Sergio Duarte

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Reflective Letter

 The past ten weeks in Writing 2 to now come to a satisfying end. This class has improved my writing in so many ways. From grammar to cohesion, the practices taught to me in this class probably have made my writing go from terrible to readable. I honestly thought this class was just going to be about answering different prompts. Little did I imagine I would learn as much as I did.

 Let’s start off with the first assignment. I thought it was so pointless to name so many different genres and compare them to each other. Like a fool, I did not see the vision. My eyes were opened as the class went on. I had to describe the different conventions a genre uses, which was something I had never really paid attention to. This genre identifying exercise has helped me see that there is a difference from genre to genre in what information they portray and communicate to their audiences.

 My writing process I think has changed significantly. All my high school career, writing was a chore and a burden to me, but now I see it as more of a sales pitch. You need to sell to your audience your argument and convince them that what you believe and the information you present is right. Although this sounds pretty straightforward, writing is still a difficult task to accomplish. Whenever I have to write, I try my best to not think of it as a chore or assignment. This class has taught me to use two types of thinking to help my writing a lot. This helps me calm down and allows my creativity to flow more. To start, I sit down somewhere quiet enough for me to focus. Then, I look at my assignment or the question posed and write down my first thoughts. Using my second order thinking, I organize these thoughts in order to provide a clear explanation for my topic. I leave spaces for examples in my outline. I find that outlining the main points helps a lot in keeping my thoughts and ideas clear and organized. After completing the outline, I start my essay. I try to provide as much detail as I can to make sure I don’t miss a point or confuse the reader.

This class has also greatly improved my revision process. After I finish an essay, I revise it and read it out loud to see whether it sounds right or not. Once I am done revising, I’m done with my essay. I think it works well for me, although I sometimes have trouble with repeating ideas throughout my paper. I never really dug deep into my essay about the structure or organization of ideas. This was partly due to the fact that I desperately tried to turn my essay in as quick as possible. Now, I use various tools such as reverse outlining and making sure my paragraphs and sentences flow together. These practices are good for me and my revision process because they allow me to see what my points are in each paragraph and whether or not I am consistently carrying my main idea throughout the essay.

The other part of the revision process that helped me significantly was the peer review. Seeing comments from my fellow classmates that were struggling in different ways than I was made me improve in the areas that I was having a hard time in. It also helped me to identify the weaker points in my classmates’ essays. This helped me not make the same mistakes they did.

This class made me learn a lot, but one of the most significant things discussed in class was learning how to read like a writer. Reading like a writer allowed me to see the different purposes in writing. Every sentence should flow and be constructed with a purpose to further a point you are trying to make. That being said, I think one of my strong suits now is getting my point across. Reader like a writer is also important in my other classes for when I have to read. This process allows me to see the different texts and what purpose they serve to the overall course.

I also think one of my strong suits is providing evidence. This sort of goes hand in hand with every sentence serving a purpose. Backing up your points in an essay is something key to sell your essay to your reader. Without evidence, your reader has no choice but to not believe you, even if you are telling the truth. In class, we discussed different ways in which to use sources and which way to not use sources. This definitely helped me because now I can see which sources are effective, what points they develop, and the purpose they serve to the essay as a whole.

This class was wildly different than any English class I have ever taken. Not only did I actually maybe enjoy it, but it asked to disregard most of the rules that I used in high school when it came to writing. They always told me to never say “I” and only use “good grammar”. This course asked just the opposite. As long as you get your point across, I learned that your grammar does not necessarily play a big role in the overall paper. At first, this was a little unsettling and even hard for me to grasp.

One thing I didn’t quite understand was the concept of punctuation. It’s not that I didn’t understand it completely; I know that every punctuation mark has significance and serves a purposes like emphasizing a part of a sentence. What troubled me was how it accomplished this. This discussion in class just didn’t sit right with me. I feel like we could have practiced this more in class besides the Dear John letter.

I can genuinely say that I grew fond of this class. I learned so much from the beginning of the year to the end. This class wasn’t easy, but it was a good challenge that ultimately helped me turn into a better writer. From all the practices and conventions we learned, I hope it will all stick with me throughout my college career while writing essays and even reading for classes. Thanks for a great quarter.