallel Activity 1	Parallel Activity 2	Parallel Activity 3	General Location	Specific Location	Level of Comfort, 1-10	Level of Productivity, 1-10
8:15am	10:00am	Composing lyrics and writing arrangement sheet.	Searching Google for synopses	Teaming with peer about sheetz de music stuff	Listening to music	ZHS	Curter's Rooms	7	8

#### Day Two: Wednesday, November 20th

Start Time	End Time	Main Activity	Parallel Activity 1	Parallel Activity 2	Parallel Activity 3	General Location	Specific Location	Level of Comfort, 1-10	Level of Productivity, 1-10

**Appendix B: (Continued)**

**Day Three: Thursday, November 21st**

Start Time	End Time	Main Activity	Parallel Activity 1	Parallel Activity 2	Parallel Activity 3	General Location	Specific Location	Level of Comfort, 1-10	Level of Productivity, 1-10

**Day Four: Friday, November 22nd**

Start Time	End Time	Main Activity	Parallel Activity 1	Parallel Activity 2	Parallel Activity 3	General Location	Specific Location	Level of Comfort, 1-10	Level of Productivity, 1-10

## **Appendix C:**

### **Writing Environments Interview Questions**

Preface: The interview with one randomly-selected research subject will be held in a more open-ended, conversational style format. The interview will be recorded. Question #1 will be the starter question, but the interview may then proceed in a variety of directions based upon the subjects' responses. These questions serve only as a guide in case the research subject struggles to converse with the researcher.

1. What do you think about writing environments?
2. What are your perceptions of academic writing?
3. What are some of the things that you think you struggle with?
4. What are some things that you might like about it?
5. What kind of physical spaces do you prefer to write in? Why do you prefer them?
6. What kind of body position / seated position do you like to be in?
7. What kind of environmental space do you like to be in? What's going in your physical surroundings?
8. Do you like other people to be around you? Why / why not?
9. What kinds of things do you like to do while writing? What's appealing about those things? Do you think those things make you a more productive writer? A better writer? Why or why not?
10. What about when you're actually in school? Do you feel like a productive writer? Why / why not? When in Cutter's class? When in study hall or another class? Why / why not?