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**Literacy assignment #1**

There are various times in life where people often struggle to become literate, and how they overcome this obstacle is a story that should be told by all. In Malcolm X’s text “Learning to Read”, he describes his determination while incarcerated to become literate. He gained knowledge through that determination to study and learn new words. I can reflect Malcolm X’s experiences with my twin sisters because she too had a struggle when it came to reading. In the second grade, my sister struggled with word pronunciations and how words were formed, to a point where her teachers wanted to test her to see if she was dyslexic and held her back to repeat the second grade. The situations are connected because both my sister and Malcolm X strived to overcome the obstacle of not being literate for a short amount of time.

The best way to become stronger is to never give up in any situation and achieve a greater reality. Malcolm X envied his friend Bimbi of how intellectual he was, but instead of constantly nagging how he wanted to become literate he took charge of his own situation and began reading the dictionary and writing the words to enhance his penmanship. “…. when Bimbi first made me feel envy of his stock of knowledge. Bimbi had always taken charge of any conversations he was in, and I had tried to emulate him…. I saw that the best thing I could do was get hold of a dictionary - to study, to learn some words. I was lucky enough to reason also that I should try to improve my penmanship.” (X, Page 1) Although my sister was held back and still couldn’t read as fluently as those of our age group at the time, she didn’t let that one obstacle down on her intelligence. She began reading everything she possibly can, such as road signs and labels to enhance her reading skills. She made sure to not let this setback defeat her and her character as a person be defined by it.

If you fall behind on something don’t let it defeat you, rise against the odds and always believe that there will be a positive outcome. In the “Learning to Read” text, Malcolm X’s ambition to better himself in reading and writing was very relentless. He took it day by day and didn’t push himself over the limit. He always made sure that the words he didn’t understand in the dictionary he went back to and gained a better understanding of the word and its definition. “I spent two days just riffling uncertainly through the dictionary's pages. I'd never realized so many words existed! I didn't know which words I needed to learn. Finally, just to start some kind of action, I began copying…. I believe it took me a day. Then, aloud, I read back, to myself, everything I'd written on the tablet. Over and over, aloud, to myself, I read my own handwriting. I woke up the next morning, thinking about those words - immensely proud to realize that not only had I written so much at one time, but I'd written words that I never knew were in the world. Moreover, with a little effort, I also could remember what many of these words meant.” ( X, Page 1) My sister moved on to reading books one step at a time and even read one book over and over until she was capable of reading the entire thing without any mistakes. She didn’t let the pressure of others trying to help her understand words and their meanings affect her into perfecting her reading skills. She went one from reading short excerpters to novels and impressed not only her teachers but also our parents. Altogether, both Malcom x and my sister didn’t let the struggles of becoming literate stop their determination to overcome this obstacle.