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Final Reflection & Portfolio

Final Reflection :

Throughout this semester, what I have learned as a reader and writer is that reading different types of genres and stepping out of your comfort zone is okay instead of just sticking to similar ones. Reading different novels, essays, and other forms of literature has taught me to analyze, interpret and dissect written material to compare and contrast as well as indicate elements such as themes, characters, plot, purpose, and the audience. Also, I have learned new vocabulary words that improved my reading and thinking skills as I obtained the information. As a writer, I have known that there are different types of structures to write in and how to express my opinion/thoughts more freely instead of just answering text-based questions. I was able to think in an analytical way. It entails gathering and analyzing information before expressing it to the reader in a way that makes sense to them.

As a reader and writer my level of thinking and interpretation has improved. Reading articles and novels have changed my perspective about the different genres that are out there. When I'm reading I make sure I'm annotating and keeping track of new vocabulary that is unknown to me. As a writer, I have developed writing from my personal experience to be able to connect with the audience and to express what career path I want for myself and how it has changed me into the person I am today. In my writing, I shared my interests and opinions and did a lot of free writing that would benefit my writing skills. In this class, I have become a better

writer by continuing to find out what my strengths and weaknesses are and being able to change it as many times as possible. Also, accepting my weakness because I know sometimes it's hard to accept our faults and learning how to be able to adapt and to improve your style of writing. Being able to handle criticism of my work and learning how to provide feedback for others on how to strengthen their writing piece. I have improved on reviewing and correcting my grammar and spelling. Furthermore, being able to proofread my own work and others helped me strengthen my writing techniques.

Based on what I learned from this class and the knowledge that might transfer to other writing tasks, assignments or situations in college or in my community is gathering and knowing how to conduct research and data. In the future, being able to analyze and interpret data for either a research project, posters, brochures, case studies, math projects, and science related projects because it serves as evidence to back up a claim that needs to be proved. Also, writing reflections can be useful in the future because they allow you to express what you think and how and why you think a particular way, and how it can be used for projects for how your research was conducted.

Writing about personal experiences and how it changed you as a person may help your targeted audience about their life experience and be able to make a connection from it. According to my Unit 1 assignment, "The earliest memory I have of being at the dentist is when I was nine years old and saw my older sister bite the dentist as she yelled and screamed while struggling to fight off my mom in the process of trying to hold her down. It was a sight to behold. I never understood why my sister was so afraid of the dentist and why this always happened when we had an appointment." I chose this quote from my Unit 1 assignment because

I'm sharing a personal experience I've had when going to the dentist with my sister. But I know that many people hate going to the dentist for their own particular experience, whether it's from childhood to adulthood. So sharing this in my writing makes it easy to connect with the audience and creates an engaging hook for them to continue reading. From my Unit 2 assignment, "The data has shown that only 20.5% of the participants thought that giving students standardized tests would help them learn more. Then, 19% had a neutral feeling about the impact of standardized testing on student learning." I chose this quote because it indicates data that can be interpreted and be evidence to back up a claim when doing research. In my Unit 3 assignment, "The reason why I decided on standardized testing is that I always hated doing it throughout elementary school, middle school, and high school. It's been a wandering issue if students learn anything from this or if teachers find it unnecessary to their teaching." I chose this quote because I'm sharing my opinion about a specific topic and giving my reasoning of why I felt that way about it.

Unit 1 :

A Stepping Stone to Success

The earliest memory I have of being at the dentist is when I was nine years old and saw my older sister bite the dentist as she yelled and screamed while struggling to fight off my mom in the process of trying to hold her down. It was a sight to behold. I never understood why my sister was so afraid of the dentist and why this always happened when we had an appointment. At a young age, I was always fascinated by the equipment/tools that they used and wondered

why they needed to use them. From then on, that's when I realized I wanted to go into the dental field.

Each year in school, we would be asked the same question "What do you want to be when you grow up?". My answer has always been a dentist since the 4th grade, and I knew I wanted to impact people's lives and help them in any way I could. Growing up with four older siblings, they have shown me kindness, support, encouragement, and self-confidence, which I want to give in return to someone else who needs it. I've always looked up to my older siblings and have wanted to follow in their footsteps. As she got older, I saw my sister get motivated about wanting to participate in the medical field, which has always reflected on me. Throughout my life, I was unsure what type of dentist I wanted to be until my freshman year. That's when I set my goal of becoming a dental hygienist. I wanted to become a dental hygienist because they specialize in polishing and scaling teeth and providing and educating patients on oral care. Also, it helps create healthier lives for people and being able to make a change in the world. There is no better feeling than knowing you are making a difference in this world. Since I knew I wanted to join the medical field, I entered the medical assisting program in high school to better understand the level of coursework and the type of environment I would be set up for.

Being part of the medical assisting program gave me a sense of purpose and a feeling of belonging. Sitting in those classes for three years helped shape me into the person I am today, and it helped build on my time management skills, communication skills, problem-solving skills, and adaptability. I couldn't be happier knowing what it's like to be in the medical field. Each day made it more apparent that I still wanted to be a dental hygienist. Making a positive impact on someone else's life is rewarding. My parents and siblings have always been supportive and

understanding of my choice. It's always been my dream to be part of the dental field and to progress further. Trying to figure out what I wanted to be was never a problem because I always knew in my heart what I wanted for my future. It was always the process of how and when it would start for me. Becoming a certified clinical medical assistant made my passion for dentistry stronger because I knew it would all be worth fighting for in the end.

After school and during the summer, I would join programs that would help me get more involved in the medical field as much as possible. Some programs I did not get into because I didn't meet the criteria, but that motivated me to work harder and keep moving forward. However, I did get into Futures and Options, where they help formulate your working skills and health dynamics. I've had mentors along the way that helped me create my education pathway and how to get more active in assisting and educating the community—participating in this program significantly prepared me for working, how to be professional, and what to expect in a work environment. I worked at Mount Sinai Beth Israel, and I got to experience what the medical field looks like. I got to work with patients and health care workers to see their day-to-day life. I was educated on how health care workers got to operate procedures and approach patients. Mount Sinai allowed me to see things more clearly and build skills like empathy and compassion.

Throughout the years, I have been creating memories and building relationships with people that have gotten me to where I am now. They have my gratitude for their unconditional support and love. I want to become a dental hygienist because there's nothing better than helping people have healthier lives and providing service to others. This profession is very thrilling to me; every day would be completely different, and you would never know what to expect. I

would also get the opportunity to learn something new every day. No matter how difficult this job will bring, I know it's something to be proud of. Knowing that I am getting closer to my goal makes me feel driven that my dream will come true and that all my hard work will pay off.

Becoming a dental hygienist is my ultimate goal, and being able to pursue that dream couldn't make me happier. The late nights studying and doing my homework will finally help me succeed in getting my dream job. Even through the tough times, I know I can accomplish anything as long as I put my mind to it. Anyone can, as long as they are passionate about it and are driven to put in hard work and dedication. Everyone wants to have a career that they are happy with, and being able to wake up in the morning to do something you enjoy doing is rewarding. Life comes with unexpected things, and we should take every opportunity to get the dream we want and work for it as much as possible. Since I was little, I have wanted to be in the dental field and have stayed committed. Picturing a future you want for yourself will only keep you driven and motivated until it becomes a reality. Someone should never give up on something that they want, and don't settle for anything less than what you want. Wanting to become a dental hygienist has been a demand in my book, and I won't stop until I reach there.

Unit 2:

U2 Reflection Annotated Bibliography

Introduction:

Research Question: How does standardized testing help improve education in public schools?

The reason why I decided to choose this question is because it was something I hated going through in high school. It's been a significant issue for students, teachers, and parents

because students need to know if they benefit from standardized tests or if they find it fitting or necessary for their lessons. Students are placed under a lot of pressure by parents and teachers when it comes to these tests because students are expected to pass since they are being prepped for it and it goes along with what they learned over the school year. Standardized testing requires a lot of studying, applying memorized formulas, understanding answers to reading comprehension, and defining words that would never be applied to real-world situations. At the end of the year, they have to cover material that may seem irrelevant to their students or curricular plan. So it might seem disruptive to teachers when students have to do constant testing.

I am interested in writing about standardized testing because it is one of the leading causes of why students are so stressed out in school. After all, this determines their future and would have a negative impact on their school experience if they don't pass. Many people support having it, and some don't because it is a vast concept of whether it benefits students.

The answers and information I expect to find in response to my question are articles and videos that tell both sides of how effective standardized testing is. Also, it would benefit students' futures because it plays an essential role in the grading system. Students undergo major stress and anxiety regarding standardized testing, affecting their overall well-being. If a certain number of students do well, they get rewarded for being good test takers, and penalizing those who do poorly is dehumanizing. It teaches students that test-taking skills will make or destroy their future.

Citation #1 : Adeli, Nikki. TEDxTalks. "What Standardized Tests Don't Measure |
Tedxphiladelphia." *YouTube*, YouTube, 13 Nov. 2014,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woVtj8GH678.

Summary:

According to the Ted Talk, shockingly, 44% of American students in grades 6–12 report
that they do not feel valued at school. Students face many hardships trying to find their way
around standardized tests because it is believed that these exams determine your national
ranking. Nikki Adeli is discussing that there is more to schooling and life than trying to define
yourself based on your rank on a test. There is nothing bad about testing in general, but it's the
concept of testing that is negatively affecting students' mentality. We want to set good goals and
purposes of schooling to help grow a citizen and not produce a good test taker because it's not
something that is useful in the real world. Nikki Adeli explains what's best for students because
we want students to do well so they can replace us one day and come up with policies to improve
society and the global economy. We want to be able to apply what we learn in school to the
outside world because that is what grows a citizen and that is going to prepare them to be future
leaders of tomorrow. Students need to set high expectations in order to help them out because
there are many times where we are going to fail and years where they are going to make mistakes
and a mentor is needed along the way to help us create the future. To make students our future
leaders of tomorrow is by making them the leaders of today, which is only done by investing into
the present. However, by investing into the present then sure enough the future will take care of
itself.

Reflection:

I strongly agree with Adeli because students are not robots and they are highly stressed and have anxiety due to these standardized testing. Students should be more valued than being defined based on their rank on a test. The concept of standardized testing has gotten out of hand because of the way it is administered. Students should not be so stressed at such a young age because they are the future.

Quote: "I don't want to say that tests are bad, I am saying the concept of what tests have become is bad, it magnified it's become a curriculum that our aim is to do well on testing. However, the first reason we implemented tests is for our students to do well in the world, but I can list all the negative effects." (11:09)

Citation #2 : Aydeniz, & Southerland, S. A. (2012). A National Survey of Middle and High School Science Teachers' Responses to Standardized Testing: Is Science Being

Devalued in Schools? Journal of Science Teacher Education, 23(3), 233–257. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10972-012-9266-3

Summary:

According to this article, the study averaged out American high school and middle school science teachers' feelings toward using standardized testing for accountability; to show their reasoning for their attitudes and the impact of standardized testing on their educational and assessment practices. A total of 161 science teachers participated in this study. Data has shown that based on the teacher's responses from the questionnaires conducted, including nine-item scale questions and two items that were open-ended. The research indicated that science teachers

have mixed feelings towards the administration of standardized tests and using their accountability purposes. The data has shown that only 20.5% of the participants thought that giving students standardized tests would help them learn more. Then, 19% had a neutral feeling about the impact of standardized testing on student learning. Lastly, 60.5% of the participants don't believe that administering standardized tests would enhance students' ability to learn science.

Reflection:

I agree with this article because many teachers see that standardized testing changes their overall teaching material and would have to change it to accommodate it for standardized testing. Some teachers think it ruins their creativity and freedom because they can't teach what they want. Students do not learn anything from it, which I agree with because standardized testing teaches students how to become better test takers, and it does not come in handy in the real world. Teachers have believed that standardized testing does not improve students' ability to learn science because it only measures basic concepts covered in middle school, not what they have taught in their courses. Standardized testing is unfair to students and teachers because the content that needs to be taught is not being covered because teachers need to follow the administration material to prepare students for the standardized test. Teachers and students are under pressure because it needs to be taught, and students need to understand the material being taught.

Quotation: One teacher said based on the evaluation: "I have concentrated on state standards and getting my students ready for the gateway test. This sometimes limits my freedom on doing things that will be more interesting and/or enriching for my students" (p 246)

Citation #3: Taylor, K. (2016, April 23). *Race and the Standardized Testing Wars*. The New York Times. Retrieved November 8, 2022, from https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/24/opinion/sunday/race-and-the-standardized-testing-wars.html

Summary:

Standardized testing has created a lot of significant issues for parents, students, and teachers. Testing results were broken down by race, income, and disability status to evaluate students' tests and consider them reliable. Parents would refuse to have their children participate, which caused them to unintentionally choose to oppose attempts to enhance students' education. Standardized testing is considered racist because the families that were to be opting out were disproportionately white and middle class. Testing members viewed those opting out of standardized testing as coddling suburbanites. However, while arguing that urban parents, who had more serious concerns about the standard of their children's schools, supported the tests. Opposition to standardized testing was proposed to be a form of white privilege. Many have been criticizing the tests and starting a rift with civil rights groups involving Black and Hispanic educators who support testing. Many have argued that the main focus on testing was based on struggling schools to cut back on improving programs like field trips and arts education. Students feel like their self-esteem is damaged based on the low scores they receive.

Many racially mixed high school students in Baltimore walked out of school and rallied to protest about their state exam. Schools with low scores were forced to close down, so they could have their attention on essential reading and math skills. Based on the "No Child Left Behind Act," schools were evaluated on their test scores, and if those grades had not improved, the school had to be closed. Students have felt like school is like jail, where you are not going to learn only to take a test. Students feel inferior to teachers to district officials because they are not taking on the responsibility for their failures but are sending low-income students the message that their poor performance is their fault.

Reflection:

I agree with this article; students are placed under a lot of stress and anxiety to do well on standardized tests. I went through the same thing where standardized testing was required, and I had to study significantly because the pressure was placed on me to do well like everyone else. Students feel like they are in jail and not in school because their test scores are the only thing that's valuable to the educators and district officials. Standardized testing is viewed to be racist because test scores are used to punish or even close schools, usually schools that have mostly black and brown students. However, with the pressure to increase test scores, students in public schools get endless test prep, while students in whiter, more affluent schools are more likely to get creative problem-solving, arts, and recess.

Quotation: Near the middle of the article the author noted: "Others say that the tests are damaging to students' self-esteem, because students interpret low scores as proof that they are inferior and destined to fail." (p 2)

Conclusion:

Based on the research and resources I have evaluated, standardized testing has come out of hand and caused distress among students, teachers, and parents. Test-taking is generally okay for students because it helps determine their academic progress, what they know, what they can do, and what they need to improve on. However, the concept of testing has negatively impacted them and turned it into something detrimental to students' well-being. Educators and parents want what's best for their students because they are the future that will change society. Still, standardized testing has made students think that only their national ranking is what only counts and don't have any sense of value for themselves. It ruins their self-esteem and self-worth because of how stressful these tests are and what's expected of them. Standardized testing has been viewed to be racist and has a biased system because of the experiences of white and middle-class children. Many students have felt like school is like jail to them because they don't go to learn but only to take a test that seems to define them by the district administration. Standardized testing has mentally drained students because of the pressure and anxiety they experience from trying to pass.

Throughout my research, I found out that many educators supported standardized testing and thought it was beneficial to students' learning and the teaching of their course material. However, I agree with some aspects of it. Still, I don't believe that students learn anything from standardized testing because they are only taught techniques to successfully pass the test, which only creates a good test taker. This research has deepened my understanding of my question. After all, it has shown how standardized testing can ruin students' self-esteem and how it needs to be fixed because it does not help students in the real world. I learned how students and

teachers believe that standardized testing gets rid of their creativity and how it causes pressure on them for it to be successfully taught and grasped. This is important because students and teachers should speak up and defend themselves on how draining standardized testing is. It can cause students to tune out and drop out, convince schools to push them out, and even drive teachers to leave. Overall, high-stakes testing will hurt students and cause stress and depression. The people that need to hear about my research are NYC DOE, council board directors (system of education), educators, and students because standardized testing needs to be fixed.

Unit 3:

- https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/pennereng1101fa2022d308/files/2022/12/Standardized-testing-.pdf

- https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/pennereng1101fa2022d308/files/2022/12/English-Reflection.pdf