

**Oh,  
hello there.**

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### Final Reflection

I cannot believe that the semester has already come to an end. It seems as if just yesterday we were writing our first Journal assignment. For the longest time, I felt as if writing English was something I would never be great at leaving me feeling hopeless sometimes, thinking there was nothing that could make my technique better. However, this class has taught me that not only am I able to write better, but I'm also able to write with more confidence. As we all know, when a person believes in something and sets their mind to it, they can achieve the impossible. Just over 120 years ago, mankind thought flying was impossible and here we are today flying from New York to Australia in 16 hours. Not only that but we have even reached the stars, flying to the moon in 1969. My point is that I was never the best English writer and I was always ashamed of my work. I've expressed this multiple times throughout my work because I never reached a point where I was satisfied with what I had written. This all changed after taking this course.

It all began with the first assignment. As much as I hate writing, Prof. Penner made it enjoyable. We were required to write about a personal item that we cherished in our lives, but the catch was there was no specific format to how we needed to write about the item. This made writing so much easier. Personally, I struggled when it came to writing about anything personal. I'm not sure whether it is because I'm just very shy, to the point where I don't want to share my experiences, or I just struggle with personal writing. Knowing this, I purposely tried taking the extra step and wrote about my past. I always had this preconceived notion circling my head, that a person is either good at English or good at math and never both. I see now that that's not

completely true, rather, a person is just way more confident in one subject and not the other. In my case, arithmetic was always something I could rely on because logically there is only one single answer, and that can never change. However, when writing the end result is never the same. While the goal is to write with a certain intent, there are endless ways to word, rephrase and create work. That's what always left me doubting myself, I never knew if the choice I made to write in this tone or with this plot was the right choice. It's safe to say that nowadays I'm way more capable of expressing myself, to the point where I can completely write a story from start to finish, where once I was unable to do so. This semester I revealed that I'm not a bad writer. I am just a very unconfident writer.

While this was generally a writing class, reading is and always has been an important factor. Whether it was when we translated the distinctive excerpts we were assigned from stories or deciphering the meaning of our peers' work, it is equally important to understand a text as it is to write the text. Surprisingly, I am a very fast reader. I was always good at looking ahead and understanding the text as a whole. As a kid, one of my favorite things to do was to predict the ending of a story and then read the whole thing and see if I was right. Most of the time I was right but there were some key details that I would completely miss. To this day, I continue to make mental guesses and see how close I was to being correct. Throughout the entire course, the reading changed. We started with reading true stories and veered deeper into fictional memoirs. I realized that reading nonfiction stories is way less difficult to understand, but fictional stories are way more interesting, but harder to understand because of the multiple meanings and messages the story can have.

Creative writing is one of those subjects where a person pushes themselves to write about some of the most obscure topics. Earlier in this semester, we were given a task to write a memoir about a certain moment in our lives. After writing a draft and revising it we then changed topics and were led into fictional writing. The professor then reassigned the memoir homework and asked us to rewrite our work with a fictional presence. We were able to write about anything and everything. This made our writings way more exciting, as we were able to venture deep into our creative minds. By doing so, I was finally able to write my own stories that portray the same message. The real question is, how am I going to use this knowledge and the rest of what I learned in this course, and apply it to my next works of writing. One thing I will definitely be using in the future will be the way I organize information. Sometimes I like to ramble on and on instead of completely finishing my sentence and continuing to the next. This course taught me otherwise and from this point on I will be much more focused on structuring my ideas. Another thing this class helped me develop was my word choice and tone. After months of peer revisions regarding tone and style, I believe we've all become more accustomed to how a story should sound. The tone should be in line with the style of the character or what matter is being emphasized. The word choice is a very important aspect of writing and is one that will take with me forever to master. Although words might have similar meanings, the strength of some words has a much deeper effect on a reader. This means if the person in the story is having a rough time, we should express this by using specific words in relation to how the character is feeling. These distinct techniques in writing make all the difference and without the constant change in tones and word choices, a story will be as boring as ever.

Overall, writing is probably one of the most important topics in our lives. While essays might not be everyday assignments, that's not the only part of writing a person should focus on. People use techniques of reading and writing all the time in their daily lives, Whether it be to read the closed captions on the Netflix show of their choice, or when they text their best friends about the plans they want to make with them. I know this because these are the things that I do in my life. While writing wasn't always my strong suit, I've always had a connection to it. I never enjoyed doing it and I was always ashamed because I wanted my writing to be perfect. Now I know that my work will never be perfect, not after the first, the second, or even the fifth revision. The only thing we can conclude about writing is that for us to be finished with our work, we need to be just as proud of it as our readers are. I appreciate all that Prof. Penner taught us and I cannot wait to apply the skills I have learned to my next works of writing. Thank you for everything and I hope one day soon I can show you my greatest composition.

## Memoir #2

Years ago, I reached a point in my life where I felt disconnected from everything, anonymous. I had just transferred schools. During the beginning of the first grade I had just been added into the class and was completely unknown to any and everyone in that class; besides the two students who transferred into the school with me. I was never the type of person who was able to make friends easy but, I was always into doing my work and sticking to my studies.

I had known nobody and I didn't feel like there was much wrong. During my free period, I'd be one of the children who played by themselves. I guess you can say I had gotten good at being a loner and that's a quality within me that never changed and always remained. Till this day, I prefer working alone, out of preference, not for any other reason. However, I always felt as if I mattered, and I don't think that'll ever change. The lonely feeling never held me back from being the person I am today. Over time I met new people, friends, and became better acquainted with the kids in my class. People would start to ask me for help in school and since then I've always been the person everybody comes to for help in math and science. Even though I didn't have the most social experience as a child, in my deepest hopes and dreams, I knew that in the future that'll change, and I'm glad it did.

### Short Story #1

June 6, 1944, better known as D-Day. Steve Smith had been training for two years at Camp Toccoa, and today was finally the day he would go to war. Smith was part of the airborne, meaning they would be required to jump out of a plane and land straight into a battlefield. The company was excited and finally, Smith and his company amassed into C-53 planes awaiting their jump.

A total of 2,395 planes in the sky was a sight to be seen. Smith sure was nervous, but who wasn't, all these men were told that the chances of them dying before even landing on to the ground was almost guaranteed. But the men were also excited because they have trained for this and their moment was finally coming to make not only themselves but their country proud. All they could think about was themselves coming back home, with the pride of defending their country. Little did they know that this was just the start and there were going to be worse days ahead of them.

The officer tells the men to get out of their seats, they latch their hook onto the line and wait for the green light to shine. They aren't where they need to be but the Nazis are shooting at them from below. The plane is hit... the engine explodes... without any hesitation, the pilot turns on the green light and everyone jumps to their unknown fate.

Smith is now in the air. The cold air blows into his face, and he's at peace for a moment not even aware of what's going on around him. There are bullets flying at him but miraculously missing. He looks to his left and sees his best friend Butler, gets hit in the shoulder, and his peace of mind is lost. Sweat fills his body. He's petrified. He does not want to die. There's nothing to do until he lands, all he can do is pray.



Smith finally lands and he rushes to his friend. He needs a medic, but there aren't any around. Not only that but they are nowhere near their drop-off zone. They need to walk. Their company is nowhere to be seen. They're out in the open. They are extremely scared but fully aware. Their training was shining through the fear.

A group of five Nazis is seen, two manning a machine gun and the other three returning fire. Smith and Butler crouch behind a small bush planning their attack. Luckily, Smith was a trained sniper, and Butler was a brave soldier.

Smith aims, breathes, and pulls the trigger. Hit. Smith had just killed his first man, and all he could think about was killing the next, he reloaded and pulled the trigger once again. Hit. Butler had taken out the other two by surprise, the bullet wound seemed to have no effect with the amount of adrenaline being pumped throughout his body. All of a sudden Smith and Butler start to cry yearning to go back home but this was just the start and if they would make it to their drop-off zone there would only be more death and violence.

The two walk on.

Poetry**School is Ending**

The day is long, as I say to my friends  
The day is long, as we continue our work  
For the math and the science  
That our professors made due.  
School can be a dread  
for the students who don't do their work.  
Keep your head on straight,  
And above your shoulders,  
The semester is almost done  
And the summer adventures begin.

**How Many Days Can I Go Without you?**

First it was one day  
Then it was two,  
I was starting to picture my life without you,  
Sad and alone, with nothing to do  
Somehow trying to make my way back to you.  
Now marks a week  
With the sadness that ensued  
Because the taste alone  
Left me feeling weird too.  
Seeing you in the hands of others  
Leaves me with feeling of disgust

Once again left with the feeling

I can no longer trust.

### **The Darkest of Days**

The bluest of skies and the chirpiest of birds

You can tell that the day is gonna be much worse

The wind began roaring like the king of the jungle

Tugging and breaking the branches of the trees

All of a sudden the sun departs,

leaving clouds of rain and thunder

The ground began to dampen

As the sky lights up with blue streaks

Day turned to night, as the sky turned to gray

The happiest of days turned into a cloudy haze

The Darkest of Days has just begun.

### **Tired and Awake**

So it has come to this

Two thirty in the morning

And i am still awake

Like an owl in the night

I am searching for something to do

Fixing, playing, watching

Anything just not to sleep

My drowsiness overcome

by stale starbucks coffee

I don't know what to do

But I will not be sleeping early tonight.

Dialogue**Dialogue 1 -**

*(Ariel texting his sister Raquel)*

Ariel - Pizza basement

Raquel - Whos here

Ariel - peeps

Raquel - Which pizza

Ariel - Domino

Raquel - I dont want

im not hingry

*(Raquel did not end up coming to the basement and stayed in her room without eating any pizza.)*

**Dialogue 2 -**

*(Ariel is texting his friend about the SAT test he took)*

Ariel - How was the test

Friend - Horrible

Ariel - Na u are capping

Friend - Bro i wish

Ariel - What was hard?

Friend - Everything

Ariel - Damn bro

**Dialogue 3-**

*(Ariel is texting in a group chat with 4 other people)*

Ariel -This chat

Has been dead

For too long

Hello all

*(8 hours later)*

Damn

we back on this "we aren't answering Ariel" game

*(Ariel didn't receive a response that day)*

**Dialogue- 4**

Ariel - Hey bro are we chilling tonight?

friend - yeah, whats the word?

Ariel -I'm down for a movie night or something, who are we inviting?

Friend - is it a boys night or like a chill night?

Ariel- Im down for whatever

Friend - lets do a boys night haven't chilled with the squad in a minute.

Ariel - okay ill come get you right now and well see who we pick up next.

Friend - bet see you in a bit.

*(The boys didn't come out that night, Ariel chilled with his friend and drove around Brooklyn.)*

Journal #3

I've always found writing to be one of my weaknesses. Ever since I was a kid I had trouble writing. Although my reading level excelled, writing was never one of my strong suits. As most people say, a person is either better at math or better at English, never both. However, in my case it seems to be leaning toward arithmetic studies. I believe this is because my brain is hardwired to find I know this can change; with practice and hard work I will get better. Coming into this class was the first step in getting better and that's why I signed up for it.

These memoirs are especially difficult for me. I find it's much harder for me to write about my own personal experiences. When I have the information in front of me, it makes writing so much simpler because I know what my end goal is and I know exactly how I'm going to format my response. However, when I write about myself I can never see the true finished product because there's always something better to add to the story. One way I can write my memoirs would be to create an outline before highlighting all my strong suits, but I find it more difficult as there is always a part of the story I forget to add. I believe my memoirs are good however they can be better.

### Journal #7

My experience with poetry wasn't always the best, and neither was English. English was never my strongest subject in school, because it involves a lot more out of the box thinking than the mathematics, and science subjects that I've always loved. Now poetry was even harder than English, because with poetry the reader needs to think even more abstractly, because what is being said is hidden behind the words, and even the rhymes, which I would have never expected. The fact that even the rhyme scheme and the reason the author may have chosen that rhyme scheme just makes poetry even harder to understand and ultimately write because as a writer of poetry I would not want my writings to be so straightforward like a story, but something that a person would have to think about and decipher when reading.

However, with the introduction of rap music in my life, I found a similarity with poetry and rap. Rap music is many times the same as poetry, involving different rhyme schemes, and different meanings behind the words. I realized that I would listen to rap music, and try to understand what the artist was trying to say, because many times metaphors would be used to convey what they were talking about. Deciphering poetry and rap music is sort of the same thing.

I had an epiphany, that if I can understand rap music, then poetry should not be much harder. It may have been all the practice of understanding rap music that I was able to much better understand poetry. I am now able to use all that I've learned from poetry and music to write poems myself. They may not be the best, but it is a lot easier to do, now that I've gained the experience of first understanding poems and the messages they have. Poetry allows me to take a step back from all the straightforward subjects like math and science where there's only one answer, and think outside the box, allowing myself to create multiple meanings to a poem. At the



end of the day, I learned that poetry and English alike are open to interpretation, and whatever the reader understands from the reading is true.