

TRANSFORMING NONFICTION FOR EARS THAT WILL HEAR

Craig Bubeck, Wednesday, May 17, from 2:15 – 5:45

WORKSHOP HANDOUT

I. COMPARE THE PRIMARY GENRES: (3) NARRATIVE, TOPICAL, & POETIC

A. Job Description

1. Narration

2. Topical

B. Structure—How Each Does the Job

1. Narration

2. Topical

C. Strength and Weakness of Narration

1. The power of empathy

2. The weakness of anecdotal persuasion

D. Weakness and Strength of Topical Exposition

1. Weaker in terms of empathy

2. The strength of logical persuasion

II. THE LOGIC OF TOPICAL STRUCTURE

A. Logic

1. Logos: reason

2. Reasoning by organizing, to make sense

B. Structure: the outline, logic's skeleton

1. The foundation is your thesis:
2. The building blocks: topics and subordinate topics
3. Choose materials carefully—beware of common weaknesses
4. Lead with weaker/lesser; end with stronger (more significant)

C. Organize logically: book, chapter, and paragraph

1. Structure: microcosm/microcosm
2. Assert and then support (imagine persuading a skeptic)
3. Look, leap, look back (book, chapters)
4. Conclude by restating, summing up

III. TRANSFORMING NARRATIVE INTO TOPICAL

A. How would you speak/teach about your story?

B. Extracting topics from your story: brainstorming

1. Listing
2. Clustering
3. Freewriting

C. Identify the thesis concept for your story

D. Develop a list of multiple topics (coherent, relevant)

E. Organize into logical structure