**Formal Essay Assignment Unit #1: Education Narrative**

**GET an APPOINTMENT WITH THE WRITING TUTORS -- REQUIRED**

**Rough Draft Due: Tuesday October 3 by midnight,** two full pages, typed, double spaced, 12-point font, Times, one-inch margins. BRING TWO HARD COPIES TO CLASS.

Two full pages is minimum. You can write more.

* Submit your Rough Draft to Google drive
* Title your Word Doc/file: Jessica Castro, RD #1 NO PDFiles

**Final Draft Due: Monday October 9 by Midnight,** three pages, typed, double spaced.

Three full pages is minimum. You can write more.

* Submit your Final Draft to Google drive
* Title your Word Doc/file: Jessica Castro, FD #1 NO PDFiles
* ALSO Submit your Final Draft to Blackboard

So the Final Draft will be submitted to TWO places: Google Drive and Blackboard

**Header at top left hand corner of first page:**

Jessica Castro

Professor Wu

English 1101CO D220

October 3, 2022

FD #1

**Reminder: TWO required visits with Writing Center tutors.** Good timing would be BEFORE the Final Draft is due.

The Education Narrative is an assignment that gives you a chance to explore deeply a part of your backstory:  How did you get here to be a student at City Tech?  What events make you the student you are today?  The assignment asks you to get personal.  So this is an opportunity to learn and explore your own story.  It might be painful; it might be difficult; but I hope you will discover that being true to yourself and true to your story will give you confidence that your story matters.  Remember that Adichie said in her TEDtalk, “Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person.”  You have the power to tell your definitive story in your Education Narrative.

Together, we’ve read essays by Frederick Douglass, Malcolm X, Amy Tan, Colin Powell and Esmeralda Santiago, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, all narratives about the writers’ experiences with education (both inside and outside of a school setting). Now it’s time for you to write an education narrative of your own. **Your goal is to show** **how a particular aspect of your educational experience shaped you to become who you are today. Choose a single transformative event or memory or a set of transformative events or memories that influenced you; do not try to cover too much material.** To do so, thoughtfully revise one of your HW Writing Tasks to explore a compelling aspect of your educational journey.

**CHOOSE ONE of these writing prompts -- NOT ALL OF THEM. You MUST use the earlier HW and the feedback I gave you.**

1. **Mentor Quotation:**

At the start of "Saved," Chapter 11 of his autobiography, Malcolm X remembers the "electrical effect" the words of his mentor Elijah Muhammad had on him in prison.  He is shocked into action, writing letters to everyone he knows and even people he doesn’t. He then expresses his frustration at his inadequacy in using proper English. As a result, Malcolm is inspired and motivated to start his "homemade education."

Think of a time a mentor or authority figure gave you an encouraging word that moved you forward in your educational journey.  You can also consider words that made you realize something fundamental about your educational path. Think back into your memory. What was that conversation like? What were the precise words––and on what occasion did your mentor tell you these words?  What was the actual scene?  How did they help you move forward?  Start your piece with this quotation.  In what ways did your relationship with your mentor conform with or go against (“dismantle”) traditional hierarchies?  How do the lessons from this mentor continue to impact you in college?

Another option -- Negative Mentor Quote: Have you ever had a time when you had to overcome somebody’s mistaken perceptions of your ability?  Have you had to prove yourself to someone or to yourself?  Think of a time when a mentor or authority figure spoke to you using negative language that caused you pain or told a joke that you didn’t find funny.  Did you challenge those words? What steps did you take to triumph? Starting with the words themselves–give a quotation–how did these damaging words affect your educational journey?

Remember what happened to Esmeralda Santiago. “That’s not the way we do things here,” says Mr. Grant.  Yet Esmeralda challenges the way things are done at this school and she triumphs.

*Start*your story with the mentor's own words–that is, with a quotation. If the person is speaking in another language, consider using that home language. Start with the quote at the top of your page. So for example start with:

“Lisa, you are a very good student. You can study anything–even if you don’t like it.”

1. **Between Two Different Worlds**

**Esmeralda Santiago** arrives from Puerto Rico and enters an American school only to be placed in a learning-disabled class instead of the standard 8th grade class although she is a bright student. She must navigate between her 8th grade class of outcasts and the English-speaking teachers and students at her school feeling out of place in both groups. **Amy Tan** shows us how she navigates her way in different worlds, each characterized by the different Englishes she uses in each of these worlds.  She believes that her family’s imperfect English language limited her own opportunities and that her Chinese background shaped how teachers and employers saw her and what they expected her to be. **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** discusses the power and the danger of a single story in her lecture. One story can lead to a series of assumptions about a place or a people. She points to the imbalance of power that prevents more stories from being told. In her lecture Adichie, shows us how she learned to rethink her own ideas that had limited herself to a single image. She learns the value and the possibility of writing stories about the diverse identities that are part of our global world, including stores about her own Nigerian culture.

**How has this experience of being between two worlds shaped your educational journey?**

**Be sure to explain to your reader exactly what the two worlds or two identities are.**  You might be bi-lingual or bi-cultural, but you may also consider other worlds besides nationality–race, class, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, education, etc.

* Have you had the experience of living “between two different worlds” or we might say of having two different identities?  In your own life how have “ambiguous” feelings or internal conflicted feelings–about language, culture, identity, gender, injustice, religion, or opportunities that affected your own educational journey?  In your educational life, have you had experiences of others stereotyping you based on any of the above? What actions have you taken to address the conflict?  Or, how have you learned to live with it?
* You may choose to focus on language or culture: Is there an event in your life when when you noticed language (either your own or someone else’s) that was formative? Have you had an experience around language that led you to become the person you are today? Have you had the experience of someone at school seeing you as *a single story*? How did you handle this? How did you solve this problem? What have you learned and -- Did you have a chance to educate others about the danger of a single story?

1. **Saved**

Each of our writers attempts in some way to “save” himself: **Malcolm X** by improving his vocabulary, competing with his fellow inmates, and reading at all costs deep into the night; **Frederick Douglass** by learning to read; **Colin Powell**saved himself at college when he joined ROTC. He reveals that he was no star student and that he floundered without direction until he joined the ROTC student group. In the military he found comradery, purpose, and discovered leadership qualities that he didn’t know he had. The ROTC led him to a successful army career; he become a US general and eventually to the high office of the United States Secretary of State under President Bush.

Describe a difficult moment in your educational journey.  What experience or activity or school club has saved you and gave meaning and purpose to your school life?  Describe this activity and how you became involved. What did you like best about this activity? How did this activity change you? How did this activity effect your academics or change your attitude towards school? What qualities about yourself did you discover in this process? What important mentors or friends did you have in that community? What skills did you learn from that activity that translate to your school performance?

1. **Resilience**

Frederick Douglass and Malcolm X faced extreme adversity, yet they struggled and persevered to achieve an education and to advance their lives -- and eventually the lives of others. Both taught themselves to read and write while being enslaved or being imprisoned. They write in descriptive language of their desire and motivation to learn and the clever ways that they outsmarted their betters to achieve their goal to be literate. You could not keep them down! That’s resilience.

But they did not stop there. Both men rose to become leaders in the fight for freedom and equal rights that did not exist for their people. Think about the battle for abolition of slavery in the 1830’s and the battle for civil rights in the 1960’s. Both Douglass and Malcolm X devoted their lives to fight for change that disrupted the power hierarchy of their time.

Focus on a single **BIG** struggle/hardship/challenge that you faced during a difficult period in your school life. What exactly was this struggle? Try to define this struggle in **clear** language. How did you persevere? What strategies did you use? Do you believe your decision/actions pushed you forward? If so, how? If not, why not? What qualities about yourself did you discover in this process? What new skills and how did you apply these skills to your school life? To other avenues of your life?

**Examples of hardships might be**:  you or a loved one was diagnosed with a difficult disease; you were bullied in middle school; your parents divorced when you were in the tenth grade; your move from middle to high school was traumatic because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_; you were mocked because of your accent or your style of dress when you arrived in the USA in third grade; the pandemic online learning year; or a less-than-what you-expected-senior year because of the pandemic.

1. **Single Story**

In her TEDtalk/speech, **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** discusses the power and the danger of stereotypes. A single story can lead to a series of assumptions about a place or a people. Adichie shows us how she faced a college roommate and professor that had stereotypical ideas of her as an African. She presents the message that you have the power to write your own story.

Have you had an experience in your school life when someone had a “single story” about you? How did you handle that? What steps did you take to improve that situation? What did you do to educate those who were stereotyping you and to “rewrite” that single story?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Develop your ideas with rich details, quotes, further explanation, and at least one connection with the class texts.

**Incorporate at least one relevant reference to one of the education pieces we read for class.**

Create **at least two well developed scenes with setting and dialogue** so the reader can visualize and hear your story.  Make you writing come alive!  Be sure to **set your piece in a particular place**–- your living room?  your bedroom?  a classroom? a family party?   Also indicate the bigger setting, which country?  What language are you speaking?   And indicate the time-line?  present day?  when you were ten?  a junior in high school?  Think of the **scene** when Malcolm X dramatically describes outsmarting the prison guards to achieve his goal of reading and studying at night in his cell.

**Note: your goal is to show how an event or memory (or set of events/memories) transformed you and shaped you in your educational journey to become the person you are today.**

**Evaluation Criteria Checklist**

* An overarching point (main idea) about your educational experience(s)
* Give your piece a title.
* One particular event or a series of events that support your overarching point
* Rich **details/description** that illustrate your claims and paint a picture for the reader
* Narrative progression and sequence that makes logical sense: Think TIMELINE.
* Clear sentence structure, grammar, and punctuation

**Development Strategies Condensed**

* Give your essay a title, one that packs a punch. Be creative here.
* Develop at least two extended scenes (as we’ve noticed in Malcolm X), one of your scenes should use dialogue. At least 5 sentences for each scene.
* Experiment with languages other than English, if it makes sense for your story. Remember how Olivarez uses Spanish to show different perspectives; how Santiago and Tan use Spanglish and Chinglish to color their writing.
* Practice one other strategy we’ve discussed (review “Writing Development Strategies” handout under Grammar / Writing Skills page) and develop it as part of your revision. For example, experiment with Using Lists.
* Make a connection with at least one of the essays we’ve read in class at some point in your story.

**Proofreading tip**

* **Read your work out loud** for missing words, better development, clarity, and organization.

**RUBRIC / GRADING CHECKLIST: Here is what I will be looking for when I grade your Education Narrative: ECc**

I.

Development

* CSD
* 5W’s

Clear Paragraphing

Logical Order of Events

Clear Timeline / Clear Sequencing

THREE full pages 750 – 1000 words

Language

* Imagery
* Vocab
* Clarity of expression

II.

Title Creative and packs a punch

Introduction is engaging

Story Arc is clear – obstacles, triumphs, process moves toward an ending

Main Idea about student’s Ed experience – there is an overarching theme present REMEMBER THIS IS AN EDUCATION NARRATIVE

Ending is meaningful, substantial, reflective and forward looking

III.

Connection to at least ONE reading

TWO extended scenes with dialogue

IV.

Essay is Engaging / Interesting /AND/ NOT rote NOT boring NOT just telling NOT just summarizing NOT generalizing

V.

Formatting -- margins, DS, 12 pt font

Grammar – Sentence Structure – Mechanics

VI. The Writing Process – student followed this process:

* HW 5, 6, 7 (Mentor Quote, Between Two Worlds, Saved)
* RD (Rough Draft using teacher feedback on HW5/6/7)
* FD (Final Draft using Peer Reviews)
* Participation in Peer Reviews for RD
* FD submitted on time