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ENG1121: English Composition 2

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Final Reflection

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The first question asks: how have you developed as a writer? As a STEM major this question is perhaps more of a challenge for me than what most would consider. And to be perfectly clear I don't mean how I have improved as a writer over the years. No, to answer that question I could simply go on a tangent about how I honed my critical thinking skills in writing or how I expanded my range of vocabulary and grammatical knowledge or even how versatile I've become with my writing having explored writing persuasion pieces utilizing different tones. To better understand how I developed as a writer I must remind you that I would ask myself why I should care about my English courses when I know I want to pursue a career in Math and Engineering.

For most of life I considered the English subject a nuance in my academic path. It was not until last year that I began to realize how much of a profound impact the lessons I learned in these English classes had on my life. The culmination of my English knowledge sat in the backseat of my brain until I visited a country where English is hardly spoken at all. During my time spent in the rural villages of Bangladesh, I was made to conversate with distant relatives I had never met in a language I hardly speak anymore. Though I was able to understand everything that was said to me, I failed to pick up on the witty sarcasm embedded within Bengali banter. I remember feeling naked and vulnerable for not being able to communicate my thoughts and feelings elegantly alongside them. For me, the language was a complex yet coordinated

dance of expression and I was an onlooker who couldn't tango. It was there I had an epiphany that this dilemma with language existed back home as well.

For all my life I have been on a pursuit to best express my thoughts and the letters of the English alphabet strung together in a particular fashion in tandem to the constraints of grammar were the only tools in my toolbox to help me do just that. Initially steadfast on taking an Art History class, this semester I chose Creative Writing as my elective at the very last minute. Right now, I am on a quest to sharpen the tools in my proverbial 'toolbox' in hopes of becoming a better writer and effectively a better communicator. This semester I learned to narrow my focus on a target audience with an essay on a discourse community I am a part of through an informative persuasion piece. I strengthened my ability to write objectively versus subjectively. Most importantly I learned to conduct proper research for an annotated bibliography. Overall, I find myself incredibly pleased with how this class went and look forward to enjoying the fruits of my labor when the overall letter grade for this class is posted at the end of the semester.

Some advice I would offer to future students taking this class would be to go in with an open mindset especially those who enter the class thinking this is just a mere requirement to fulfill their general education credits before they can go to take the niche courses required for their major. Had I not been open to actively learning in class and participating frequently I would not have been able to hone any of the aforementioned skills. I think it sinks in better when you begin to realize that you probably took English as a subject for your whole life ever since kindergarten and this will most likely be the last time you ever take an English class ever. It gives you a newfound appreciation for what you are to learn.