For unit two of WRTG120, I chose to assign Genres in the Wild. I had my students chose a genre in the field they intend to go into and write about its features. Our working definition of genre was based on that in Kerry Dirk’s essay, “Navigating Genres,” as writing that arises to meet specific goals and adheres to certain conventions. One of the invention portfolio items I had my students create in class was a drawn multimodal piece intended to familiarize them with genre conventions. The materials necessary for this activity are paper, drawing materials like crayons or markers, and tape to post the drawings on the wall. The prompt is as follows:

Draw (yes, draw) a social media post of your choosing about the genre you are working with. This activity can present a snapstory that points out the key features of your genre, a Facebook status describing in detail the intended audience of your genre, a tweet describing your response to receiving a piece of your genre, or an Instagram post featuring a “picture” of your genre. The only rule is that your post must conform to the conventions of the platform you are choosing to model.

As part of their projects, my students had to create effective and ineffective examples of their genres, so this activity was designed to familiarize them with paying attention to how genres may look and how the information that goes into genres is written. For example, a Facebook post looks different than a Tweet and both have different allowances of character count. Additionally, the platforms can be said to also have differences in how their users write their posts in terms of tone, word choice, etc.. This is true of all writing genres. My students had to pay attention to what these social media posts would look like in terms of structure and then had to adapt the language of their papers according to the platform they were depicting. Several of my students said this was one of the most help assignments in completing their project because it helped them understand the modeling process.