The Final Portfolio

Gisselle Gomez

New York City College of Technology

Professor S. Schmerler

English 1121 – E115

May 21, 2019

My Journey

As the end of this semester approaches, I find myself with ever growing willpower and courage to finish this semester strong. I used to have a history of not finishing what I started (academically). My priorities would get wrapped up in real world problems like paying bills, having a social life, and maintaining family relations. I would take the experience of being in a class learning for granted. I didn’t care.

I found this English 2 composition class to be encouraging. Unlike the other (three) English 1121 classes I have taken. One of the main takeaways I learned from Professor Schmerler’s class is: Permission. In this class its about giving **yourself** the permission to write. Everything is writing. The poetry I wrote in a notebook somewhere about stationary pens is writing. So, am I a writer? *Yes.* I am a writer. Am I a “good” one? I don’t know. But I know there is always room for improvement. Even though this semester is over, this year is not. Perhaps this will inspire me to write more “pen poems”. Maybe on the train. Or on a plane. Taking the bus. Wherever it is, I know I must (write).

This class helped me with my, not phobia nor fear but, caution of writing. I feel myself growing the confidence to write just for the act of writing. I know that to grow as a writer I must detach myself from the words. Detach from the idea that anything and everything I write must be “good”. The purpose of writing should be for authenticity.

Each unit in our curriculum taught me more about myself as a writer.

Unit 1 started off the semester with constrained in-class writing assignments. Those assignments helped me realize how I should continuously strive to expand my vocabulary. By removing certain letters or words from my writing I had to find new ways to express myself

Unit 2 helped me get out of my comfort zone. I had to take a specific form of writing and transfer the content into another form. This assignment helped me notice the different genres we see in our day-to-day life. Everything is a genre. This unit also reinforced my skills on how to translate information in order to transfer it to another format (and possibly another platform).

Even though Units 3 and 4 were short units, I felt that the skills I used in the previous units helped me get through these last units. The skill of adapting and transferring information from Unit 2 helped me visualize a media format for the multimodal project.

Unit 1 Literacy, Metacognition

*Our first assignment already demonstrated how different this class curriculum was compared to the other English 2 classes. No direct prompt as to what to write for. Only the word Freedom as inspiration. This meant I had to look to my own definition and experiences for the Freedom paper. I took inspiration from my experiences in education and personal life. Freedom is a broad term that can be used in various contexts. I had to look within myself for writing material. Through my writing and rewriting I found more material to add and some to omit. I took the grading notes from the first entry and incorporated into the final submitted piece. I tried to add more sentence variety and clear out any awkward phrases. There may be some sentence fragments I couldn’t help to edit.*

Permission, Program, Pearl

Freedom means many things to different people. It’s about being at ease to do and reach your own potential without any of life’s day to day hindrances. To some it is a hopeful second chance. To others it is an overwhelming endless choice of options too vast to explore or even comprehend. Some believe that freedom is more of a chaotic good. A constraint that pertains to the mind and spirit rather than the physical state. Malcolm X’s autobiographical excerpt recounts his experience of being in a physical constraint [prison] never made him feel less free. Being confined helped him find his way into books and knowledge. This became his route to freedom. Freedom is permission to live life without self-restraint regardless of constraint.

In my experience, finding freedom is a continuous challenge. Now that I have finished high school, and entered the “real world”, I find freedom to be overpowering. The lack of routine leaves me with too many possibilities. As a child I felt conditioned to do and act of a certain manner. With all my choices made for me and no opinion of my own. Now as an adult I have all the power to make of my own decisions and do as I please with my time. In my adulthood there is the recurring theme of time management. The eternal quest to finding the time to go to school, work a full-time job, have an active social life.

Try taking classes, graduating, obtaining a degree or two or three all while working full time. Is it impossible? No. Can it be done? Yes. However, the choice is up to us as students to find time to balance the workload. This is something I struggle with. I have to follow up with my education for myself. I had trouble with this before where I had to take a semester off from college to focus on work and my mental health. Whereas in high school education was something brought upon me. There was a set structure that was easy to follow. In the adult world this no longer exists. There is a new freedom that makes me unsteady. There is no system of guidance to tell me what is “right” or “good”. So, doubt seeps within my mind and into my writing. Doubt makes me question if my writing is “good”. In high school I felt programed to write for an objective grade. With rubrics and prompts telling me what and how to write. It only made sense that I depended these tools for grading survival. Learning to grow into myself as a writer is a freedom I am realizing in this brave new world of written word.

In life finding freedom is about balancing all sorts of relationships. For me the one most important relationship is the one I have with myself. Allowing myself to have peace of mind is a difficult thing. I continually challenged myself to try to achieve it. I suffer from what may be an acute form of depression that, redundantly, creeps and strikes in passing moments. My denial to be properly diagnosed is possibly the very reason I say this. With all the light mental illness has received in the past years it is common to say, or rather ask: “Who hasn’t experienced the swinging motions of depression? Or battled with the inner voice we hear inside our head that beats a negative tone to which we carry out our day”. Anxiety. That which I have grown to call it and give it a name. To name it is to give it a space and recognize its existence. Once we do that, we can find a way to analyze an issue, a problem, and ultimately treat it. Freedom is acknowledging all of the above and figuring out the next step to becoming a better, happier you. Freedom is being kind with yourself. In light of this, I’ve recently made changes to my home environment in hopes to better my overall mental wellbeing. I decided out with the dull seafoam green color that’s covered my walls for the past decade. In its place appears a serene polished pearl cream color that welcomes tranquility. They say that sight and smell are our two strongest senses. With the visual appearance of my room changed, I went ahead and bought aromatherapy candles to appease the other sense. Lavender and cedarwood. Freedom of the mind is the soul seeking solace…. to the scents of Bath and Body Works.

Something that I have had to teach myself to do is to accept help. To take the weight off myself and let someone support me when I’m drowning in the pressure. To let myself be taught. As well as accept that I don’t know everything and admit I am only human. That it is okay to let someone in and help me unwind from the tight coil of anxiety I sometimes find myself in. This concept of finding freedom is an ambition I aspire to achieve. I see freedom as the state of fully having a grasp of my surroundings so that all my goals work together effortlessly.

Unit 2 Rhetoric, Genre, Discourse

*Writing a recipe for a skill that I am best in is a simple task. I was good at skill that was already in the recipe genre. Juicing is my skill. I worked in the skill to take vegetables and juice them. Now I had to take that skill and flip it into another genre. I found that difficult. I thought I understood the concept of the project but had no idea as to how to start it. Juicing was not a convenient skill for this assignment.*

*With help from other classmates and inspiration from our class discussions I found it a little easier to search for another genre to mold my skill into. If another classmate could make a menu from a skill completely unrelated to food, then I could make something we commonly read juice related. I spend a lot of time reading gossip-like pieces on social media. That includes horoscope. This sparked the idea to turn juices into something that could be read as a horoscope. I would use a juice-like menu item as a prediction for the astrological sign that was being described.*

*Finishing this project/ assignment made me proud. I feel like I can transfer anything from one genre to another. I only wish I knew earlier in class that my skill choice would later be the same subject for the following unit pieces.*

**Juice Horoscopes**By Gisselle Gomez

**Taurus**Apr 20- May 20Protein Bullseye:Looking for something filling and nutritious? This drink will keep you strong as a bull. Collard greens, kale, lemon, apple. If you’re feeling adventurous you could add supplements such as spirulina and whey protein.

**Gemini**May 21- Jun 20  
Double Trouble  
You know it’s not your eyesight when you’re seeing double, not only detoxify your body but also your aura with wheatgrass, kale, swiss chard, parsley, apple, and cucumber, and ginger.

**Cancer**Jun 21- Jul 22  
Tropical Colada:Pineapple, coconut, spinach, and kale. This yummy drink is a good pick me up for unforeseen rough patches in your personal life. Remember to take a step back from any hard stress from work and relax.

**Leo**Jul 23- Aug 22  
Sunrise Punch:  
Everything this sunrise touches boosts your energy to help conquer your day. Grapefruit, Pineapple, orange, and mint.

**Virgo**Aug 23- Sep 22  
Chaotic Apple:  
Practical, strong, and driven. This perfect combination of apple, spinach, pineapple, and swiss chard will surely please any picky Virgo.

**Libra**Sep 23- Oct 22Balanced Veggies:At the snap of your fingers get half of your daily dose of veggies. Cucumber, carrot, apple, and orange. A well-rounded healthy intake is good for cleansing your mind and body.

**Scorpio**Oct 23- Nov 21Spicy Beat:Passionate and driven you won’t let a simple cold keep you down, this mouthwatering concoction contains ginger, beets, carrots, and spinach, all which provide good immunity.

**Sagittarius**Nov 22- Dec 21  
Carrot Surprise:  
Collard greens, swiss chard, lemon, apple and cucumber, the real surprise of this mysterious drink is that it contains no carrots.

**Capricorn**Dec 22- Jan 19  
The G.O.A.T:  
Get your steaming hot cup of orange, ginger, lemon, and mint. Guaranteed to keep you warm all winter long

**Aquarius**  
Jan 20- Feb 18  
H2TheOh:  
Watermelon, kale, strawberry, and basil. This refreshing drink is a friendly and fruity excuse to connect with old friends or make new friends

**Pisces**   
Feb 19- Mar 20  
Sea Cucumber:  
For the sensitive Pisces, you’ll find this juice calming to your taste buds. Light and healthy celery, cucumber, and lemon is a good replacement for your morning coffee.

**Aries**   
Mar 21- Apr 19  
Turmeric Turnstyle:  
Turmeric, carrot, orange, and apple. Designed to keep you keen for any new opportunities coming around the corner.

Unit 3 Inquiry Based Argumentative Project

*In my research pape-... I mean inquiry-based project... I was unsure of how to approach my skill. I have knowledge in juicing because of a previous job. With that being said I went into inquiry not for myself but for others. When I worked making juices many people would ask me about the health properties of some juices. Customers would also ask me about which ingredients had better benefits or what to drink for feeling under the weather. I wrote the inquiry-based project as a proposal to open a conversation.*

Drink Your Veggies Like Your Mama Told You

Unless you have been living under a rock it’s hard to hide from today’s health trends. People are becoming aware of what they put in their bodies. A lot of people miss out on eating their daily recommended amount of fruits and vegetables. A good way to keep up with fruit and vegetable intake is by juicing. Juicing takes these vitamin rich foods and blends it down to a quick and easy drink. This recent trend makes being healthy approachable.

With the convenience of having a vitamin rich drink in your hand this trend makes juicing easy to be used as a meal replacement option. It is easy to get carried away with the trend and exaggerate the health benefits.

This is why I want to open up the discussion on being properly informed about the benefits of juicing. Juices are made attractive to everyone by the amount of beneficial properties any juice can have. This being said not every juice is the same. Depending on the mix of ingredients there can be nutrients that help boost immune system, gut health, and can be suited to also help with mental health. Super foods like kale, spinach, and acai berries can be used to make juices high in anti-oxidants, rich in iron, and make them tasty as well.

These health benefits can also act as marketing tools for companies to label juices under exaggerated terms. Top brands like Tropicana are releasing juices with more fiber to attract more customers. Bai, a wholly owned subsidiary of Keurig Dr Pepper, Burlington, Mass., and Piano, Texas, offers Bai Antioxidant Infusion, a line with 10 flavors that contain fruit flavors and antioxidants. (The good kind of juicing: juicing trends could benefit CPG market)

Studies and articles support the green juice and plant-based lifestyle. A better healthy diet supports body and mental health. It is simple logic that by feeding your body the minerals and vitamins it needs this helps your body feel better. Vitamins found in vegetables can help reduce stress and anxiety. This new form of juicing your greens and veggies may also promote a vegetarian / vegan outlook on your diet.

Juicing is a good source for nutrients intake however it should not replace having a balance diet consisting of whole foods.

Citations

1. "Super juice; All hail the new hero of juices. Innovative functional blends are driving growth that flies in the face of consumers' sugar concerns." Grocer, 23 Feb. 2019, p. 43. Culinary Collection, http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A575347536/PPCA?u=cuny\_nytc&sid=PPCA&xid=4817e385. Accessed 12 May 2019.

2. "Tropicana unveils high-fibre juice pair." Grocer, 11 May 2019, p. 39. Culinary Collection, http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A585085116/PPCA?u=cuny\_nytc&sid=PPCA&xid=c44928e4. Accessed 12 May 2019.

3. "Superfood or Superphony?" Men's Health, Jan.-Feb. 2019, p. 32. Culinary Collection, http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A568180337/PPCA?u=cuny\_nytc&sid=PPCA&xid=23677e2d. Accessed 14 May 2019.

4. Dennett, Carrie. "Can the Foods You Eat Affect Your Mood? Why your eating habits can affect both body and mind." Environmental Nutrition, Mar. 2019, p. 4. Culinary Collection, http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A574567092/PPCA?u=cuny\_nytc&sid=PPCA&xid=b3b0b7bb. Accessed 14 May 2019.

5. Dennett, Carrie. "The Pros and Cons of Juicing for Health: Is juice as good as--or even better than--eating your fruits and vegetables? EN gives you the scoop." Environmental Nutrition, Feb. 2018, p. 6. Culinary Collection, http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A525070555/PPCA?u=cuny\_nytc&sid=PPCA. Accessed 16 Apr. 2019.

6. Goldman, Leslie. "Eat to cleanse your body." Natural Health, Mar.-Apr. 2014, p. 24+. Culinary Collection, http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A367422078/PPCA?u=cuny\_nytc&sid=PPCA&xid=35037508. Accessed 14 May 2019.

7. "The good kind of juicing: juicing trends could benefit CPG market." Beverage Industry, Jan. 2014, p. 14+. Culinary Collection, http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A356143491/PPCA?u=cuny\_nytc&sid=PPCA&xid=60f4c366. Accessed 16 April 2019.

Unit 4 Repurposed Multimodal Project

*My inspiration for the multi modal project came from 2 forms of media examples: Late Night Talk Shows and YouTube. Originally, I would have liked to have converted my inquiry content into a segment that could be seen on a show like Last Week Tonight with John Oliver. However due to time constraint and lack of skill I wasn’t sure in how to make it happen. Then I thought about YouTube. Many content creators start off making videos in the comfort of their homes with their computer camera and no skill. By imitating the mannerisms and phrases commonly heard from youtubers I felt that it became a good way to achieve my project. The simple aspect of raw unedited video can fit into the category that is YouTube.*

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f1Y8LBijAz8*