

Library Scholars in Community

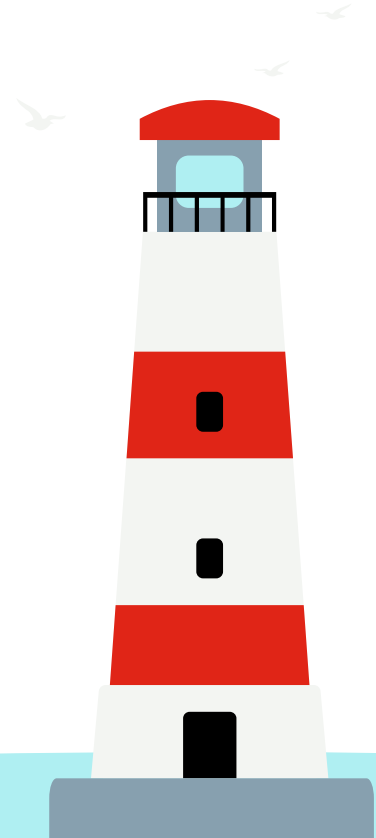
Caitlin Benallack & Dylan McGlothlin
MiALA Annual Conference May 8, 2026



Goals for Today

Develop and share ideas for scholarship or writing projects with MiALA community members.

Reflect on your writing experiences and create a plan to move forward.



Agenda



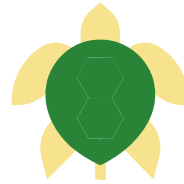
1

Reflections



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Card Sorting



3

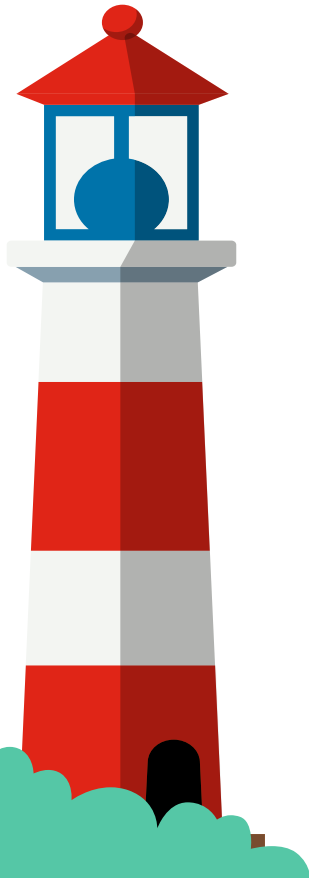
Group Discussions



4

Closing

Threshold Concepts (of Writing Studies)

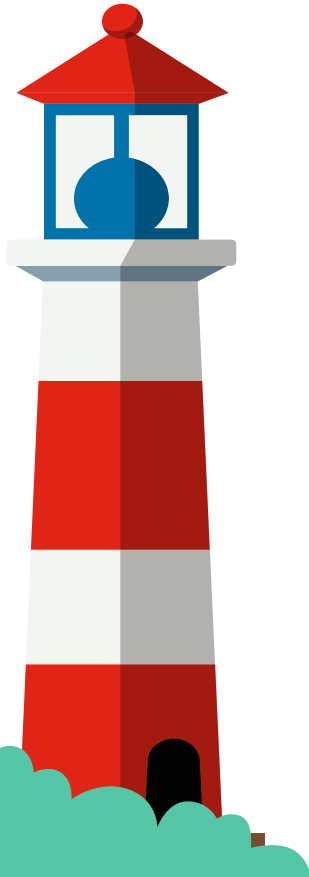


“ A threshold concept can be considered akin to a portal, opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something” (Meyer & Land, 2003)

Threshold concepts are:

- **Transformative**- they change how learners think and/or behave.
- **Irreversible**- they typically can't be unlearned.
- **Integrative**- they expose connections.
- **Bounded**- they often show the lines of demarcation between disciplines.
- **Troublesome**- they are often challenging when first encountered, counterintuitive or alien.

Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies



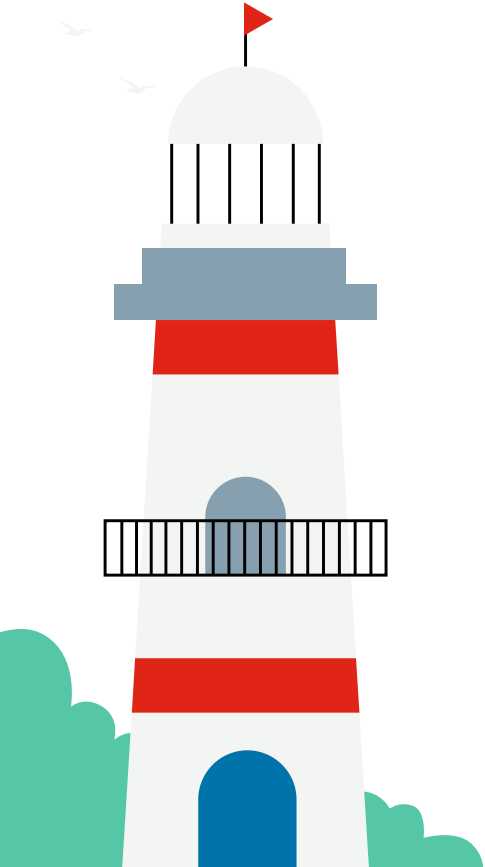
- Writing is a Social and Rhetorical Activity
- Writing Speaks to Situations through Recognizable Forms
- Writing Enacts and Creates Identities and Ideologies
- All Writers Have More to Learn
- Writing is (Also Always) A Cognitive Activity

From *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies*, Edited by Linda Alder-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle

Emergent Strategy

“There is a conversation in the room that only these people at this moment can have. Find it.” – adrienne maree brown

- Find the unique conversation that can only happen now
- Build connections with colleagues
- Practice communicating your knowledge
- Take ideas to the next step



Individual Reflection

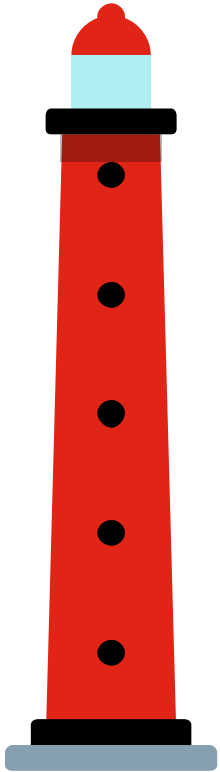
Prepare for group discussions using the following prompts. These responses are for you and do not have to be shared with the group.

Research Content/Focus: What issues are important to you, excite you, or frustrate you in relation to the LIS field? How do they connect to you or your work?

Research Approach/Perspective: What previous experiences, theories, approaches, or methodologies are you interested in applying to inform your research perspective?

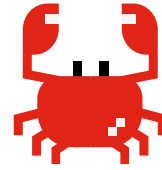


Card Sorting Activity: Overview



1. Write down your scholarly interests (and pain points) on sticky notes.
2. Everyone sorts all the sticky notes into categories.
3. Form discussion groups based on the categories that emerged (we will have a second round of discussions as time allows).

Card Sorting Activity: Sticky Notes

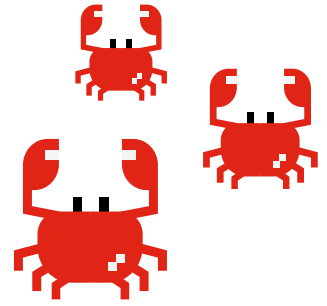


On a sticky note write down:

- **Topics** you are exploring or hope to explore in your scholarship or writing.
- **Research methods** you are using or hoping to use.
- **Theories or lenses** you are using or hoping to use.
- **Pain points** in your writing or scholarship process.

Each idea should be on its own sticky note!

Card Sorting Activity: Sticky Note Examples

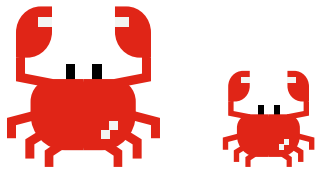


*One-shot
instruction*

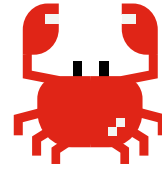
*Autoethnography
(or other qualitative
methods)*

*Choosing a
Journal*

*Embodied
Teaching*

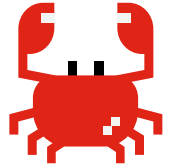


Card Sorting Activity: Sticky Notes!

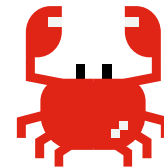


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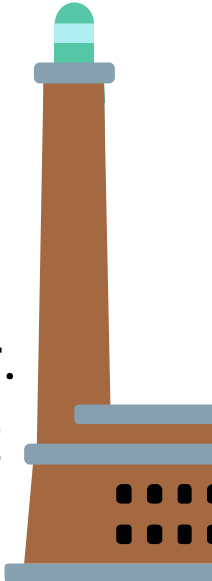


Card Sorting Activity: Sorting

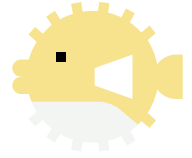
1. Walk around and look at other folks' sticky notes.
2. Group sticky notes together based on topics or categories.

Tip: If a sticky note seems to belong in two categories, feel free to create a duplicate sticky note.

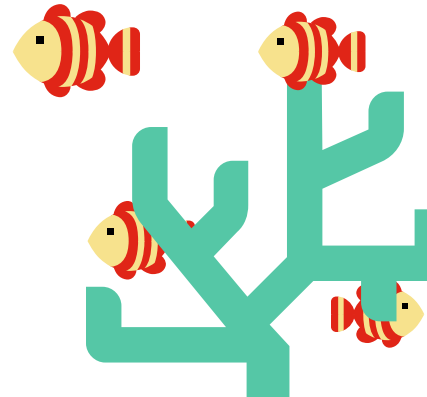
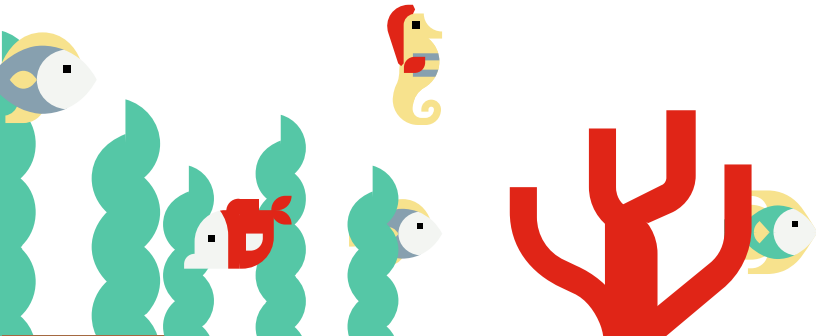
3. Place each group of sticky notes on a big piece of paper. Give each category/grouping a name. The name doesn't need to be perfect.



Card Sorting Activity: Find Discussion Group



Find a grouping of sticky notes that represents a topic you would like to discuss.



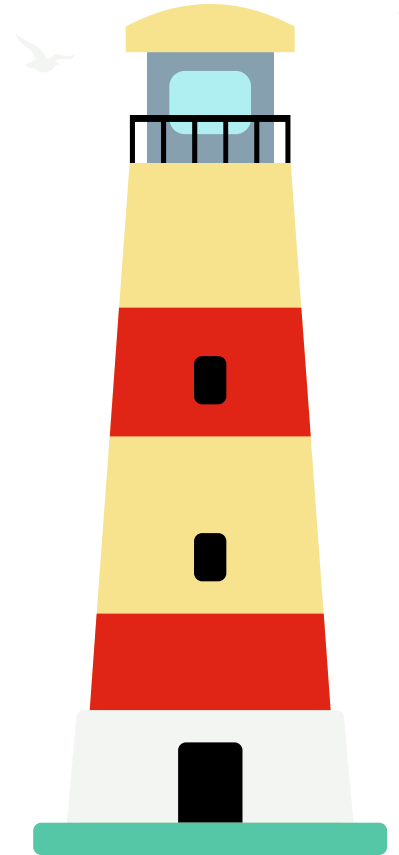
Small Group Discussions

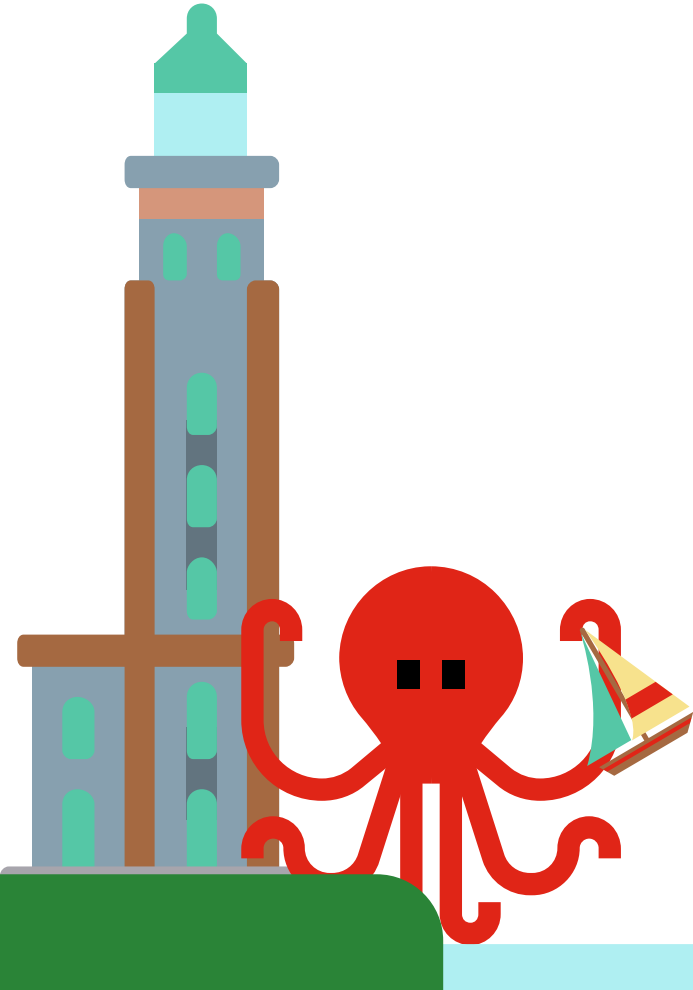
Table Introductions

- Name, pronouns, job title/institution
- Explain your sticky note in a few sentences

Discussion Prompts

- How are your sticky notes/topics related?
- What possibilities for collaboration are emerging?
(New approaches, resource recommendations, publication or conference recommendations, co-author, reviewer, etc.)





Take a Break!

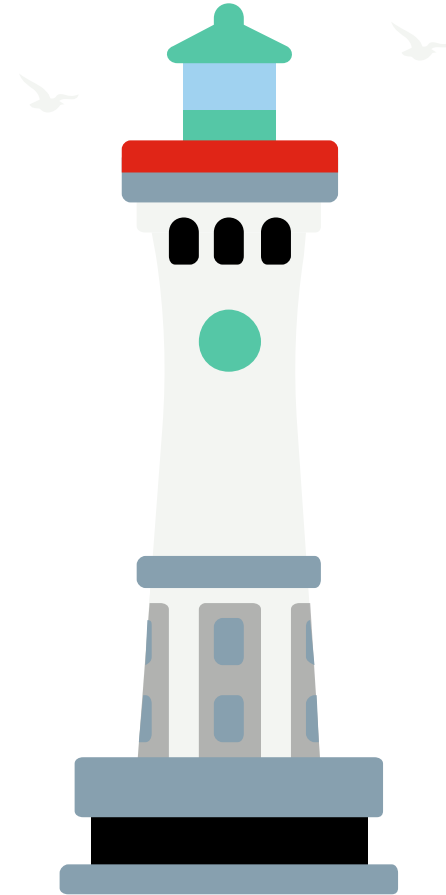
Small Group Discussions Take 2

Table Introductions

- Name, pronouns, job title/institution
- Explain your sticky note in a few sentences

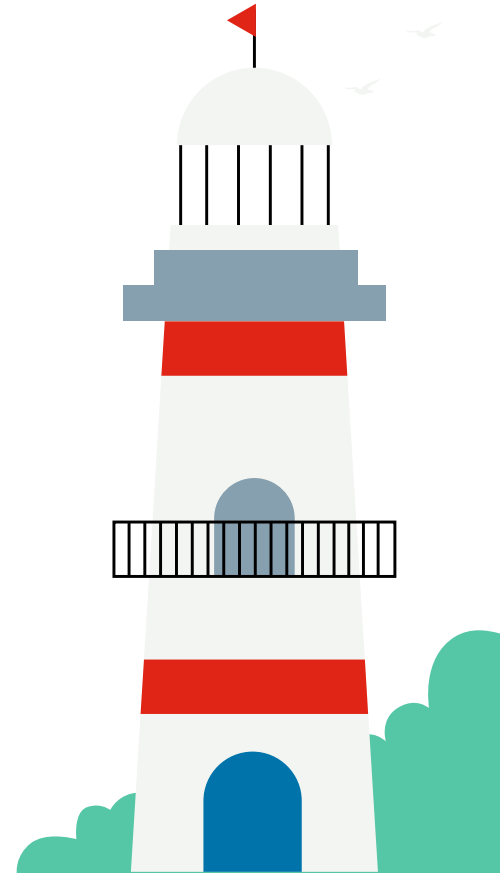
Discussion Prompts

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Closing

- Take a moment to reflect on what do you need to do to continue this momentum
- Get contact information
- Create a to-do list
- Make a calendar event



Works Cited

Adler-Kassner, L., & Wardle, E. A. (2015). *Naming what we know: Threshold concepts of writing studies* (Classroom edition.). Utah State University Press.

brown, adrienne maree. (2017). *Emergent strategy: Shaping change, changing worlds* (Reprint edition). AK Press.

Meyer, J.H.F. and Land, R. (2003). 'Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge: Linkages to ways of thinking and practising within the disciplines', in Rust, C. (ed.), *Improving Student Learning: Improving Student Learning Theory and Practice – Ten Years On*. Oxford: Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development.



Session Feedback

