Developing Academic Literacy with First Year Undergraduates.
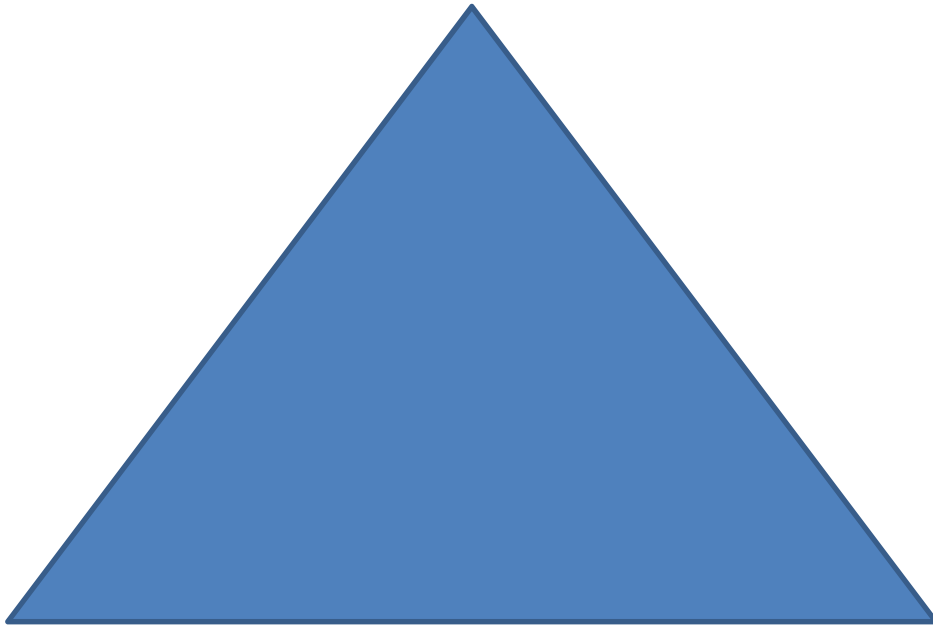
Work in progress (or groping towards solutions)

Academic Literacy

- Can 'new to university' learners do the reading and writing required?
- Lea and Street (1998, 1997)
  - study skills
  - academic socialisation
  - academic literacies

The story so far….

- Research approach
- Research context
  - learners
  - learning
- TLA approach to academic literacy

Learners at transition.

The focus for the session – reading and writing for academic purposes

- What can the 'new to the university' learner do?
- What is the tutor's responsibility?
  - Curriculum design
  - Classroom practices

Developing Academic Writing

From the data from 176 learners over the last 6 years suggests that

- Doing a version 1 essay with *feedback (but no mark)* helps most learners
  - Personalised approach within the same structured frame
  - Limited to three points
  - One to one meeting

Reading for academic purposes

- Perhaps many learners come to university with too little practice of traditional approaches to reading and writing for university work
- But they come with a wealth of experience in new literacies – believe me none of them is illiterate.

Responses as tutors

- Status quo?
  - Muddle through doing more of the things that help learners

- Influence institutional approaches to curriculum development?
  - Embed new literacies as part of the learning 'diet'
  - Enable transitions (at each stage) for learners by establishing incrementally processes of thinking and working that are discipline/subject specific

What I have been reading - some starting places for exploring the issues:

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Selinger, M. (2000) Opening up New Teaching and Learning Spaces. In T. Evans & D. Nation (eds) Changing University Teaching. London: Kogan Page

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