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

**Rough Draft Due: Saturday March 5**, two full pages, typed, double spaced, 12-point font, Times, one-inch margins

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: Sunday March 13 noon,** 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 1101 OL05

March 12, 2022

FD #1

**Reminder: two required visits with Writing Center tutors**

Together, we’ve read essays by Frederick Douglass, José Olivarez, Malcolm X, Amy Tan, and Esmeralda Santiago, 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.

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 then expresses his frustration at not being able to use proper English in writing reply letters back to him. Malcolm's desire to address his mentor respectfully using standard English inspires him to start his "homemade education."  On the other hand, after all these years he remembers with pain and anger the racist joke told cavalierly in front of the class by his seventh-grade teacher.

At the end of his essay “Maybe I Could Save Myself by Writing,” José Olivarez speaks of “mentorship relationships” that “dismantle” traditional hierarchies of power.

*Think of a time a mentor or authority figure gave you an encouraging word that moved you forward in your educational journey.  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 figure continue to impact you in college?*

*Conversely, 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.  Starting with the words themselves–give a quotation–how did these damaging words affect your educational journey?*

Remember to *start* your story with the mentor's own words–that is, with a quotation–as Professor Hellman does in her essay.  She gives a quotation from Governor Cuomo before starting her essay.  If the person is speaking in another language, consider using that home language.

1. **Two Different Worlds**

**José Olivarez** is the son of Mexican immigrants.  He tells us that when he entered the local preschool in suburban Chicago, he was too Mexican, and that when he visited Mexico for the first time at age sixteen, he wasn't Mexican enough. Throughout his difficult educational journey through public school, he writes of a double or “ambiguous” identity that has made it hard for him to feel at home anywhere, in either the U.S. or Mexico.  He is “constantly fighting” with the different parts of his identity.  **Frederick Douglass** feels so conflicted when he learns the hard facts of slavery that it puts him it at odds with his fellow slaves, “In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity” (238). In prison **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.

*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, identity, injustice, or opportunities that affected your own educational journey?  What actions have you taken to address the conflict?  Or, how have you learned to live with it? 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.

1. Saved

Each of our writers attempts in some way to “save” himself by learning to read or write: **Malcolm X** by improving his vocabulary, competing with his fellow inmates, and reading at all costs deep into the night; **Frederick Douglass** by bribing the little white boys and riffling through the “Columbian Orator”; **José Olivarez** by finding his place in the poetry slam club in high school and questioning his high school curriculum.

*Describe a difficult moment in your educational journey. What experience or activity or decision has saved you or helped you cope?  What strategies did you use? Do you think your decision/actions saved you? If so, how? If not, why not?  What qualities about yourself did you discover in this process? What lessons have you learned from your actions and how have you shared them with others?*

\*For some of you, this difficult moment may actually be your struggle with online learning, either in high school or now in college. Your difficult moment may also be the “loss” of your senior year of high school. How did you attempt to “save” yourself from the isolation and frustration of online learning or from the sadness of a senior year that was so much less than what you expected? What strategies did you use? Do you believe your decision/actions saved you? If so, how? If not, why not? What qualities about yourself did you discover in this process? What lessons have you learned from your actions and how have you shared them with others?

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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.
* 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.