Oregon Public Broadcasting
AMERICAN PASSAGES: A Literary Survey
Formative Research Survey Results

Goodman Research Group, Inc. (GRG), a research company in Cambridge, Massachusetts that specializes in evaluation, is conducting formative research for Oregon Public Broadcasting's (OPB) *AMERICAN PASSAGES: A Literary Survey*. OPB received funding from Annenberg/CPB to create this college-level American Literature survey course that is meant for first or second-year undergraduate students and for high school teachers seeking more information about American Literature. The formative research is designed to obtain information to advise decisions made by the producers regarding the design, production, and implementation of the course's three main components:

- 16 half hour videos, each focusing on a different American literary movement
- a Web site containing information about American Literature, including a searchable database, teacher materials, student materials, and possibly access to online composition software
- printed course materials (Teacher's Guide and Students' Guide)

OPB has secured a partnership with W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. The *Norton Anthology*, 6th edition will serve as the primary text for the course. W. W. Norton & Company will also develop and print the Teacher's Guide and Students' Guide. Also through association with Norton, it is possible that the project will incorporate Norton's *ConnectWeb* online composition software.

RESEARCH METHODS

In consultation with OPB, GRG developed two separate surveys (Content Survey and Technology Survey) to gather information from instructors of American Literature survey courses at the high school, 2-year college, and 4-year college or university level. By developing two separate surveys, we were able to ask the scope of questions of interest to OPB without making one survey prohibitively long for respondents. However, several questions were the same on the two surveys. These questions gathered general information about the instructors' thoughts on the importance of several teaching objectives, as well as their comfort level in achieving those objectives with their students. Both surveys also shared questions about what instructors consider when choosing an

anthology and whether support from professional organizations or alignment with curriculum requirements were important in their adoption of new course materials.

The Content Survey specifically focused on instructors' course organization and their use of instructor and student guides. We also asked instructors to tell us which literary movements they teach, and to give us their reasons for not teaching a given movement.

The Technology Survey specifically focused on instructors' current use of the Web and other technologies in their teaching of American Literature. We also asked instructors to indicate what might encourage them to increase their use of technology in the future.

Sample Selection

We mailed the surveys to a total of 2,000 instructors of American Literature survey courses. Half of them received the Content Survey and half of them received the Technology Survey. The sample was selected randomly and was stratified based upon the type of institution at which the instructor taught (high school, 2-year college, or 4-year college or university level). Sample selection was also dependent on the availability of names from Market Data Retrieval's (MDR) files and on OPB's interest in reaching all segments of their target audience. The percentage of surveys sent to each group and the percentage from each group who responded is shown below:
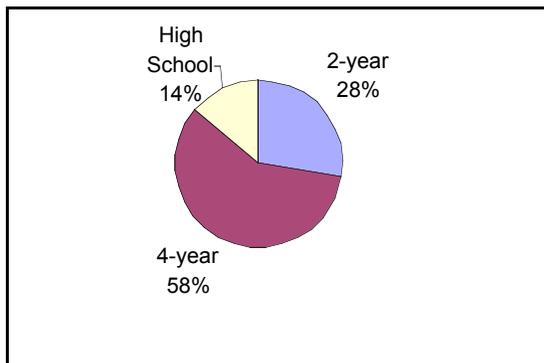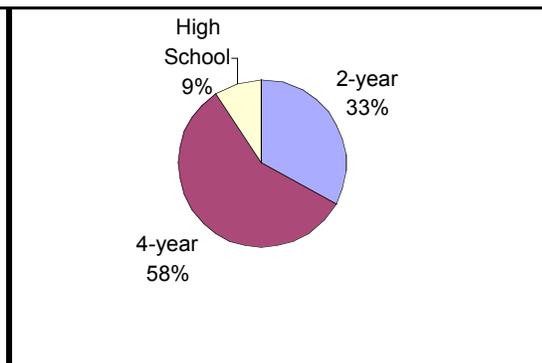
Exhibit 1A: Target Population	**Exhibit 1B: Respondent Sample**

Response Rates and Profile of Respondents

In total, we received 463 surveys through two waves of data collection. The first mailing was sent on December 5, 2000. The second mailing, targeting non-respondents, was sent on January 22, 2001. Factoring in the incorrect addresses, the overall response rate for the two surveys was 23%. Exhibit 2 provides the total response rate, as well as the response rate to each survey. Response rates to the two surveys were similar. We received higher response rates from college instructors than from high school teachers.

Exhibit 2
Response Rate

		# Mailed	# Received	Response Rate
Technology Survey	High School**	135	20	15%
	2-year	275	65	24%
	4-year	590	131	22%
	Total	1000	224*	22%
Content Survey	High School**	135	20	15%
	2-year	275	78	28%
	4-year	590	125	21%
	Total	1000	239*	24%
Total		**2000**	**463**	**23%**

 *Not all respondents provided information about grade level taught, so numbers do not add up to total.
**Some of the respondents who teach high school teach more than one grade, however, the majority of them teach 11th or 12th grade.

Experience Levels

As a measure of their experience in teaching American Literature survey courses, we asked respondents to tell us how many times they had taught such a course. There was a wide variation in their responses (1-200 times), with the average instructor having taught an American Literature survey course 22 times. The median fell at 14, so half of the respondents had taught such a course 14 or fewer times, while half of them had taught an American Literature survey course more than 14 times.

In order to use information about respondents' experience levels in teaching American Literature survey courses in our analyses, we combined them into four groups. The percentages of respondents who fall into four "experience level" categories are shown in Exhibit 3.

Exhibit 3
Respondents' Experience Levels

No. of Am. Lit. Survey Courses Taught	Percentage of Respondents (n=398)
1-10	45%
11-20	23
21-40	19
41 or more	13

These four experience level groups will be referred to in the Results section when differences between groups are discussed.

RESULTS

Following are the key findings from the Content and Technology Surveys. The findings include statistical data, exhibits (charts and tables), and descriptive information. Statistically significant differences between instructors at 2-year institutions and those at 4-year institutions are discussed where they emerged. Comparisons between high school teachers and college instructors are also discussed where relevant.

Results are presented in these sections:

- The Merged Data Results
- The Content Survey Results
- The Technology Survey Results

Following the results, we present Conclusions and possible directions for future formative research.
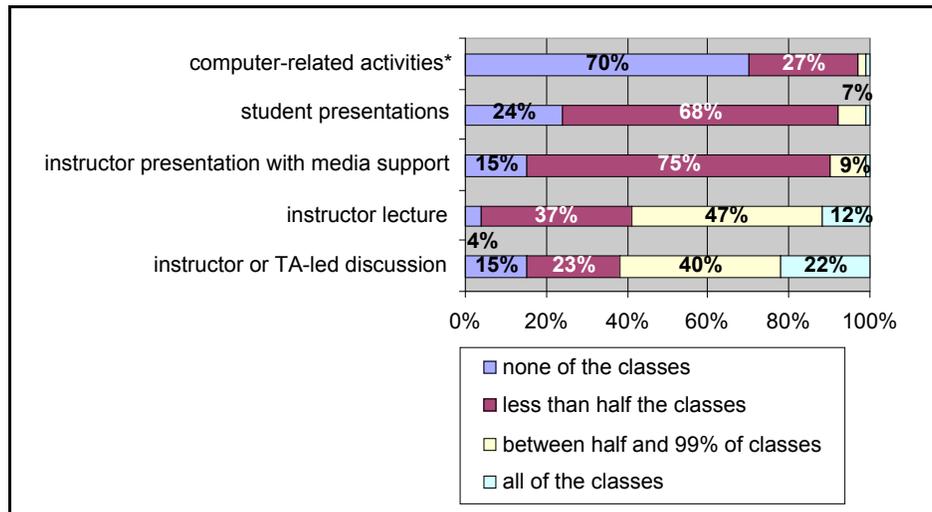
THE MERGED DATA RESULTS

Since the two surveys shared several questions, and the instructors were randomly assigned to receive one or the other of the surveys, we merged the data from them and analyzed the questions together. The results of these merged questions are reported in this section. Topics covered include what instructors do during their class time, their ratings of teaching objectives, and factors that influence their adoption of new course materials.

What Instructors Do During Their Class Time

When asked to report on the percentage of time they are involved in a variety of activities during their classes, respondents told us that they spend most of their time lecturing or in discussion with students. We also found that Teaching Assistants (TA's) rarely lecture or make presentations with media support in class—only 4% and 7% respectively. The percentages of time instructors report spending on other activities during their class meetings are displayed in Exhibit 4.

Exhibit 4
Time Spent on Activities During Class

Activity	none of the classes	less than half the classes	between half and 99% of classes	all of the classes
computer-related activities*	70%	27%	7%	
student presentations	24%	68%		
instructor presentation with media support	15%	75%	9%	
instructor lecture	4%	37%	47%	12%
instructor or TA-led discussion	15%	23%	40%	22%

Legend:
- □ none of the classes
- ■ less than half the classes
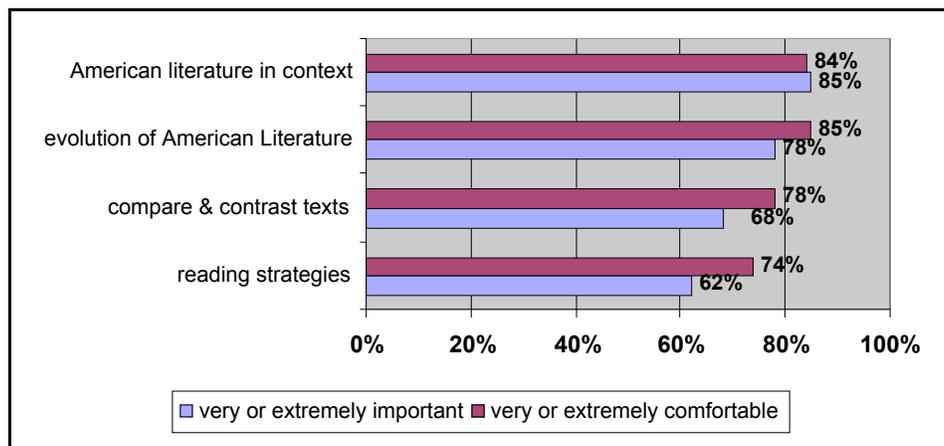- □ between half and 99% of classes
- □ all of the classes

*"Computer-related activities" include CD-ROM, Web, & threaded discussion.

As Exhibit 4 above indicates, few instructors spend time during class doing computer-related activities; 70% of our respondents told us they *never* use computer-related activities during class. However, use of media support is more extensive. Eighty-five percent of our respondents include presentations with media support in their classes, and over three-quarters of them include student presentations in their classes.

General Teaching Objectives

We asked respondents to rate the importance of certain teaching objectives, and also to tell us how comfortable they felt in achieving those objectives with their students. In general, they reported that all of the teaching objectives mentioned on the survey were either *very important* or *extremely important* to them, and the majority of them also reported that they are quite comfortable in achieving these objectives. As Exhibit 5 below indicates, instructors placed a high priority on teaching American Literature in context.
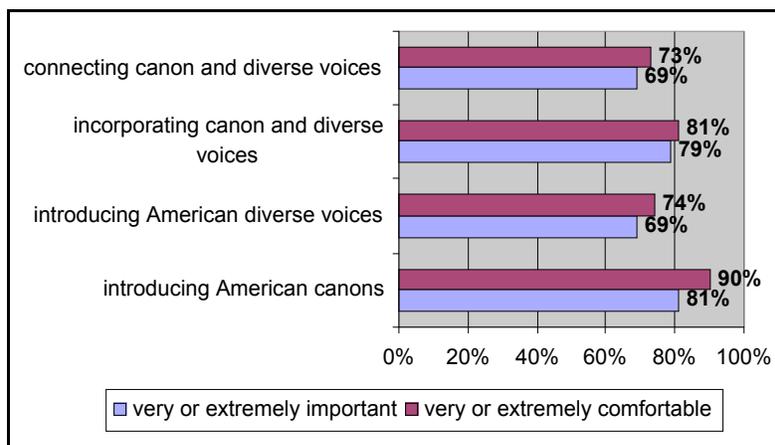
Exhibit 5
Importance of & Comfort with Various Teaching Objectives

Chart showing:
- American literature in context: 84% (comfortable), 85% (important)
- evolution of American Literature: 85% (comfortable), 78% (important)
- compare & contrast texts: 78% (comfortable), 68% (important)
- reading strategies: 74% (comfortable), 62% (important)

Legend: very or extremely important ▪ very or extremely comfortable

Objectives Related to Canons and Diverse Voices

We also asked respondents to report on how important they felt it was to teach the canons and to teach texts representing diverse voices. Here, too, we see that the majority of the respondents believe that these objectives were either *very* or *extremely important*, and felt either *very* or *extremely comfortable* in carrying them out.

Exhibit 6
Importance of & Comfort with Canon & Diverse Voices

Chart showing:
- connecting canon and diverse voices: 73% (comfortable), 69% (important)
- incorporating canon and diverse voices: 81% (comfortable), 79% (important)
- introducing American diverse voices: 74% (comfortable), 69% (important)
- introducing American canons: 90% (comfortable), 81% (important)

Legend: very or extremely important ▪ very or extremely comfortable

Differences in Importance and Comfort Ratings Related to Experience Level

A few significant differences emerged in the instructors' ratings of the teaching objectives, both in their views of the objectives' importance and in their ratings of their comfort in achieving the objectives. Instructors who had taught an American Literature survey course 10 or fewer times:

❖ gave significantly higher ratings to the importance of *introducing writers, styles, and themes representing diverse voices* than those who had taught the course 41 or more times (p<.05).

❖ rated the importance of *incorporating both canons and authors representing diverse voices* as more important than those who had taught the course between 11 and 20 times (p<.05).

❖ gave *teaching American Literature in the context of other subjects* lower ratings than instructors in all other groups (p<.01).

❖ were less comfortable than all other groups in *teaching the canons* (p<.001), and *in illustrating how American Literature has evolved over time* (p<.001).

Adopting New Course Materials

When asked about the importance of several factors in their decisions to adopt new course materials, respondents told us that the ability to customize the curriculum materials was the most important to them. About two-thirds of them rated this factor as at least *somewhat important*.

Instructors at 2-year institutions were significantly more likely to rate the following items as *very* or *extremely important* than those at 4-year institutions:

❖ Customizable curriculum materials (p<.05)
❖ Alignment with school/district curriculum requirements (p<.01)
❖ Alignment with state curriculum requirements (p<.01)

Since some of the factors regarding the adoption of new course materials were particularly relevant to high school teachers, we conducted a separate frequency analysis for them. This revealed that high school teachers (n=40) rated all of the factors as more important than did the college instructors (n=423). They also prioritized them differently than did the college instructors. See Exhibit 7 for a comparison of college instructors' and high school teachers' responses to this question. The percentages represent those who rated the items as either *very* or *extremely important.*

Exhibit 7
Elements of Importance to Instructors when Adopting New Course Materials

	College	High School
customizable curriculum materials	34%	59%
ASA support	13%	13%
meeting state curriculum requirements	13%	83%
meeting school/district curriculum requirements	11%	73%
NCTE support	11%	38%

College Instructors (n=423), High School Instructors (n=40)

About half of all respondents answered a question asking what other factors influence their decision to adopt new course materials. Of these 218 people, almost one quarter of them (24%) said that factors surrounding the format of the materials influence them. Respondents mentioned sundry issues of format (including font size, one volume versus several volumes, readability) and whether the materials contain tests for them to use.

> *"Appearance of the texts (i.e., not over-crowded on the page), apparatus (footnotes, introductions, bibliographies.)"*

Over one-fifth of them mentioned that the content covered in the course materials was a factor that would influence their decision to adopt the materials. Several illustrative comments are presented below:

> *"I'd like an anthology that includes secondary materials – noteworthy critical essays alongside texts."*

> *"A fair representation of all American literatures, and complete works instead of small snippets of longer works."*

> *"Definitions of literary terms in the back of volume."*

THE CONTENT SURVEY RESULTS

This section details the responses of the 239 instructors of American Literature survey courses who responded to the content survey. See Appendix A for a copy of the survey. Topics covered include which anthologies our respondents use, the likelihood of their use of Student Study Guide activities, how useful they would find various features in an Instructor's Guide, and the literary movements they cover in their courses.

Anthology Choice

Virtually all of our respondents (96%) have input regarding which anthology they use in their American Literature survey courses. The three anthologies our respondents reported using the most often are: Heath (21%), Prentice Hall (19%), and the Norton two-volume edition (18%). However, an additional 14% of the respondents reported using the Norton one-volume edition, and another 11% told us that they use Norton, but did not indicate whether they prefer the one-volume or the two-volume edition. As such, when all Norton users are combined, close to half our respondents (44%) use a Norton anthology in their courses. The pie graphs in Exhibit 8 depict which anthologies our respondents use.

Exhibit 8
Anthologies Respondents Use
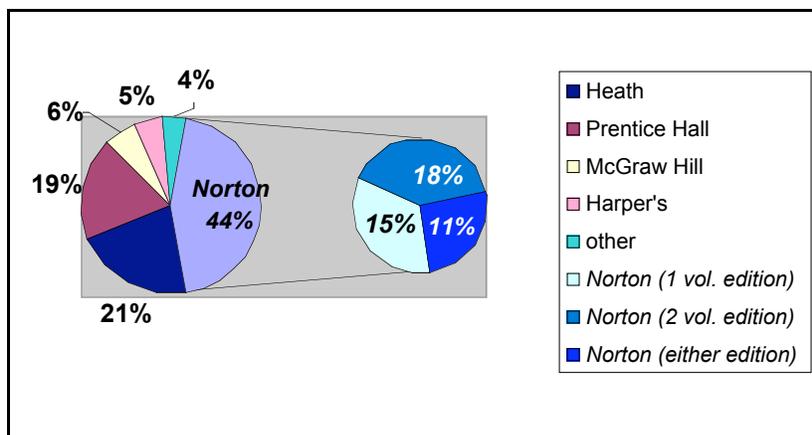
When asked about the importance of various factors in their decision to use a particular anthology, the inclusion of texts they use in their courses was a primary factor for our respondents. Ninety-two percent reported that this was either *very important* or *extremely important* to them. The presence of a ready-made curriculum to accompany the anthology was clearly the least important to our respondents. It was *not at all* or *only a little important* to about three-quarters (74%) of them. The importance of other factors in instructors' decision to use a particular anthology is shown in Exhibit 9.[1]

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[1] We asked instructors about the importance of a variety of factors in their anthology choice on both the Content and the Technology Surveys. This table shows the combined findings of the two surveys.

Exhibit 9
Importance in Choosing an Anthology

	Not at All or Only a Little Important	Somewhat Important	Very or Extremely Important
Inclusion of texts used in course (n=442)	2%	6%	92%
Cost (n=443)	14	40	46
Availability of 1 volume edition (n=436)	36	23	41
Instructor's Guide (n=438)	46	26	28
Student Study Guide (n=438)	55	29	16
Ready-made curriculum (n=438)	74	15	11

Student Study Guides

In order to help OPB determine what to emphasize in the Student Study Guide, we asked instructors how likely they would be to use a variety of elements in such a guide. They reported that they would be most likely to use a Student Study Guide for its *discussion or study questions.* The feature that they would be the least likely to use in a Student Study Guide was *fill in the blank exercises.* The table below displays instructors' reported likelihood of using seven different features of a Student Study Guide.

Exhibit 10
Likelihood of Using Activities in a Student Study Guide
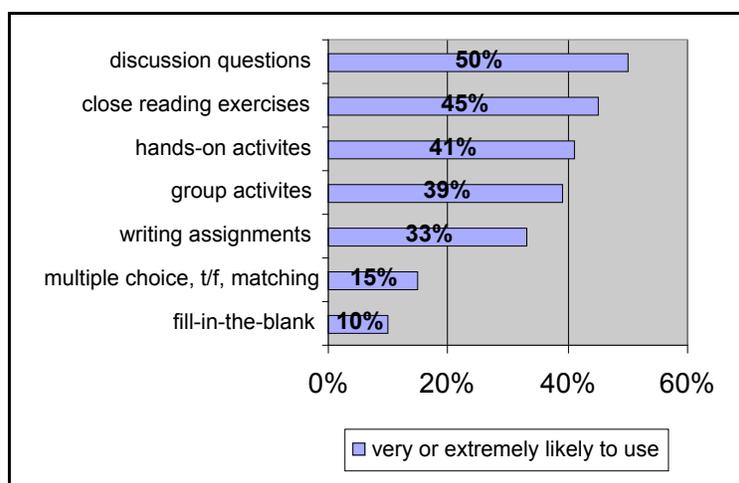
Instructors at 2-year institutions reported being significantly more likely than those at 4-year institutions to use a Student Study Guide to assign all but two of the above activities.

Those activities were *hands on activities/project-based assignments* and *close reading exercises/exercises exploring narrative strategies.*

We also asked respondents to tell us about any other features that would be helpful to them in a Study Guide for students. Seventy-four people gave suggestions, with over one-third of them (39%) requesting that the Study Guide include journal exercises and vocabulary for students. About one-third (36%) also requested that the Study Guide contain contextual materials, such as historical synopses of literary periods, maps, pictures of artifacts, or newspaper articles. Other suggestions included questions to aid students in test preparation, sample model essays, a bibliography, and a "Webliography".
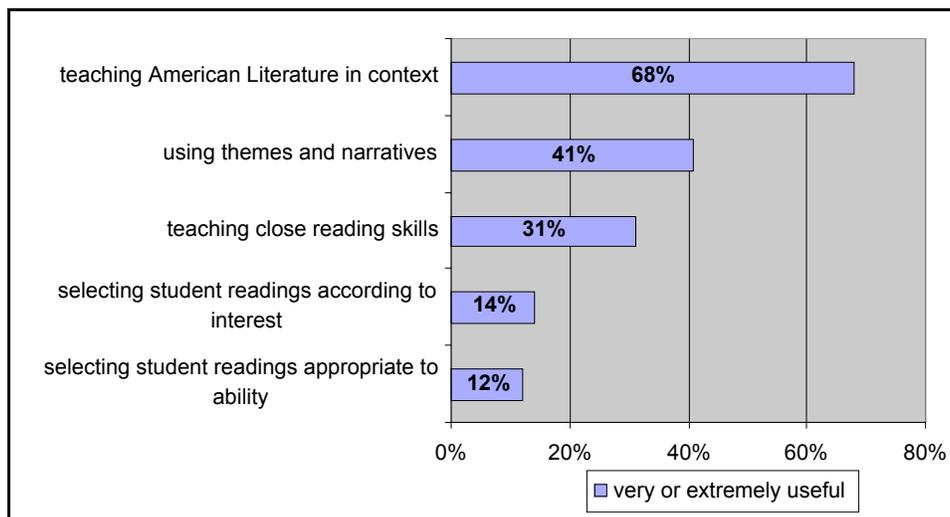
Instructor's Guide

We also asked instructors to rate the usefulness of nine different features that might be included in an Instructor's Guide. The features were split between information related to the text-related aspects of teaching American Literature (e.g., selecting readings for students) and technological aspects of teaching American Literature (e.g., how to integrate online materials into one's course).

The majority of our respondents reported that they would find *guidelines on teaching American Literature in the context of other subjects, such as history, politics, and the arts* to be the most useful aspect of an Instructor's Guide. Although instructors at both 2-year and 4-year institutions felt it would be highly useful, respondents at 2-year institutions were more likely to give this item higher ratings (p<.05). Note that instructors' ratings of this item's importance and their comfort in achieving it with students were quite high (see pg. 5), yet it is still something that they would find highly useful in an Instructor's Guide.
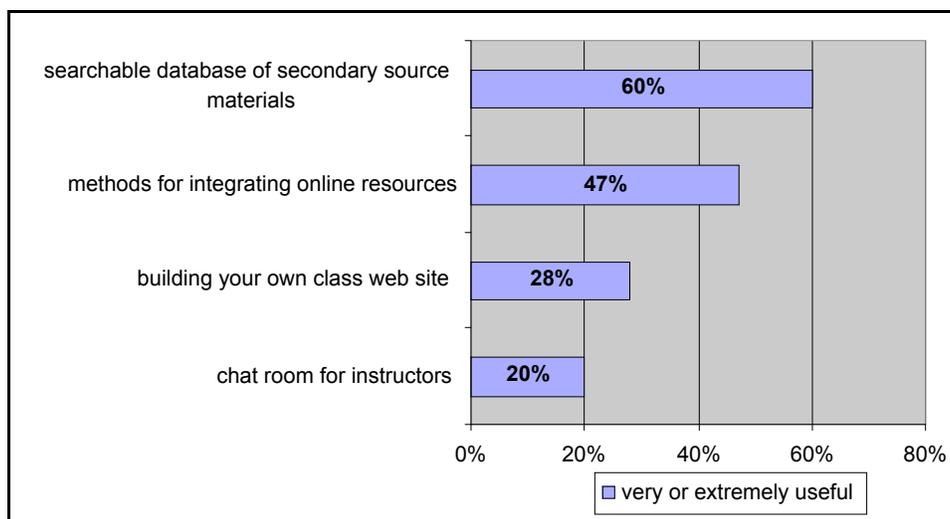
Instructors at both types of institutions said they would find little use for guidelines on selecting reading appropriate for students' abilities. Instructors' ratings of the text-related features are presented in Exhibit 11.

Exhibit 11
Usefulness of Text-Related Features

teaching American Literature in context	68%
using themes and narratives	41%
teaching close reading skills	31%
selecting student readings according to interest	14%
selecting student readings appropriate to ability	12%

☐ very or extremely useful

Of the technology-related features that might be included in an Instructor's Guide, our respondents reported that they would find an online searchable database of secondary source materials to be the most useful. Instructors' ratings of the four technology-related features are shown in Exhibit 12.

Exhibit 12
Usefulness of Technology-Related Features in an Instructor's Guide

searchable database of secondary source materials	60%
methods for integrating online resources	47%
building your own class web site	28%
chat room for instructors	20%

☐ very or extremely useful

Course Content

In order to inform OPB about the curriculum choices made by instructors of American Literature survey courses, we asked our respondents to indicate whether or not they teach 20 different literary movements. Only one difference emerged between instructors at 2-year and those at 4-year institutions in this area. Instructors at 4-year colleges or universities were significantly more likely to teach the Literature of Spanish Colonization than their counterparts at 2-year schools ($p<.05$).

The three movements taught by the highest percentage of respondents to the Content Survey were (noted in ***bold italics*** in Exhibit 13):

- Transcendentalism & the American Renaissance;
- African-American Literature; and
- Modernist Prose

The three movements taught by the lowest percentage of respondents were (noted in **bold** in Exhibit 13):

- Chicano Literature;
- Asian-American Literature; and
- Literature of Spanish Colonization

See Exhibit 13 for more information about the movements respondents reported teaching.

Exhibit 13
Movements Taught by Respondents

	% currently teaching this movement/ topic (n=227)
African-American Literature	*91%*
American Indian Oral Tradition	61
Asian-American Literature	**38**
Chicano Literature	**40**
Literature of Spanish Colonization	**34**
Puritan Tradition	90
American Enlightenment (c. 1750-1820)	89
A National Tradition (c. 1820-1850)	87
Slave Narrative	87
Transcendentalism/American Renaissance	*92*
Southern Realism (c. 1865-1900)	78
Naturalism & Progressivism (c. 1890-1910)	88
Literature of the Gilded Age (c. 1880-1910)	81
Modernist Prose (c. 1910-1940)	*91*
Modernist Poetry (c. 1910-1940)	87
The Harlem Renaissance	84
Southern Renaissance (c. 1930-1960)	69
Post-War Literature (c. 1945-1965)	87
Literature of the 1960s	78
Contemporary Literature (c. 1975-2000)	75

We were interested in respondents' reasons for not teaching a particular topic. We asked them to consider the following three reasons and check all that they felt applied to their decision to not teach a movement:

- Relevance to narratives or themes they use in class
- Their knowledge level in the subject
- Their perception of the availability of support materials

For the three movements taught by the lowest percentage of respondents, Chicano Literature, Asian-American Literature, and Literature of Spanish Colonization, most respondents told us that they do not teach these movements due to their own lack of knowledge in the subject area. These three movements, along with the American Indian Oral Tradition, were also the areas in which a lack of support materials influenced instructors' decisions not to teach the movements. For the remaining 17 movements, the relatively small percentage of respondents who reported that they do not teach the movements indicated that this is because the movements are not critical to the narratives or themes they use in their classes.

Differences in Experience Level and Movements Taught

We compared the responses of instructors with varying levels of experience to see if there were any differences in the movements they chose to teach. For the most part, there were no significant differences between instructors with little experience and those with more experience in terms of choosing which movements to teach.

However, there was a significant trend for instructors with more experience to be more likely to teach the following movements than instructors with less experience:

- ❖ American Enlightenment ($p < .05$)
- ❖ National Tradition ($p < .05$)
- ❖ Naturalism and Progressivism ($p < .05$)
- ❖ Literature of the Gilded Age ($p < .01$)
- ❖ Southern Renaissance ($p < .01$)

THE TECHNOLOGY SURVEY RESULTS

This section details the responses of the 224 instructors of American Literature survey courses who responded to the technology survey. See Appendix B for a copy of the survey. In the technology survey, we explored the extent to which instructors use technology in their class meetings and in the assignments they give to students, as well as what might prompt them to use technology more. We also asked them to tell us about the amount of experience they have with the Web. The findings from these questions are presented below. See Appendix X for a copy of the survey.
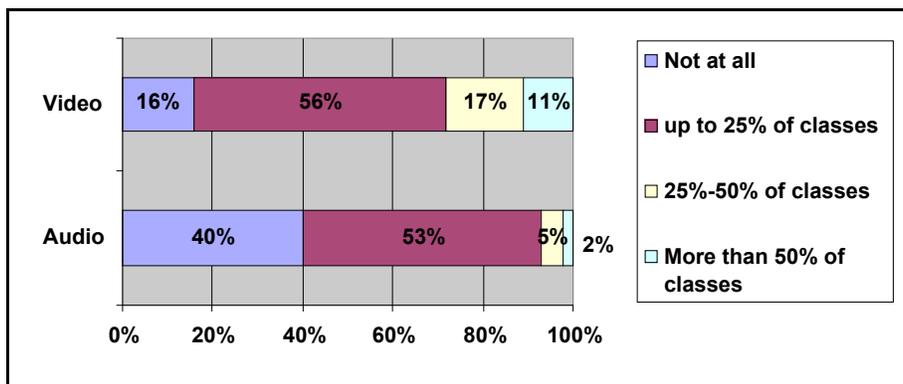
Use of Technology in the Classroom

Respondents indicated how frequently they use 10 different types of technology during a typical American Literature survey course. Video and audio recordings are the most frequently used technologies. Exhibit 14 displays percentages of respondents who use each of the 10 technologies during their class meetings and for what percentage of the course they use the technologies. Instructors at 2-year institutions were significantly more likely to use video at all during their classes than those who teach at 4-year institutions ($p<.05$).

Exhibit 14
Technology Use During Class Meetings
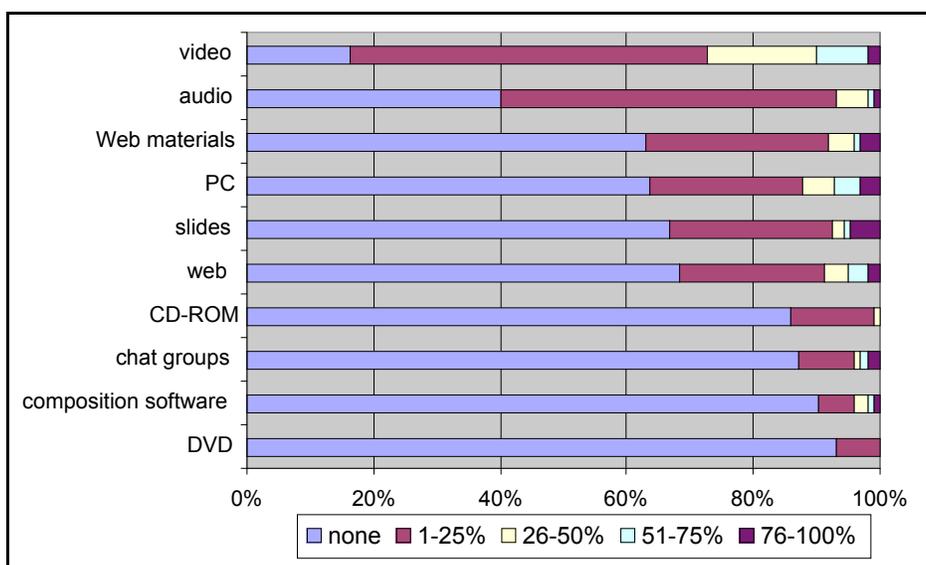
Since video and audio recordings were used by the largest percentage of respondents, we examined their patterns of usage a bit more. As with all of the technologies, the majority of those who use video and audio recordings tend to do so in up to 25% of their class meetings. However, as displayed in Exhibit 15, some respondents use these two types of technology more frequently.

Exhibit 15
Use of Video and Audio Recordings during Class Meetings

Technology Use in Assignments

Since instructors may vary in the extent to which they use technology in their classrooms and the extent to which they ask students to use it in assignments, we asked them to report on both. Respondents generally encourage or require students to use these technologies in *25% or less* of their assignments. The three technologies most frequently assigned or suggested for use in class work are video (60% of respondents), Web (57% of respondents), and personal computer (54% of our respondents). Instructors at 2-year institutions were more likely to give assignments involving video than those at 4-year institutions ($p<.05$). The percentages of instructors who incorporate each of the technologies into their assignments are displayed in Exhibit 16.

Exhibit 16
Required/Suggested Technologies to Use in Assignments
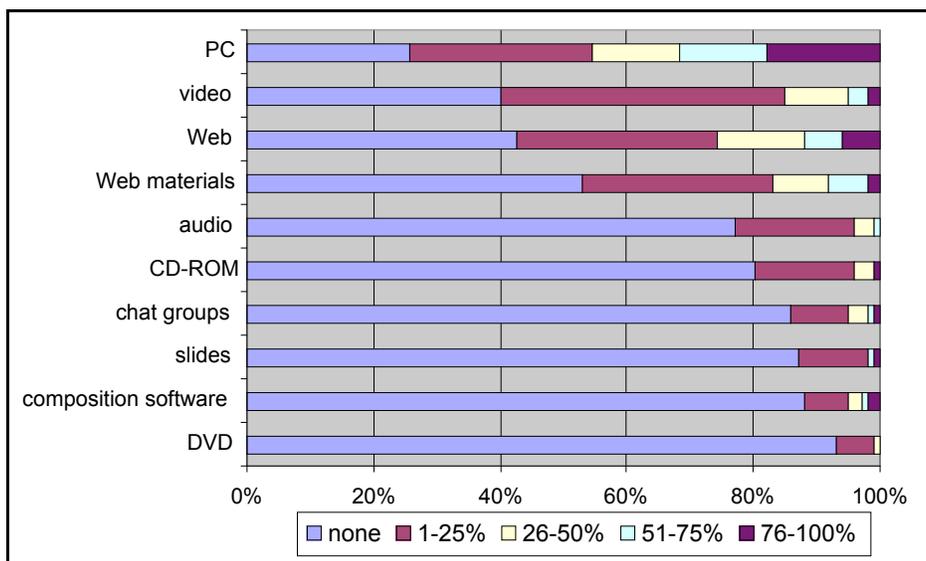
General Experience with the Web

When asked about their experience with the Web for a variety of functions, respondents told us that they are most experienced in using the Web to interact with students via email (70%), for personal needs like shopping or checking weather (49%), and in using Web resources to research content for class materials (41%). Exhibit 17 shows respondents' experience levels with various Web capabilities.

Exhibit 17
Experience with the Web
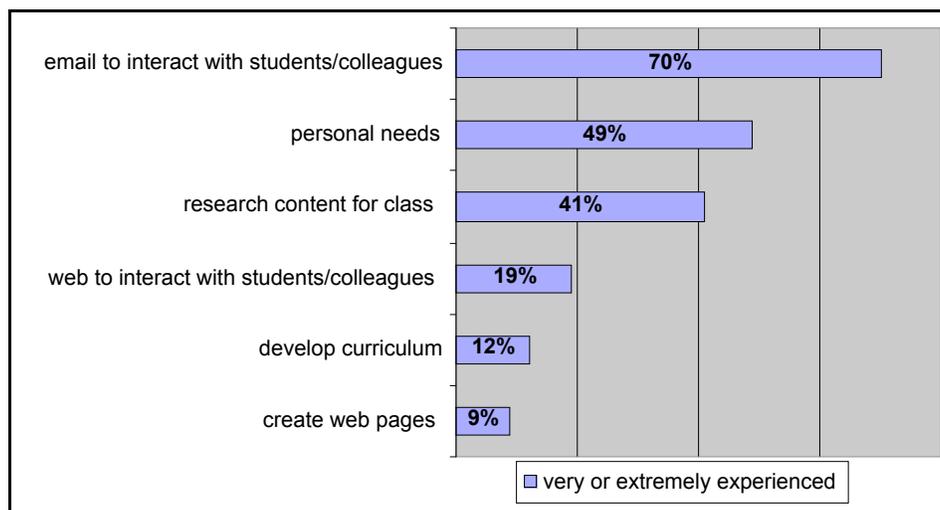
Instructors at 2-year institutions reported that they were significantly more experienced in using the Web to develop curriculum resources than instructors at 4-year institutions ($p<.05$).

Increasing Technology Use in American Literature Survey Courses

We asked instructors to tell us if they might be encouraged to use technology more in their teaching of American Literature survey courses, and most of them said that they could be encouraged to do so (range from 89%-63%, depending on the technology). However, these percentages were lower for threaded chat/online discussion groups or online composition software. For these technologies, 52% and 53% of respondents, respectively, said they could be encouraged to increase use.

Three factors were listed on the survey and instructors were asked to indicate which of them would promote their increased use of each technology. These factors were: increased availability of equipment, increased technical support and/or training, and increased availability of American Literature content materials. The factor that would encourage most of the instructors to the technologies is the availability of American Literature content materials. This was true for Web-related technologies as well as other

types of media. Exhibit 18 displays the percentages of respondents who would be encouraged to use more Web-related technology if each of the factors were in place.

Exhibit 18
Factors Encouraging Use of Web Resources

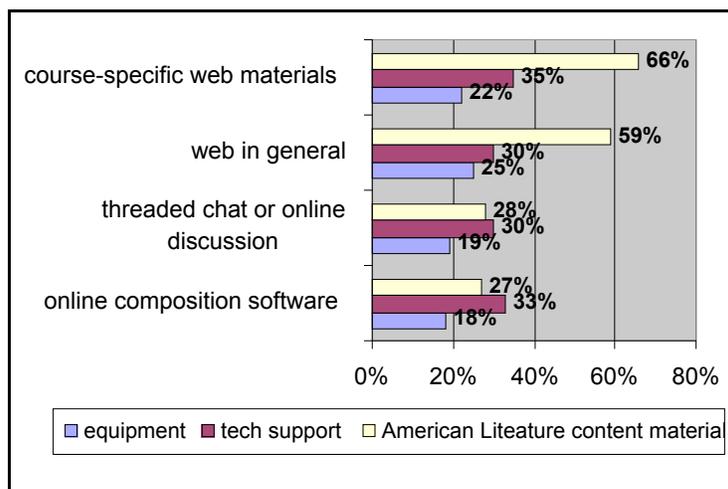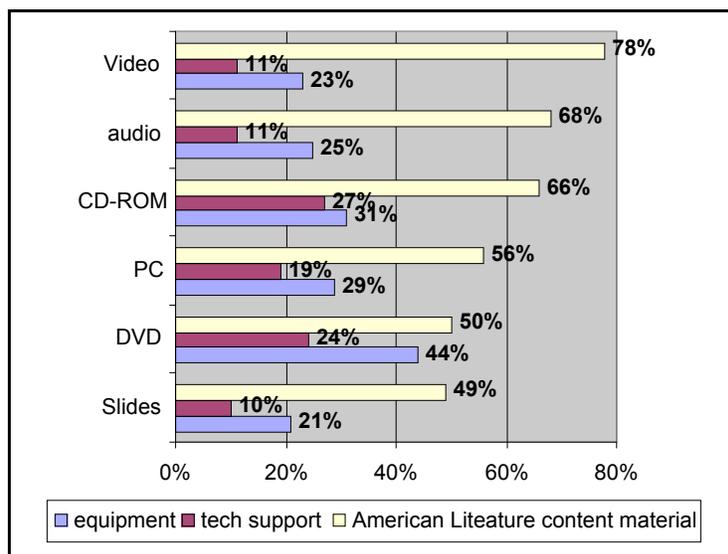| Factor	equipment	tech support	American Literature content material
course-specific web materials	22%	35%	66%
web in general	25%	30%	59%
threaded chat or online discussion	19%	30%	28%
online composition software	18%	33%	27%

Exhibit 19 displays the factors that would promote instructors' use of multi-media resources. As with the Web resources, the availability of American Literature content material was the factor that would encourage most of the instructors to use the technologies.

Exhibit 19
Factors Encouraging Use of Multi-Media Resources

Factor	equipment	tech support	American Literature content material
Video	23%	11%	78%
audio	25%	11%	68%
CD-ROM	31%	27%	66%
PC	29%	19%	56%
DVD	44%	24%	50%
Slides	21%	10%	49%

The only significant difference between instructors at 2-year institutions and those at 4-year institutions was around factors that would increase their use of DVD. Instructors at 2-year institutions were more likely to report that they would use DVD if there were an increased availability of equipment ($p<.05$) than were their counterparts at 4-year institutions.

Respondents commented in an open-ended question about what would increase the likelihood of using multiple media formats in their American Literature instruction. Two representative comments included:

> *"Fully media-equipped classrooms and additional training and web-support course development and course applications."*

> *"My own increased comfort with cyberspace!"*

Experience Level and Receptiveness to Using Various Media

In general, the data show a trend for instructors with less experience to be more receptive to using different types of media than those with higher levels of experience teaching American Literature survey courses. This trend was significant for the use of audio recordings ($p<.01$) and personal computers ($p<.01$).

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions Related to Content

Our respondents report that they consider teaching American Literature in the context of other subjects to be highly important, and consider themselves to be quite comfortable in achieving this with their students. They also report that guidelines on how to teach literature in context would be more useful than all other potential features in an Instructor's Guide. It appears that the instructors are seeking even more information on how to incorporate this aspect of teaching into their courses. Therefore, the contextual materials intended to accompany the OPB series would be well received by the American Literature instructors in our sample. Touting the extent to which OPB's materials include information about how to teach literature in context may also be a "selling point" for many instructors.

Our respondents feel strongly that it is important to incorporate both canonical works and those by authors of diverse backgrounds into their courses. However, when asked to rate the importance of introducing each of these to their students, respondents indicated that they think the canons are slightly more important than those works representing diverse voices. Thus, if the OPB materials enable instructors to seamlessly incorporate both of these types of literature, the materials may work very well for those who feel it is important to incorporate both but would choose the canons if forced to decide.

Asian-American Literature, Chicano Literature, and the Literature of Spanish Colonization emerged as the three movements that are taught by the fewest respondents and also the three movements about which respondents reported knowing the least. Overall, few respondents indicated that there was a lack of support materials for any of the movements, but these three again emerged (along with the American Indian Oral Tradition) as the movements about which the largest percentage of respondents believe there is a relative lack of materials. OPB's materials could fill a gap in these subject areas, if that is a direction the producers wish to take.

Those respondents who teach at 2-year institutions were significantly more likely to rate alignment with school/district and state curriculum requirements as important factors in choosing their new course materials. As such, if OPB plans to focus its materials on these instructors rather than those at the 4-year institutions, careful attention to the curriculum requirements of 2-year colleges would be warranted.

Instructors at 2-year institutions also reported that they would be more likely to use 5 of the 7 suggested items in a Student Study Guide than were instructors at 4-year institutions. Although usage of multiple choice, true/false, and matching questions, and fill in the blank activities were low for both groups, those at 2-year institutions reported that they would be more likely to use a Student Study Guide for these purposes.

Conclusions Related to Technology

The results of this formative research show that instructors of American Literature survey courses currently use technology to a moderate extent in their courses. Generally, instructors tend to use technology to supplement their lectures, rather than as a primary tool during their class time with students. They tend to use more traditional media, such as video, rather than more recent technological advances, like threaded chats. The instructors we surveyed report that they would use different types of technology more often if there were material relevant to their American Literature survey courses available in those media. This is particularly true of video, audio recordings, CD-ROM, and course specific Web materials. Video is already the medium that the majority of our instructors use, and it is the medium that most instructors say they would use even more if the content were appropriate. As such, it seems that the video component of OPB's project will fit nicely with the current usage patterns and expressed needs of American Literature survey course instructors.

Three-fifths (60%) of our respondents indicated that they would find a searchable database of secondary source materials to be *very* or *extremely useful.* This potential feature of an online Instructor's Guide received the highest usefulness ratings of all technology-related features that might be in an Instructor's Guide. OPB may want to keep this in mind as they restructure the plan for the Web-related features of the project.

POSSIBLE DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE FORMATIVE RESEARCH

This section presents a few suggestions for further research as OPB continues its development of *American Passages.* We propose a few areas that OPB may want to explore in further depth and suggest possible methods for obtaining more formative feedback.

Investigation of Instructors' Access to Technology

In this research, we determined that the use of technology (other than video) by instructors of American Literature survey courses is rather low. The following additional information may be helpful as OPB makes its plans for the direction of *American Passages:*
   ❖ the extent to which instructors actually have access to technology in their high schools, colleges, and universities
   ❖ the plans such institutions have for the building up of their technological platforms over the next several years

Typical Users of Annenberg/CPB Materials

As OPB, Norton, and Annenberg/CPB make their plans for marketing the *American Passages* course, it may be helpful to gain more information about who the typical users of Annenberg/CPB materials actually are, including:
   ❖ the selectiveness of the schools at which users of Annenberg/CPB materials teach
   ❖ the features of Annenberg/CPB materials users find the most and least helpful in their teaching
   ❖ whether and how users' age relates to use of such materials

Focus Groups

Now that we have gathered information from a large sample of instructors of American Literature survey courses, OPB may wish to gain more detailed feedback from a smaller group of instructors. Topics to be explored include:
   ❖ what instructors would like to know about literary movements with which they are unfamiliar
   ❖ challenges they face in using technology in their classes
Depending upon the timing of the focus groups and OPB's production of prototypes, the prototypes could also be pilot tested in the focus groups.

Telephone Interviews

GRG could conduct phone interviews with a subset of the survey respondents in order to explore more fully their thoughts on teaching American Literature survey courses. Other issues to be addressed include:
   ❖ perceptions of student receptiveness to using technology
   ❖ the availability of training for instructors on the use of technology
   ❖ further exploration of instructors' decisions to include certain movements in their courses

Student Feedback

It may also be useful to obtain student feedback regarding the videos, written materials, and Web site once these materials are in their prototype phase. Information to be gathered includes:
   ❖ students' opinions about the videos' content and format
   ❖ students' perceptions of the Web site's navigability and ease of use