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### Final Reflection

Throughout the semester, what I learned about myself as a writer and reader is that my writing isn't the same as it was in high school with some being bad and some good, I felt like I wasn't entirely motivated to write some of the time which hinder my ability to write something that I feel proud of but was able to at least use some of my experience in life to make it easier on myself when selecting a topic. I definitely felt that my writing was better than my reading which hasn't changed as much but I was able to read passages of different genres without getting bored. As a reader, I wasn't fully afraid of reading out loud to other people like in high school which is an improvement that I always want to change about myself and wish to continue getting better at, whether talking in front of the class or just in a small group.

This semester I learned that in order to be good at reading or writing, you need to be good at both and there is plenty of techniques to help you get better at it. These newfound techniques will help me in my college life by allowing me to understand what I'm reading and saving time on reading. or writing. A technique I learned is to write the body paragraph first and then do the introduction and conclusion last when writing an essay.

The "Shitty Draft" assignment was definitely an experience I won't forget because it was the first where I was given a good amount of time to come up with something to write and we weren't given a format on how to make the draft so it allowed me to just write whatever was in my head and kept rewriting it until I thought it was good enough. This assignment taught me that

your first draft will never be perfect and even the revision draft still won't be perfect but as long as you keep rewriting the draft, it will eventually come together.

In unit 1, we wrote about an experience that changed our lives. Writing something personal helps target an audience that may have experienced the same thing as you or help educate people about your experience. In my essay, I talked about how I feel about my community and leaving my neighborhood for the first time. "We walked toward the closest train station and to this day nothing has changed. It is filled with graffiti, dirty walls and floors, and homeless people sleeping in the station. We enter the train and it's the same as the station, unsanitized and the announcer sounds muffled. But the moment we reached Mathannen, mainly 42nd street, it was like a whole different world. The Station was filled with ads that weren't broken or painted on and the station itself was super clean. We only live half an hour away, yet it felt like I entered a new country". I chose this quote because I'm sharing my personal feeling which is rare for me to share in my writing and feel that my experience isn't just happening to me but to many people living in low-income communities and want to share that feeling in my writing because while it might not be a crazy experience to others, to me it changed the way I view the world.

### Unit 1

As a kid, I enjoyed playing video games and loved the story and world that people made because I liked to believe that I was a part of that world, especially in games like Super Mario and Pokemon. To me, the outside world wasn't as perfect as the games I played. The community I grew up in wasn't the perfect place for a kid. I would see people sleeping in the corner of the

deli or in the park, asking for money, and a lot of violence. I would ask myself why I was raised in this type of community and how are people allowing this. As I grew up, I realized that certain people have things that others don't have, even basic things such as a roof over their heads, food, clothes, and money. I remember my first time leaving Hunts Point. I was around the age of 10 and my sister took me out to eat in downtown Manhattan. We walked toward the closest train station and to this

day nothing has changed. It is filled with graffiti, dirty walls and floors, and homeless people sleeping in the station. We enter the train and it's the same as the station, unsanitized and the announcer sounds muffled. But the moment we reached Mathaven, mainly 42nd street, it was like a whole different world. The Station was filled with ads that weren't broken or painted on and the station itself was super clean. We only live half an hour away, yet it felt like I entered a new country. During my first day in middle school, our Dean made us do a class exercise where each student was side to side and the Dean would read a statement, if the statement applied to you, you would have to step forward, and at the end of the exercise, the whole class was scattered

around the gym. The Dean would explain the exercise and how people are born with different privileges and that we all come from different backgrounds but that doesn't mean we can't reach the finish line. This was the moment that I saw the world for what it was. And after that point, I realized that my parents didn't start the same as me and my siblings.

As I learned more about our government and society, there are people who started the race very behind but were able to achieve things that some would say were impossible for them. One of those people is Oprah Winfrey, she was born to a poor family in rural Mississippi. She suffered a lot of tragedies in her life but was still able to overcome the obstacles in her life. She was the

first African American in her state to have a TV show. Now she is a very successful person who I and others look up to because just like her, many people including me in my community are from immigrant families who had nothing when coming to America and are trying to achieve the same level or at least a stable life for ourselves and family. During quarantine, I would have all this free time and would just watch the news to kill some time. Every day the news would talk about Covid-19 and how they are trying to make a vaccine. But one day while watching the news the reporter talked about how the vaccine could affect lower-income communities and I thought to myself “How can a vaccine affect people just because they are from different communities?”. And the reporter went into detail about how would the government distribute the vaccine and whether people would have to pay for it. I thought to myself again “Wouldn’t everyone just get at the same time and it’ll be free”. As the month went by and I kept watching and reading the news on the internet, I started to realize why this was a big issue, People who don’t have insurance would have to pay hundreds of dollars just to get the vaccine. People who have Diabetes have to pay 10 to 100 dollars every month with insurance for medication, according to CostHelper. I realized that people in the world can’t afford medication that can save their lives while others can. This open my eyes to what the world was really like little by little. In my Senior year in Highschool, my English teacher made us write a speech about our life and connect it to a philosopher's philosophy. I wrote my speech about my curious nature and how I like to seek more about the world and how we should live our life. In the speech, I connect my idea to Socrates, who also asks questions about life and the world we live in. One of the quotes that I’ll always remember is “ There is only one good, knowledge, and one evil,

ignorance” (Socrates). Since the moment I saw this quote it never left my head. I started to question everything I knew especially how the way the world works and how the government operates. I look back at my life and the life that my parents lived. I see that my parents had it worse

than I did. Both parents grew up in Mexico in a small town. Both of their families were poor and lost their parents at a young age. At a very young age, they had to work and take care of their family, they didn’t have time to be kids. Unlike in America where kids have to decide whether to go to college or work, they weren’t given a choice. My parents decided to leave their families behind and go to America to seek a better life. Both of them worked non-stop in order to even have a roof over their head, they had to share a small apartment with cousins who were already here. They would end up having four children including me but as I talked to my siblings who are years older than me about the life they lived while being kids, it was a completely different experience than mine. My parents weren’t able to give me everything my siblings wanted and even when they moved out, they weren’t able to afford a room for each person so my 3 siblings had to share a

room. My siblings had to share everything because it was impossible for my parent who worked full time, 6 days a week, to afford each one's individual needs. My upbringing was different and similar in certain aspects. My father would buy anything I wanted compared to my siblings but just like them, I had to share a room with my parents until I was 12. I realize now that even within my family weren’t born the same and given the same thing

but in the end, we were able to come out of that small apartment and lived in a house where each person had their own room and was able to get the things we wanted. We no longer worry about

bills anymore as we use to. There are still people out there who think it is impossible to get out of their situation but that is not true. People like Oprah or even my family show that it is possible to live a better life and not believe that just because you are born with fewer things doesn't make you lesser than anybody but you'll have to harder than most individuals.

## Unit 2

Introduction:

Modern America is now facing another major issue that has separated the people's opinion on how America should be. Guns have been a part of America since the birth of the nation. Guns have played a huge role in many Americans' lives, it's a part of American culture and many have called to get rid of Guns and place restrictions on how to acquire one. Both major parties in American politics have used this issue to fuel their campaign and gain supporters. It has been the most talked about topic besides Racism because there have been more school shootings these past years. This led me to wonder why this issue has become bigger and more controversial throughout the years. My research is to understand the impact Guns have on America and a way to find a solution that both sides can agree on.

Citation #1: Worsnop, Richard L. "Gun Control." *CQ Researcher*, 10 June 1994, pp. 505-28, [library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/cqresrre1994061000](http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/cqresrre1994061000).

Summary: The article talks about how bills were passed to ban certain guns and have a more secure background check when trying to acquire one. It also has studied from professors who give their opinions on the bills and how it affects the number of crimes committed with guns. One of the professors gives his data and opinion on these gun control laws and it shows that many of these gun owners acquire guns due to their dangerous environment. The professor

believes that banning automatic weapons was a useless law due to the fact that many owners use regular guns such as pistols instead of automatics. His data shows that instead of banning guns.

#### Reflection:

I agree with the professor that many gun owners are people who live in dangerous areas and these laws don't help with the real issue these communities are facing but more guns doesn't also solve the problems. When seeing the data, it really shows that banning certain guns don't actually help because most of the guns being banned are rarely used in gun violence. They also talk about how people are not being responsible with their guns.

#### Quotation

“To resolve the issue, Arthur L. Kellerman, a physician at the University of Tennessee, and nine associates conducted a study on “Gun Ownership as a Risk Factor for Homicide in the Home.” Published last fall in the respected New England Journal of Medicine, it concluded that “A gun kept in the home is far more likely to be involved in the death of a member of the household than it is to be used to kill in self-defense.”

#### Citation #2:

Gross, Dan. “Why Gun Violence Can't Be Our New Normal | Dan Gross.” *YouTube*, YouTube, 20 Apr. 2016, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8gJJuCdP\\_A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8gJJuCdP_A).

Summary: This video shows that Gross is very supportive of more Gun control because of his personal story. He also talks about how the NRA downplays the numbers they use as evidence and how they prevent ways to improve the safety of guns. He also talks about how many

celebrities are speaking out on these issues such as Kim Kardians which shows how big this issue is and his main point is that many people support more gun control.

Reflection: I agree with him that there shouldn't be gun shows without background checks and that there should be more background checks but I disagree with him that people feel safer with a gun because it's been shown that a lot of owners are irresponsible. I also feel that his evidence may be somewhat wrong because it is hard to believe that many Republicans agree with Democrats, especially in this day and age.

Quotation:

“90 percent of Americans support expanding Brady background checks to all gun owners. Including 90 percent of Republicans, more than 80 percent of gun owners, and more than 70 percent of NRA members.”

Citation 3: Schaeffer, Katherine. “Key Facts about Americans and Guns.” *Pew Research Center*, Pew Research Center, 13 Sept. 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/09/13/key-facts-about-americans-and-guns/>.

Summary; This article shows data that different types of people view gun control differently and both parties have different views on certain restrictions but have some of the same views as each other such as preventing mentally ill people from having guns. It also shows that people use their political views when determining their opinion on Gun control.



Reflection: One of the data that stood out to me was the view on gun violence by ethnicity. It showed that Black Americans believed gun violence is a major problem while not even half of white Americans believe it's a major problem. Many people also use guns to protect themselves or to hunt, but there were people who didn't want to disclose why they own a gun which I found weird.

Quotation:

“About eight-in-ten Black adults (82%) say gun violence is a very big problem – by far the largest share of any racial or ethnic group. By comparison, about six-in-ten Hispanic adults (58%) and 39% of White adults view gun violence this way.”

Conclusion: In my research, I found that many people who live in urban areas support stricter gun control and that people who own guns mainly use it for protection or hunting. I also found that laws won't always be the perfect solution and having more guns won't solve the problem that America is facing with guns. While gun violence may decrease due to better laws, the government still needs to improve on making guns safer to use and preventing people from using guns irresponsibly. After reading all my research, there might not be a perfect solution to gun control or gun violence but that doesn't mean we can't improve in certain areas such as making sure that guns are going to people who are responsible and at least have a better background check on people.

Unit 3

<https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/pennereng1101fa2022d308/files/2022/12/Unit-3-Part-1.pdf>

<https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/pennereng1101fa2022d308/files/2022/12/Unit-3-part-2.pdf>

