

# How do you use **The New York Times?**

## Fall 2008 Contest

### Grand Prize Winner

Hilary Demske, Lecturer, Music

“Noteworthy: Fredonia Piano Performance Reviews”

This class analyzes four classical reviews published in the *Times* and the students explore how the reviews are similar and contrasting in terms of format, style, purpose, and audience. Students are then assigned five additional reviews over the course of the semester and asked to record their meaningful observations which are later shared in class.

The students are also assigned the task of writing their own music review for a current music performance at Fredonia. After a first draft evaluation, the reviews are published online in a similar format style to *The New York Times* online reviews. The website, “Noteworthy: Fredonia Piano Performance Reviews”, is currently located at <http://fredonia.110mb.com>. As updates are added, the address is announced to all of the school’s piano majors through an email distribution list.

Of note: At a pedagogy conference in October, Anthony Tommasini, head music critic of the *Times*, was shown a copy of the music review website. He relayed his sincere approval and encouragement of both the project and the SUNY Fredonia students that are developing skills that they will use as future music educators and leaders.

### Honorable Mentions:

Dixon Reynolds, Assistant Professor, Theatre & Dance

The “Costume Design” and “Stage Makeup” courses use photographs from the *NY Times* to help students transform what they read into a visual that matches or compliments the text/script. Considering the design elements of color, texture, line, and scale, the students tell the story through the art of collage. The students also create a makeup morgue. This is a collection of images, mostly faces that act as reference research for future designs. They are asked to compile over a hundred images, many found in the *Times*, in the following categories; old age, middle age, ethnic, glamour, distressed, scars and blood, ailments, and animals.

Kathryn Moore, Lecturer, English

In this course, students studying editorial voices and persuasive writing were given a link to the *NY Times* and had to find and read an editorial of their choice every day for an entire week. The goal of this week-long assignment was to have the students explore various editorial voices, both syndicated columnists and NY Times readers, prior to writing their own editorial—either a letter to an editor or an editorial column. Students received feedback on their editorials and engaged in self-generated discussion (without instructor prompting) about the topics that they had discovered.

Natalie Gerber, Assistant Professor, English

“Using *The New York Times* as a Living Textbook on the English Language”

In “ENGL 373: English Grammar for Everyone,” the class draws on examples from the *New York Times* both as sample texts to analyze and as cautionary tales in prescriptive vs. descriptive grammar. Students also are encouraged to read *The New York Times* on a daily basis and to bring in examples of grammar use from the newspaper that intersected with class discussions. The article “What Corporate America Can’t Build: A Sentence” is also used to speak to arguments in favor of prescriptive grammar and to argue for the importance of proper grammar and clear communication in all professions. In “ENGL 352: History of the English Language,” an array of articles are used to make points in the class that are both contemporary and relevant.