My ENG 1121 Portfolio

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__Final Reflection__

This past semester in ENG 1121, I have gained experience as a writer, and I am blown away by the progress I have made since the beginning of the semester until now. My experience in this class has taught me that I am a very creative reader and writer, which enables me to avoid the challenge of being stuck with no idea what to write. My ability to form sentences rapidly also allows me to complete my work more quickly since I am full of ideas. My strategy consists of having a broad outline of what I am going to write in each paragraph or sentence before I begin the essay. If anything needs to be changed, my ability to improvise is also considered a skill because of my ability to adjust quickly. Another takeaway from this class that I acknowledged was the use of AI. AI is a very important feature in today's world, and most professors despise and forbid the use of it. Professor Cipriani, on the other hand, promotes to us that we should use AI for all our work because it will be part of the future and we must adapt to it sooner rather than later. It was really refreshing to hear a professor actually notice the good in using AI instead of the generic crew that automatically assumes it is a negative.

There have been many changes in my writing, from my grammar to my format. Going into my first year of college, I thought my writing was excellent and required little to no improvement. I was mistaken and discovered it immediately in 1101; even in 1121, I discovered that I was making errors that should not have been found on the college level of writing. Prior to 1101, I was only using the period and comma as punctuation, which was a rookie mistake. I discovered that there are puns for every situation, such as the semicolon, which is used to connect sentences and is now a punctuation mark that I use in all of my writing. In terms of format, I have learned over the last few months that the correct way to format your piece is to press the tab on the first sentence or simply leave space between the edge and the first word of the paragraph. It is a good thing I am learning how to correct these simple mistakes this year; otherwise, it would be embarrassing for me to continue making the same elementary mistakes in my second, third, or even final year of college. It would give the professors a negative impression of me, implying that, despite all of my education, I still do not know how to write properly.

To summarize my experience in ENG 1121, the most important thing I learned is that, in the opinion of the professor, using AI programs to fix/edit your work is not a bad thing. Prior to this lesson, I was afraid to use AI because I was afraid that if a professor discovered I was using AI to correct some errors, they would accuse me of plagiarism or using AI to write my work. It gave me a sense of relief for 1 reason, and that was because knowing that not all professors think like that allows me to have confidence in using AI programs for other class projects without worrying about whether they are going to be flagged.

Unit 1 Project - Portrait of a Word

If God is Willing

Growing up in an Arab household, my parents, who were born and raised in Palestine, always spoke Arabic to my brothers and me, and even though we barely spoke the language, we understood what they were saying most of the time but still chose to reply with English. The one word that grew on me throughout my childhood was the saying, Inshallah.

Inshallah means if God is willing in English. Every single person who speaks Arabic and is Islamic says, Inshallah, after everything they do to show they are thankful for everything, they leave everything up to God to decide. Inshallah is usually said when something is asked about in the future. Recently, my mother taught me that it is important as a Muslim to say this word, as it will provide great fortune for those who say it. Growing up, my parents, especially my mother, would always say no when I asked for something, and every time she gave me the answer, inshallah, I would always see it as another saying for no. Growing up, I never liked it, inshallah, because I felt like it was another way for my mother to say no and make me believe she would do whatever I asked of her. I remember, as a child, I wanted a game so bad that I begged my mom and dad for it, and when I asked, they said yes, inshallah. Being young, I did not understand the message so I was infuriated with her response and I said, Inshallah, no. She was enraged with what I said and started humbling me. It always made me confused as to why she would rather say that than a simple yes or no, but little did I know the reasoning was by far not confusing at all. The meaning has changed over time for me and made me realize that everything is in God's hands. I recently started saying, inshallah, a lot when I went back to Palestine this summer and spoke Arabic mainly to communicate with my family. Over the past

couple of months, I have gotten accustomed to saying I get asked questions that have something to do with my future.

Inshallah can correctly indicate if someone is Muslim because it shows they only believe in one god, and that is Allah (god in Arabic). When you believe that everything is up to God to decide, that makes you a Muslim because you dedicate your life to him and believe he paves the way for everyone. So when hearing someone say Inshallah when spoken to, you can automatically determine that this person has dedicated their beliefs to the Quran and has full trust and faith in God. Those who can say inshallah are those who only believe in one god, and that is Allah. As a result, if you don't believe in Allah and then say a word with his name in it, then you are considered to be mocking him. There are extremist Muslim countries that punish those who mock God through death, and this is unfortunate but true. The actions of the extremist people do not portray the actions of all, as many are against extremism, but show how far some are willing to go when their god is being used as a joke.

Those who are filled with worry and stress should consider saying Inshallah or Bismillah, which means in the name of God because it will allow God to help assist in ramming through their conflicting times. In the face of those challenges, these individuals need to understand that they will never be alone, even if they have been abandoned by everyone around them. They should be able to know that they can have a powerful figure who believes in them and what's best for them. Also, for anyone who is a victim of any injustice, all those who believe in God know that the committee of any sin will receive their punishment at any given time, and no sinner will run around for long without a punishment being given. Like many students, I tend to do my worst on any exam, essay, project, etc. Even though I may not be fully confident in myself to get the grade I want, right before taking the assignment, I will always say, inshallah, I pass along with bismillah because it gives me hope that anything can happen, even when it feels like

the opposite. I was also taught as a young child to say the two words inshallah and bismillah before I go to work, school, or even outside in general, so I know that when I step out, I will be in the safest hands possible, and God will do his best to make sure my day turns out well. I'm very superstitious about it because I feel that I forget to say these prayers. I feel as if my day will be ruined and I will receive bad luck, so it makes it difficult for me to remember each time I step foot outside my house.

What I learned from these past couple assignments is that every culture, language, and even people are unique in their ways. Each culture has words that mean so much, such as Fuku, Inshallah, etc. Learning the meanings behind certain words in different languages helps you understand the background of something you are unfamiliar with and takes you into the mindset of people with different beliefs. The targeted audience for projects like "The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao " and this piece here is those willing to take a step and see what it's like for different cultures and to understand how one word can have a huge impact on a large number of people. It's very preposterous how a single word can have as much of an influence; those who have never witnessed it will never fathom the impact it has had. Writing this makes me want to see the impact of one word in different cultures in different regions around the world.

The Effect of Social Media on Mental Health

To all the people that are under the age of at least 21, have you ever wondered what life was like without technology or how it would be without it? I think about that all the time. The world we live in today is much different than the world that existed less than 15 years ago. During this period, our lifestyles have changed significantly due to the creation of phones and social media. The part of the brain that controls our thinking has taken most of the hit from the new technological evolution.

Learning about the impact of social media is important because it has the greatest influence on most people who utilize social media. As an 18-year-old who is on social media every day for a good amount of time, I always see both the positive and negative impacts of social media. With apps such as Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat, cyberbullying is at an all-time high, and news has become much more unreliable due to legitimacy being neutralized and some feeling "less" than others. Some positive outcomes include connections being made through social media and more opportunities being widely available. Another positive outcome is the accessibility and assistance it can provide.

To start, social media can provide new opportunities and change lives at one of the quickest rates ever. I know a bunch of stories of social media influencers who went from being broke to making hundreds of thousands of dollars or even millions just by posting content

online. When social media influencers see they are getting a lot of acknowledgement, they quickly profit off it by usually creating merchandise to profit from all the views they are getting. One influence I automatically think of is some guy named Parker Jones on TikTok. Parker does a lot of car content on the app and has been one of the top automobile influencers on the app for the past year. In 2023, he was a valet driver in Georgia, making enough to support himself, but then moved to Florida later that year to improve his car content. It was a risk he took, but it paid off because he is now doing well and has begun selling merchandise and auto-cleaning products, which is aiding his success. Parker Jones is just one of many people whose lives have been positively impacted by social media. According to sociologygroup.com, apps such as LinkedIn and Indeed make finding opportunities easier for those looking for work. These apps allow you to find the best fit for you simply by submitting your resume and filtering your requirements. I got my current job through Indeed, and I enjoy it. Last but not least, social media can raise awareness around the world. Social media allows users all over the world to stay up to date on current issues and even promotes charities that help those in need. Many influencers can be found on many apps sponsoring GoFundMe campaigns to help those in desperate need of financial assistance.

Another pro of social media is the connections it can help create and how easy it is to communicate through it. Apps like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter help create connections and friendships. These apps have these things called communities, which are group chats about one thing all those people have in common. For example, if I am interested in football, I can join a chat with those who also like football, and I can chat with them. There are communities for every single topic, so it's kind of hard to not find one that piques your interest. If you use the apps listed, you will also find that it is much easier to communicate with others. DM's, also known as direct messages, allows you to contact others if you do not have their

phone number. I have had many instances where I used to use Instagram to message someone due to not having the other person's number or contact information. Social media influencers use social media to create connections with other influencers to create content that they think will attract the eyes of many new viewers. With social media's quick communication and ability to see profiles and suggestions, friendships are formed all the time.

Social media can do a lot of good for the community, but at the same time, it can do a lot of bad. The biggest con of social media is its ability to provide false news and spread false rumors. When you hop on social media, within a minute of scrolling, you will 100% find an account trying to spread a false rumor to gain attention and gain as many viewers as possible. These rumors could be very disgusting and dangerous, but as long as they get the attention they seek, they will not mind them. Those impacted the most would be those with fame, as they usually tend to get their name dragged up for clicks. Even if these rumors are false, they can cause depression, anxiety, and, in some cases, suicide. When someone has rumors about them, even if they are proven to be wrong, the damage has already been done, and their career has probably been damaged. Even if rumors about someone are proven to be false, the damage has already been done, and their career is likely to suffer as a result. If you get your news from social media, you should consider making changes. News coverage on social media is very confusing because you will always see different sources saying different things. Even though that is the case with all news coverage, news on social media is all about making sure they get the word out quickly, not the quality of the information. If someone sees one thing on social media, they will react quickly to spread the word without verifying if the source or content created is valid and accurate. Legitimacy on social media is very questionable, which is why it's important to verify anything you see on social media before you spread the word.

Mental health has been a major topic these past couple of years when social media has been brought up. Cyberbullying is at an all-time high, as is body-shaming and peer pressure. Cyberbullying is very common due to its secrecy. Negative comments are all over social media and are being used all the time because those keyboard clowns know no one can trace them or do anything about them. It is a win-win for them because they get to have a good laugh while facing no consequences for their harsh actions. Peer pressure has also occurred on social media because when someone posts a picture or video of themselves doing something that others find cool, they all want to emulate it. You can see young people smoking e-cigarettes and vapes because they are motivated by a desire to fit in. In addition to that, it is also important to remember that the younger generation may not be able to identify the long-term effects of the things they do, as they have never really understood these things, so they are hurting themselves by turning a blind eye to all that is happening around them. One of the biggest concerns is the body-shaming that occurs because of social media. When you go on Instagram, you will see women posting pictures of themselves with barely any clothing in what some may consider to be the "perfect body." These social media models attract attention by doing this, which makes men feel lustful. In the other direction, men will also engage in thirst traps in an attempt to attract women's attention. On Instagram, I frequently come across posts of this kind, and they are well-liked. This has the effect of easing others' self-consciousness. People will assume that the pictures they see are what everyone wants to see, and they will be disgusted by you if you look anything like these so-called models. According to a New York Times article, social media is to blame for a significant number of eating disorders and extreme dieting practices. My direct research also gives an example of how these thirst traps are supposed to make people feel jealous.

Social media is one of the most significant inventions in human history, and it has changed the world significantly. Social media has a lot to say and dictates how the younger generations live because of its influence. All social media users should take caution and exercise complete awareness when using the apps, as they have the potential to negatively impact both their mental well-being and their way of life. Refrain from feeling envious of someone because of an image that someone posts.

The Dark Side of Social Media!

By: Zayd Mali

Right now, you are looking at the three Instagram pictures, wondering what the message behind them is and what these posts are symbolizing. Social media is one of the most significant inventions of all time, and its impact on people all over the world is enormous. When you think of social media, the first thing that comes to mind is all of the benefits, such as improved socialization and the ability for others to become a part of your life through pictures and videos. It is basically a news source for those who do not like watching the news on television. What is rarely discussed are the drawbacks of social media, which I will address. My work will target fourth graders, and the reasoning behind this is that they are very young and are already using social media. Informing 4th graders about the impact of social media before they get onto it can help prepare them for what could possibly happen to them in their future experiences. The posts I created are, in my opinion, the best way to demonstrate how powerful social media is and how it can demoralize others. The posts are far more understandable and teachable to my fourth-grade students than a boring Ted Talk or essay that's put people to sleep because of the lack of multimodal involved.
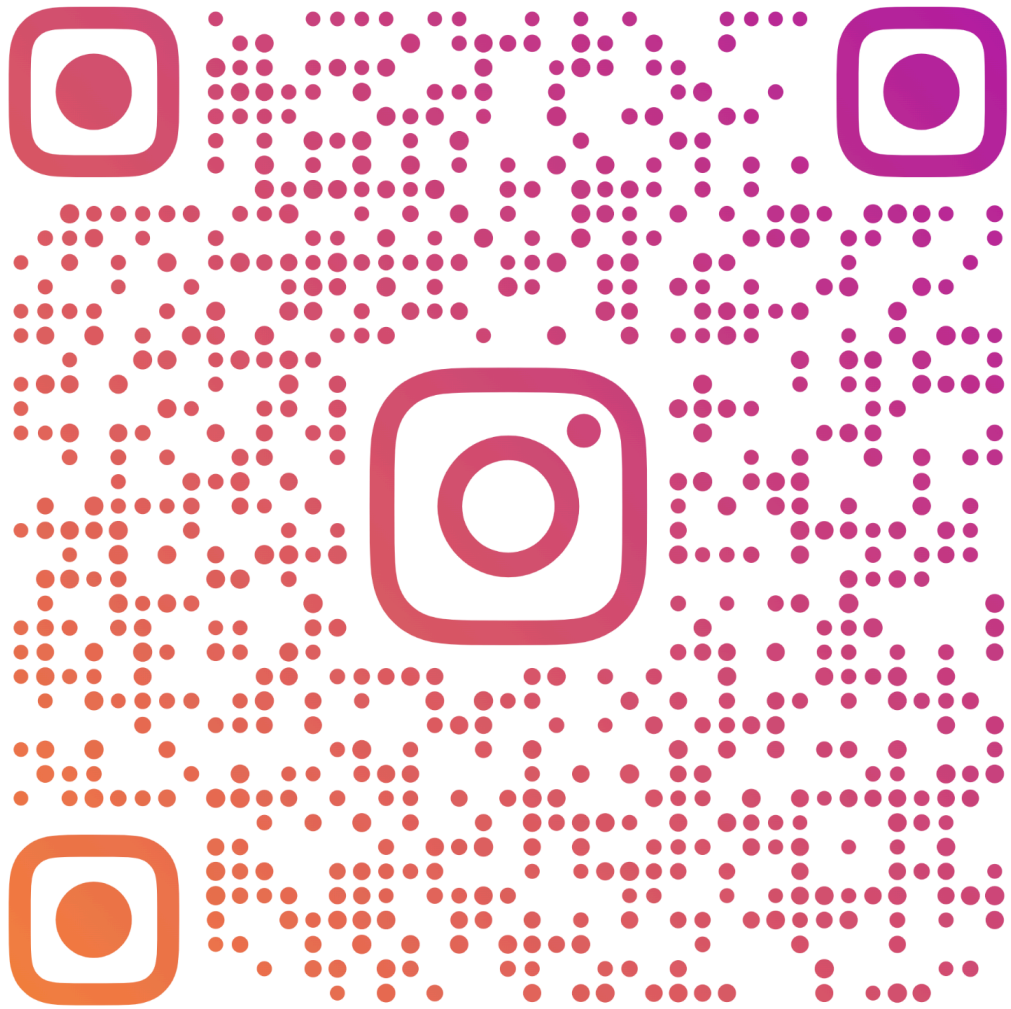
I decided to use a photo essay to inform the audience of fourth-grade students about the disadvantages of social media. I shared a series of posts that are common on social media and have a significant impact on one's mental health. The 2 photos of the male and female are the ones with the biggest impact. Those 2 posts are considered thirst traps and are meant to make the audience feel jealous. These types of thirst traps, which are all over social media, create a lot of insecurities for those who feel as if they are not "perfect," and in this case, if they do not look like the models in the posts. People who scroll through Instagram and see these types of thirst traps believe they are the norm for what one should look like. Another disadvantage of social media is how quickly it can spread false information, rumors, and lies. The post about the UFO over the buildings in New York, as well as the comments, demonstrate how everyone believes everything they see on social media and how manipulative it is. Every time I am on social media, I see accounts posting fake news in order to gain viewers and fame, and it is scary how credible these false rumors are because I have fallen for them myself at times. Also, with the invention of AI, photos and audio could be altered without anyone noticing. This young audience should be taught sooner or later that everything they see on social media is not always true and that there are people out there willing to do anything just to get some clout. Always take time to verify the information you get online because you don't want to be the person who just speaks out about everything you see on Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook

When using social media, be mindful of your actions and ensure that the content you see and the people with whom you interact are safe. Safety on the internet is critical to teach because you will see stories of criminals and sick people hiding behind a fake persona in order to find their next victims. My goal at the start of this project was to raise awareness about the dangers of social media, and after extensive research, I believe that my presentation was ideal for my audience because of the creativity involved and how appealing it was to a group of fourth-grade students. Overall, I believe my project was successful in raising awareness, and the only thing I could have done better was to include more examples of social media being dangerous, but what I have now is convincing enough.

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Awareness for Youth
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