



*Art of Competition*

By: Ralph Ayala



## Final Reflection

What I have learned about myself during this semester is writing about stories in a more detailed fashion that I personally have an interest in. I noticed the stories I enjoy writing about are stories that relate to sports or games that involve strategy. I personally enjoy these kinds of games because of the rush of playing against strong players in a high stakes game. I also noticed that I tend to attract the reader's attention by describing the thoughts and emotions of characters in more detail. If I am being honest I like discussing these details because I love expressing my opinion on the subject in the hopes to bring the audience into the discussion.

What I have learned about myself as a reader is enjoying the details of emotions in characters to express the situation characters are in. If there is one thing I enjoy about the characters is how different they think or how they act that affects the story. There will be many different kinds of characters that could be unpredictable or easy to read based on personality. Even if there are stories that take a change of tone, those stories I find interesting. What I mean is if a story is a good or joyful setting and turned into a negative or dark story that can drag my attention. It is a surprise twist in the story that can always capture my attention.

I can use my hobbies as stories for others to enjoy. Doing this will not only allow me to grab the attention of my audience but it will also help build a source of communication to discover whatever my audience is interested in. Even if the audience is not interested in the story I only hope that it is the characters that capture their attention. By grabbing the attention of my audience and seeing their amusement in the story, I will be happy that I grabbed their attention

with my hard work. If I could do this to my friends then I can be happy that I have another way to communicate with my friends.

My favorite assignments have to be the short stories because they can have a good amount of words based on a story you like to tell. Since I have a personal interest in sports or competition I like to create stories related to that to build characters' emotions and growth in the story. My least favorite assignment had to be writing poems because poems were never my strong topic of stories. I would find poems easily confusing because if I cannot understand it I am afraid I might misunderstand it. Even if it was about creating a poem I doubt I could make it impactful to the readers.

The best way I was able to adapt into this writing class was taking pictures of the homework assignment slides at the end of the session to get an idea of what I need to do before class. Any assignments that had a fast due date I made sure to set as my first priority. My one and always challenge I had was the fear of a first impression. Whenever I see an assignment due the next session or due today I get scared and think I am not going to finish it in time. Then when I actually do the assignment I think it is not too bad or difficult.

A major challenge for me in this course was doing the reading assignments before class. I was also packed with real life responsibilities and doing other assignments for other classes so trying to fit in the reading assignments in my schedule was difficult. The best I could do was skim through the reading assignments and note down important details in the story that stands out.

That way during the next class session I have a chance to talk about what stood out to me. My only hope is that this participation method gives me credit for the class.

The best kind of peer feedback I received was just positive feedback from what my peers enjoyed about my writing. Reading these comments can help motivate myself and give me confidence to provide another story that people could enjoy. I do not mind providing feedback myself. When I provide feedback I like to provide positive feedback to let the person know what certain parts of their story did that individual do well at. Any positive feedback I will take to help me gain confidence in my stories.

When it came down to revising assignments it was not as time consuming as I thought. If there were good things about my story that people enjoyed I would leave those details inside and add new information based on the feedback I receive. I enjoy making new additions to my story and if those additions could make it better then it is a story I can be proud of. My only wish is people reading the new and improved stories after they were revised. That way I can enjoy the nice feedback from my peers.

If I had to compare work from the beginning of the semester to now, I would look at both assignments and observe what the stories are successful at. If it describes the setting in great detail that is good, and if it establishes a great sense of one emotion to the reader that is better. When I write a story I want my readers to understand how those characters feel in that scenario. This way the readers are engaged in the story and the readers have something to talk about

regarding my story. The more details my story has in settings, characters, theme, or actions the better I believe how much work I put into it.

Memoir - Ralph Ayala, Meet my Cardfight vanguard.

Meet my Cardfight Vanguard card, this is a card game I play to this day. I first learned about it in 2013 thanks to YouTube recommendations. I watched the first episode and the next thing I know I was hooked on the characters, the cards, and the game. I thought it looked cool for the way the monsters were designed on the front of the card. The physical card on the back says "Cardfight Vanguard" with what appears to be a star in the middle of the card, highlighted in a blue and black color scheme. It feels thin; not like a credit card or student ID. One Vanguard card that is my favorite is called "Blaster Dark Revenger". The reason why it is my favorite is because of the art, for the lore of how he fights in the shadows to protect his home and fix his mistakes of the past. I enjoyed this lore because it reminds me of how I would be there for friends in difficult times if they ever need me.

When I first got into the game, I always enjoyed the art of the cards. I would just take them out in the cafeteria and just look at one card at a time. One day someone recognized the logo of the cards I had in my hands. So me and my opponent Chris played each other. Believe me I was bad, it was completely different from the show. I made mistakes during the first 3 games I believe and eventually I won against Chris. Now it is hard to play with each other in real life, but thankfully the online version of our card game keeps us playing against each other. Chris was the only player I knew that played Vanguard at high school.

The way you win the game is by putting the opposing player's damage to 6. Each player has a damage counter, think of it like your life force in a video game. In Cardfight Vanguard if that number hits 6, game over. In Cardfight Vanguard it is almost similar to a game of chess. You are

the one leading the army, so you must give the commands of how to act against the opposing player.

I was always having trouble making friends in high school, it was not until my Sophomore year I actually got the cards and started playing by myself. The next thing I knew there were others who were familiar with the game and I started playing against them. Trust me I was bad, but over time I got better cards, started winning, and made lots of experiences. I made friends, had great laughs, gained a competitive side, joined a team of cardfighters, and gained confidence to speak up. To this day I am still friends with those people. I told my family about it too, however they were not interested in the game. My dad was proud to hear me win from time to time. What I love about this is that it is not as complicated compared to others like Pokemon or Yugioh. I enjoy the strategy behind this game because you have to think about how to outplay your opponent and get the win.

There are even tournaments based on this game for a chance for you to win money. Tournaments are usually set up by one person along with volunteers to act as the referee of the game. You will see people playing with others for practice or just chill and relax because they are confident in their experience. Once the tournament is set up people will look at the bracket to see who they will play against. A round goes by a set or just one game. In a set the first with two wins advances. Whereas in tournaments it is just one game, you win and you advance. If you are lucky your game can even be commented on during bigger tournaments. My games have been commentated on from time to time and honestly it felt nerve racking but at the same time pretty cool. The idea of my opponents watching how good I am gives me so much excitement to play against them.

When I played my first tournament I was nervous because I could only imagine the strong players there. Eventually as the game kept going my nerves stopped and I just had fun. When I play the game at a competitive level to this day it is like I am a different person. I am focused, ignore what is around me, completely quiet, and show no emotion. Including team tournaments where you need to help your teammates improve their game if you guys wish to win. The biggest accomplishments I have ever gotten in this game was getting first place four times in a row, and joining a sponsor team. Sponsor teams pay for all tournament fees. Usually a fee could be five dollars or greater depending on how the setup goes.

If I had the opportunity to teach someone this game I would want them to remember to just have fun at the end of the day. To be honest I would still be shy to make friends if I had never discovered this game. Having fun and enjoying the game can make you smile about how amazing it is.



Short story - Ralph Ayala, Short Story 2(Revised)

As Jaden walked around a hotel he could not help but enjoy the amazing lights of the place on the ceiling. It was very fancy, something he could not afford, but Jaden was thankful his team won a regional tournament and is living in a fancy hotel for a chance to compete in a National tournament. Jaden's team, The Ravens, were friends he made inside the gym. Some were quiet, but some were just there just to have fun despite how talented they are. As The Ravens went into their assigned rooms he could not help but enjoy the comfy beds in the room. At the end of the day, "we did not come here to relax or for sightseeing, we came here to win a national championship". Jaden's coach, Danny, finally arrived and we began talking about the opposing team for day 1. Nationals is a best of 3 game, single elimination tournament.

If one team lost a single round they would go home and try again later during fall 2020. Jaden was still in the hotel so he thought the team should eat pizza for dinner. The scenery of the buildings shining during the evening was amazing, he could not get the idea of playing his first game at nationals out of his mind. The shower's were so refreshing and all that was left was to relax and play to the best of their abilities. Jaden's team took a van straight towards the gymnasium that they will be playing in.

Jaden sat alongside his best friend and neighbor Jack. As he looked at the distance from the window, "You ready man?" said Jack

"Ready? Nervous or excited? Take your pick" Jaden chuckled.

"Well anyone can be nervous before a big game right? But I am sure we all suffered enough losses just to get here. So why be nervous if you have nothing to lose already?" said Jack.

“Does that even make sense?” said Jaden As he tilted his head.

“Hey whatever gets your spirit nerd” says Jack.

Jaden chuckles “Yeah sure thing. Thanks.”

The Ravens walked inside together and looked for a giant sized bracket in the front of the gate. The Ravens knew beforehand where they were playing, but man it looked big. There are about 64 teams participating in a single bracket, put the two brackets together and you have 128 teams in nationals! Anyway, the first was about to start. The team changed into their clothes and they wore ASICS Men’s Gel-Rocket 9 Volleyball Shoes.

The Ravens won the first round and second round. It was day 3 and it was also the worst day for volleyball players too. You not only need to play your round 3 game but if you win you have to play your quarterfinals game on the day 3 as well. Jaden was nervous, he not only won his game but The Ravens luck was about to get worse. Their opponents were Fall’s 2019 champions, the YellowJackets. Jaden knew it was going to be a struggle but thankfully Danny calmed down the team and explained to them that this will be a struggle for the YellowJackets as well.

“It’s not about flexing your achievements, it's about the effort you put into getting it. Show them how hard you wish to win. Show them how you do things back home!” said Danny as he shouts with his head up high.

The Ravens were ready with high energy but their gameplay was low. The Ravens lost the 3rd set 28 – 26. As the team packed up all their stuff from the hotel, The Ravens got into the van and headed home. It was a silent trip that night.

Poem - Fear of Heart

Title: Fear of Heart

Fear of losing someone,

fear of failure,

and the fear of others.

Many living things can fear anything,

fear can control our actions,

fear may even lead to pain.

People, animals,

And maybe fantasy creatures contain fear.

It is inevitable.

No escape from fear,

no running from fear.

When the shadows of negativity arise,

the hearts hurt,

and strive for release.

Without fear,

evolution is embraced.

No fear,

no change of others,

fear is as essential as a heart.

Fear is a emotion on pain,

acceptance is a form of strength.

For when fear is accepted,

the heart has a will to move forward.

Dialogue - Ralph Ayala, Dialogue(Revised)

Dialogue 4 Title: Sus

Narrator: The story takes place in a spaceship. The year is 2045. One of the individuals is the imposter.

Raph: Rachel is the imposter.

Rachel: No I'm not. I was in communications.

Narrator: Rachel shakes her head.

Raph: Then why did you say "I was in communications" if I never saw you leave from medbay in the first place?

Narrator: Raph raises his left eyebrow.

Narrator: 2 seconds later.

Rachel: Well um-

Raph: You are the imposter!

Narrator: Raph hits the red button to vote her out. As Rachel leaves from the station, the game screen states "Rachel was the imposter"

Ralph Ayala, Journal assignment #6

The good experiences about writing short stories is going in detail with the stories to attract the readers you are writing this to. While it is difficult to come up with a topic from time to time, I do enjoy going in depth and hearing the positive feedback. It makes me feel good about my work. What I do not enjoy is the struggle of how big or how long should I make the story. I know it is a short story, but I can not seem to find a good duration of the number of words in a story. What is ok is the time it takes to write the stories. The time it takes to write the stories is good because it is more than enough time for me to finish it. What I learn is how much I enjoy discussing stories in a more detailed fashion. Just seeing who else has an interest in the story's details is great to see and hear for me.

Ralph Ayala, Journal assignment #8

Chronz: "Hello?"

Jack: "Hello." He waves his hand.

Chronz: "Hey my name is Chronz and I am a member of VoC. We have been seeing your performance lately during the tournaments in our tournament discord and well, we would like to speak to you about recruiting you to join our official sponsor team."

Jack: "We?" He tilts head in confusion.

Chronz: "Our leader Pyro would also like to speak to you."

Jack: "Ok."

Narrator: Jack notices the chat box from Pyro and responds to him

Pyro: "H-hey."

Jack: "Hey." He smiles.

Pyro: "I know this may seem selfish seeing as you are part of another team in our tournament discord but we see you as a great player and if you like you can join our discord server and get to know many of the amazing players. This may seem like we're stealing a player from another team, but we can help you provide many opportunities for you to get better. Would you like to think about this decision?"

Jack: "Yes please." He nods.

Narrator: The next day

Pyro: "Have you decided?"

Jack: "Yes, I would like to join VoC." He smiles.