

*The Best is Yet to Come*



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## Final Reflection

First and foremost, this class has shown me that I am truly capable of writing about almost anything there is to write about which has definitely pushed me out of my comfort zone of writing. With some personal revision and feedback from others, I was certainly able to create many pieces that my audience have enjoyed and works that I'm proud to actually share. A lot of my work was created from personal life events and situations that I went through, fabricated to be a fictionalized story, dialogue, memoir, and so on. Its crazy to think how my life, of only 20 years, has created so many stories for me and I was able to share them with the class in ways I never imagined.

Despite having learned these few things about myself this semester, I did encounter a few bumps in the road. When it came down to short story writing, I found myself struggling to find a story to write about because I had this huge pool of ideas to share but could not pick one. What helped me finally pick a topic/story to write about was by being true to who I was, and that brought me back to writing about my own life experiences. Although not every detail was exact to how it played out in my life, it was certainly a true lesson I learned in life and I believe it is one that a lot of people can relate to and that is, somethings are better off to be left the way they turned out to be.

As a reader I have always had a love and hate relationship for it. I'm very picky when it comes to reading, it usually has to be something I'm interested in so that I can fully indulge myself into the reading. I enjoy reading but I do not enjoy readings that have pointless fluff to it. What I have come to learn even more so this semester is that what I consider to be "fluff" is not really what the writer intends. In fact, majority of the details in writings have a purpose and the writer themselves added those details for a particular reason, even though it may not seem like

they did. From this experience I have learned to place myself as the reader into the writer's shoes for a while, to tell why they may have added a particular detail even though it may not seem necessary to myself.

At the beginning of the semester, I did not think I would enjoy this class as much as I did. I thought assignments would become tedious and boring, but the opposite happened, and I enjoyed seeing myself grow as a writer. Looking back at my work, I think my biggest growth was accomplished behind the scenes and that was seen in my confidence. When we first started posting journal assignments, I was worried that my work would not be good enough, or that my peers would not like what I wrote. Through comments made by my classmates and cohort conversation, I learned that my work was enjoyable, and many others could relate to it which was important to me. The more I wrote the more I found myself wanting to continue writing. It has inspired me to purchase my own journal to create a variety of works as a way of expression for myself and for an outlet when necessary.

My favorite assignment of the semester was poetry writing, which is extremely odd for me. Throughout majority of high school and elementary school exams, poetry was always given to me in ways I never understood. The hidden meanings, alliteration, figurative language, and so much more never seemed to mean what they were in my mind. I struggled with poetry for a long time but writing poetry in this class was a better experience. Not having to stick to a strict guideline for poetry writing, I was able to really get creative and make poetry that was true to me.

This semester just like the other two we have experienced virtually, has been quite an adventure with some peaks and some pits. Having online school not as an option but rather the only way to complete school has given me the opportunity to experience what online school is

like. I never imagined myself taking online classes and yet here I am doing just that. There have been moments where I have felt overwhelmed with online classes and felt extremely unmotivated, but I have come too far in my education to stop now. There's nothing like being in a classroom and getting to interact with one another, this was surely the biggest struggle of the semester and it made me shy when it came to open mic classes. Despite the few bumps in the road to the end of the semester I can say that I enjoyed having the creative freedom and I hope to continue to improve even more as a reader and writer.

## Memoir: Meet My Sweats



From the beginning of fall to the start of December I had been looking for a great pair of sweatpants. I had always wanted sweats that were durable and looked good. There was no better time than now, pandemic era, to own a pair of sweats to lounge around or go to the store in. I went to a bunch of different stores until I stumbled upon these gray-ish sweats, that had everything I was looking for! They have a nice thick fleece texture, a tapered jogger style at the end, reach my ankles (unlike most pants) since I'm tall, and the price was just right. Even the pockets are deep, which I think is a rare quality to find in sweats for women.

I work in a retail store known for their jeans, so most days I'm in jeans. Any chance I get to have a break on my days off, I throw on these sweats to run errands and even just to hangout casually with friends. They're baggy enough to layer underneath for these cold February days, yet form-fitting to make it seem like I at least made an attempt to get ready this morning. I knew

these sweatpants were significant when they immediately caught my eye, and I could envision making several outfits with them. On chillier days I pair my sweats with a zip up hoodie or even a pullover one. Once the weather gets warmer, I usually throw on a nice graphic shirt, sometimes an oversized one for extra comfort possibly with a denim jacket.

I could pair my sweats with Ugg boots, creating an outfit that screams “I want to be comfy today.” Or I could throw on some high-top sneakers that make my outfit say, “I wanted to be chill, yet a little stylish.” Considering how much I love these sweats and the great quality they still have till this day, I went back to H&M to buy more sweatpants, one in black and one in nude. These sweatpants hold a special place in my heart and I probably won’t try any other style until these are worn out.

## Short Story #1

Imani had been looking for a job for a few months and had no luck whatsoever. She had applied to 5 different retail stores and was told that she did not qualify because she had no previous work experience. Imani had taken so much time to create a perfect resume stating all of school accomplishments thus far such as maintaining an average above 90, haven taken several Advance Placement exams/classes, and even included that she was currently taking college courses while still in high school. "It all sounds good to me" Imani thought to herself. "There's no reason they should deny me, I'm capable of working retail even without the experience, there's nothing to it."

She wondered how she could get any work experience if no one gave her the chance to gain the experience that was supposedly needed. Feeling extremely defeated with so many denied applications, Imani was about to give up in her search. It was late June when suddenly she received an email from Footlocker stating for her to come in for an on the spot interview the following day, no prior work experience needed! With a smile on her face, Imani knew this was her chance and she was going for it with everything she had.

Friday morning Imani anxiously got ready for her interview. She had carefully picked out an outfit that was business casual the night before. A pair of green dress pants and a white blouse with flats was the go to for such a last minute interview. Having woken up an extra hour early Imani thought to herself "I'm so tired, but this feels like the only chance I'll ever have." Too anxious to even eat much of anything, she decided to leave the house a little early.

Headphones in and a stomach full of butterflies she headed to the train station. The 10-minute walk seemed to be done in just 5 minutes but before she could reach the station, doubts started to flood her head. She thought this wouldn't work out in her favor. She thought she would get turned down. "What if they don't accept me like the other stores?" She worried that no one would give her the opportunity she desperately wanted. She remembered her mother's encouraging words, "if you don't try, you'll never know." Imani was so determined to give it her best shot that she pushed the negative thoughts out. She wanted the independence of having her own money and had goals set to finally start off her life in the work world.

Once she reached the work site, she was instructed to wait in the lobby until more interviewees came in. Minutes began to feel like hours to Imani. She decided to stop and look around her for a second. She saw the huge flow of customers coming in and out the very busy Manhattan store and even noticed the commotion between employees about the new possible workers. She thought to herself "wow, this is a lot of people. Can I handle all of this?" More interviewees began to arrive, and Imani grew a bit more anxious as she realized her interview was about to start shortly. Finally, the manager made her way towards her and a group of 4 others. Ready as she'll ever be Imani started off her interview strong, speaking first, answering questions to the best of her abilities, and explaining to the manager that she was capable of doing everything the position required. Imani loves to work with people, she made this clear to the manager. She could sell and engage with customers easily. She has a caring personality and is always willing to help others no matter how small the gesture may be.

Once the interview was done Imani radiated with confidence but was still a bit worried because there were other good candidates. She thought "it went well, all I can do now is wait it



out.” She knew she did her best and felt like her best was going to pay off. Within a few hours the manager emailed her and said she got the job! Reading the message full of joy Imani couldn’t help but smile. She was ready to get to work as a brand ambassador for a brand she loved.

## Poetry

### **When Summers Were Longer**

Remember when times were simpler?

Long, hot summer days

Breezy summer nights

When summer breaks felt like an eternity

The fire hydrants would be open, we would all run through

The ice cream truck would pass by and the whole block would grab a cone

Remember when times were simpler?

When neighbors would sit on the stoop and talk to each other for hours

When the barbeques were filled with food on a Saturday afternoon

Kids would ride bikes and scooters until they were too tired to continue

Laughter would fill the streets

Smiles could be seen for miles

Remember when times were simpler?

When friendships were genuine

When kids could be kids

When streetlights told us, it was time to go home

When being outside was the best part of the day

To not have a care in the world only when summers were longer

Dialogue

### **When Hunger Strikes**

Dennis: Yo, ya hungry?

Amani: (happily) You already know I'm always down to eat!

Uran: Not gonna lie (brief pause) I could eat too

Dennis: What's the word? What we getting to eat?

Uran: (excited tone, claps hands quickly) We could get paninis from this fire ass place I know

Amani: Nah I'm not feeling that right now

Dennis: Island Burger?

Amani: Oouuu I never tried it, I heard its good though

Uran: It's actually really good. Ya wanna order it to the house since it's brick out?

Amani: Yeah, it's toooooo cold to be walking anywhere

Dennis: Worddddd! Let's hurry and order, I'm mad hungry

## Journals

### #6

Oddly enough, short story writing has been a challenge for me, probably the hardest task of the semester thus far. Having to fictionalize a story seems like such an easy task because you can literally change anything, but for me I think since it pushes the creativity box so much, I tend to overthink what I want my story to be about. I take the small details and think about them drastically, questioning if the details make sense or not, or maybe even that my reader wouldn't like what my story is about. I enjoy having the opportunity to think outside the box, but I can tell that it is definitely something I struggle with and have struggled with for a while. Overall, the experience of getting to write short stories proved to me that I am capable of fictionalizing events that may or may not have happened in my life and that my readers do enjoy my writing as well.

### #7

I've enjoyed writing poetry a lot. It's nice to really be able to write about anything we want without having to worry about a word count. Poetry gives us as writers the opportunity to express our own ideas and thoughts and have our readers interpret them in any way, they see fit. I like the flexibility poetry gives us in which there isn't really any wrong way of writing one since there are so many different styles and versions. Poetry writing pushed me outside of my creativity box and allowed me to express ideas through a voice I would not typically use in my other writings. Most of my poetry were based on real events or an emotion I had felt, and it was nice to see how I can take something so simple and turn it into something bigger.