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English 1121, Section #402

Professor Schmerler

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Section #1

Ariel Ruiz

MY SKILLS/ACTIVITIES ARE:

The skills I have:

- 1) Singing
- 2) Drawing
- 3) Playing the piano

The skill I chose was Singing:

Before the confinement I used to do all these things whenever I had time. I would find myself doing these things whenever I was stressed about a situation. I found comfort and was at ease whenever I would sing. It was the melody and emotion of the song that distracted me from the outside world. In these moments, I would forget about papers due or exams I had to study for.

Now that we are in confinement I find myself singing for no reason. Especially when I study and start getting tired, I sing to keep me up. When I get sad and/or bored I sing in the basement of my house, to hear the echo it produces. When doing this skill I feel myself expressing my emotions whether they are negative or positive. All lyrics and tone have a meaning and are trying to portray a message. The amount of sound you use

or the tone, can either make the song sound boring and flat or can make it sound vivid and beautiful.

Here are some fun facts about singing that I learned from www.takelessons.com:

-singing produces endorphins and oxytocin hormones, also known as the happy hormone.

-singing relieves stress and tension and can improve your heart condition.

-singing produces strong and healthy lung capacity, it was proven to help patients with COPD, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.

-the ability of singing is much like a muscle, you “use it or lose it”

When researching the action of singing, it had a very interesting definition.

According to dictionary.com, it means to “utter words or sounds in succession with musical modulations of the voice; vocalize melodically”.

If I were to explain my skill, well it takes a lot of physical activity. To sing professionally, practicing takes a big part for good results.. It is considered an art and for some people, you are either naturally a good singer or you have to build up that skill and progress in it .According to www.britannica.com “Singing includes speaking by the manner in which the breath is expended to vibrate the vocal cords”.Meaning you need your lungs, diaphragm, tongue, and mouth. All these things need to work together and be firmly controlled in order to produce a melody or note.

Music is one of the things that can emotionally impact a person, it can be compared to the use of Pathos. People use music to calm them down, to feel good, even to focus while studying. All these reasons are linked with emotions. An individual can

have their emotions affected by a song, they can become sad listening to a song about heartbreak. At times the person doesn't even relate to the song, but they feel the emotions portrayed by the message, leading the person to completely change their mood. We tend to connect a song with a certain emotion, even a song without words. For example, a violin is mostly connected with the emotion of grief. While an electric guitar is more of a positive emotion. I like to think about ancient composers like Mozart and Beethoven. These composers were famous due to their original way of music. Their music was very dramatic and bold, and were used to tell stories or plays. This is another amazing point about music, music can stimulate you to imagine a story in your head, just like a song can make you remember memories or people.

People can feel uncomfortable, or even scared when asked to sing. Personally, when singing, I become very vulnerable to the people there. It is why I am very shy when I sing, because it is like I am singing my thoughts. My thoughts are being poured out there, for everyone to see and judge. That could be the most scary thing in the world. Now all your feelings and thoughts are out in display, going in harmony with your voice. The audience takes what you have poured out and your voice for observation. They can either like or dislike what you have performed, or they can either seem emotionally affected or be dry towards your music.

On the other hand, singing can be very satisfying. Hearing someone's beautiful voice can be "music" to your ears. When a singer hits a high note perfectly, chills run down your spine. When you finally let out all your emotions that have been stuck inside through a melody, you've taken off weight from your chest and you can breathe again.

Finding a song that speaks for you, meaning that the song portrays exactly what you feel, you feel like you are not alone. The song can make you tear up of joy or sadness and after you're done, you feel good letting it out. You feel satisfied after that experience.

Section #2: Pair work

1. What you have in common -- where you meet on common ground on a deeper level, as well

I know that you are a big fan of soccer, and you enjoy practicing it. I like volleyball too, and I think it's important to practice. Practicing in singing has made me better at it. I'm sure that soccer requires more practice and is very strategic as well. I see some players kick the ball and steal it from their opponent, and I immediately become intimidated.

One thing Ariel and I have in common is that our skills have much deeper meaning than just an "interest". She likes to sing when she's stressed or overwhelmed and that's her go to place. For me, Soccer is a big part of my life. It is a place where I find peace and tranquility. Both of our skills require a lot of practice, which I was quite surprised that singers have to practice.

2. What new thing(s) you learned from each other

I learned that you, Maher, live in my area. Also, we took that A train together and saw each other that one time. We would have been good train buddies if it weren't for the virus. I have also seen your good moves in soccer. They seem very hard to do, I know I wouldn't be able to master them. I'm proud of how much of a great player you are. Also, congratulations on your MVP award, you deserve it all the way because I have seen how hard you work.

I learned that singing takes lots of practice. I sometimes thought that singers have natural talent in them, Ariel mentions that "Singing includes speaking by the manner in which the breath is expended to vibrate the vocal cords". Meaning you need your lungs, diaphragm, tongue, and mouth. All these things need to work together and be firmly controlled in order to produce a melody or note. I also learned that when singing in a group creates an emotional bond between the singers. When playing, communication is just as important. To play well you have to know your teammates well enough.

3. What new thing the other person pushed you to learn about your own skill

Maher actually pushed me to sing a song called “selfish” by Madisson Beer. He actually pushed me to try high notes, which I don't do as much due to its difficulty. It was nice to try something out of my comfort zone. It also showed me what I can improve in as a singer and how much more creative I can get with my voice.

After my soccer season got cancelled because of quarantine I was really frustrated with myself and I found myself lost. Ariel privately messaged me to not lose hope, she encouraged me to work out at home(a specific app called workout home) and to keep my diet healthy.

4.What new perspective you gained from doing this exercise

Doing this exercise I realized that even though two different skills can be completely different they can have their similarities. Looking at other people's skills from different perspectives gives creativity towards how they can perfect it. For example I told Ariel to try a song called “selfish” little did i know that song had a high note in it which ariel claims to not do them as often.

During this exercise, I got to know people through their skill and what they enjoyed doing. Many had a skill that needed certain qualities. For example Maher showed me how self-disciplined he is, and his determination in his sport. Soccer is a challenging sport, and him challenging himself to do better, shows me his focused personality.

Section #3

Reflection on my Pair:

My pair whom I worked with was Maher. He used to take the A train the same way I did, back when we attended college. As a person who likes staying athletic, he's a determined Player. His hobby is enjoying soccer and it's one of the things he misses most. I noticed how he takes practicing the sport, very seriously. He at times goes to play outside, but it is not the same as playing in a field, where you feel free. Maher is very passionate about his sport, and due to practice he has gained great skills. Maher is such a good player that he won an MVP award. I know that it's hard to master those moves in order to steal the ball from the opposing team and the speed to run fast. This just

showed me how self-disciplined he is. When Mher sets his mind on a purpose, he is able to execute it. He is very focused on his goal and scores it. Even though he has improved so much, he still feels that he can keep improving himself as a player, which i admire.

Reflection on overall Unit 3:

I thought in this Unit it was nice to see what my classmates had as a skill. It showed me a part of their personality and also what had made their personality. For example, some of my classmates had jobs that had jobs that helped them grow as a person. Another person used drawing in order to express their thoughts and emotions. I started reflecting on how singing has changed me as well. I realized that singing made me more happy, because it was the instrument I used to express my personality. Reading others skills, gave me an idea on what other skills I could try during quarantine. There are many things that I was not fond of trying, like cooking. However, when I read how fun others had cooking, my interest in it grew. I have definitely started cooking small things and I hope to keep improving as a beginner chef. I also felt more united with my class, seeing how we are all trying to keep ourselves. This exercise made me feel less alone in a way. We are struggling through this situation together. Staying in contact with classmates was comforting and fun to explore their likings as well as their perspectives on certain activities I've never tried. Despite my shy personality, I was very pleased exploring others' diaries and going to class through Zoom. I felt myself more open to participate.

When attending these classes on Zoom, we explored ways of being more creative in our writing. I personally thought that my writing was very vague and needed more vivid details. In class we chose objects and tried to describe them as detailed as possible without directly saying what our object was. It was fun to see how my classmates used literary devices like figurative language and personification to force me to imagine the objects in my head. Doing this was very clever as well as helpful for my writing. I learned how to be more creative in expressing myself through my writing. I was more willing to explore through my writing, meaning using different literary devices. It required focus, which I have now mastered. In addition, this unit motivated me to take interest in my classmates, on a deeper and personal level. I was motivated to take initiative to start conversations on google docs, and to deeply reflect on my classmates' skill documents.

When I saw the motivation and passion my classmates showed through their hobbies/skills, I admired them.

I believe that I deserve an A for unit 3, the adaptation to a new learning style. I have seen myself work harder and gone out of my comfort zone with this assignment. It was not easy to reach out to other classmates, but it ended up being fun for me. It was also very difficult to explain something such as singing. It was something I just did casually everyday, it was hard to focus on what it included. Yet through researching it, I was shocked and regret not paying more attention to it. The unit made the class seem more like a family in a way. We all shared our ideas, skills, and feelings. Even though it was through paper, I was able to relate to other people as well as discover new skills I

was motivated to try out. Therefore, I know that I have worked hard in this unit resulting in an A, and have personally made this unit my very own.