



Little Benny

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Final Reflection Paper

Over the course of this semester, I believe I have learned a lot about my potential in writing. I always thought to myself that my writing was average, but I feel that after this class my writing skills have been able to improve and are still able to further improve. This writing class has given me the opportunity to gain knowledge with reading various stories and think creatively, along with being able to efficiently interpret these pieces of literature. From learning how to interpret these readings, I was also taught different writing styles. This included memories, dialogues, journals, etc. Since each writing style had a different purpose, I learned that my way of writing had to change as well. Each writing style took time and effort, but with the new techniques and skills I learned, I was able to write the best writing piece I could.

To be specific, the short story assignment taught me a lot of what I didn't know I could do with my writing. For years, I thought essays were supposed to always be five paragraphs including the introduction, three body paragraphs, and conclusion. I was excited when I was told that short stories did not necessarily need to follow those steps. If anything, the main requirement was to be as creative with my writing. This was good and frustrating news for me because I was not used to writing without following a format and more importantly, choosing to write about any topic. Figuring out what to write for my short story was another challenge I faced because the topic was up to me and try to make writing as interesting as possible. After hours of brainstorming, I finally knew what I wanted to write about, and the writing process began. I was unsure of myself when I finished the rough draft, but after receiving positive feedback from my peer and Professor Penner. I began to feel confident about my writing abilities. I believe that writing this short story gave me the boost of confidence I needed, to know that I was on the right track with my writing.

Following this assignment, I was instructed to write a memoir. The idea of writing a memoir did not sound complicated but deciding what I wanted to share was what made this assignment a little complicated. I liked the idea of writing a memoir because it is based on a personal experience that was important and could have made a powerful impact onto oneself. After overcoming the most difficult part about this assignment, I was able to brainstorm how I wanted to write my memoir. I decided to write about a childhood friendship that means a lot to me. I knew I wanted to write about my friendship but deciding how much I wanted share was what made me hesitant. Despite this, I wrote about my friendship, and it was by far the easiest writing assignment for me. I think personal writing assignments are easier to write because you already have a connection and you do not have to think twice about what to write. By having this connection to your writing already, it made writing more fun and the flow of my writing better. I also enjoyed reading my peers' memoirs because it allowed me to see from their perspective and empathize with them. Overall, writing memoirs was a great writing experience and by far my favorite.

Finally, writing dialogues was assigned. When I was told dialogues were going to be the next writing assignment, I was unsure how to feel about it. I knew dialogues were conversations between two or more people but knowing what I wanted the dialogue to be about was what made this difficult for me. After Professor Penner indicated we could use our text messages as dialogues, I was sort of relieved until I realized I barely text anyone or there just wasn't enough context in my text messages. What I mean by not enough context is that my friends and I only text to confirm what time we're leaving to meet up and I felt that this was not enough to make an interesting dialogue. I think my biggest struggle is still trying to be creative as possible and for the reader to be interested in my writing as well. After a while of trying to figure out what I

wanted my dialogues to be about, I decided to talk about my friend and I going out to potentially get tattoos and another idea I was able to brainstorm. All in all, I still struggle with my writing creativity, but I overcame my struggle to write dialogues.

Overall, this English course has allowed my writing to grow. Before enrolling into this class, I was not very confident in my writing and believed I was going to struggle. Thankfully, I am leaving this class not only knowledgeable in writing different pieces of literature but less skeptical on my writing abilities. Being able to write drafts before any assignment was an efficient way of helping with my writing by receiving feedback from peers and Professor Penner. I'm still not where I would like to be with my creative writing, but this class has for sure brought me out of my comfort zone. I believe my experiences in this class has helped me become a better student overall. By having an English class that constantly supported my writing allowed me to become more comfortable with my writing and knowing that I should no longer hold myself back from expressing my thoughts.

Memoir

Back in 2013, I meant my best friend Mark. It all started in middle school, in my 7th grade home room class. I remember so clearly how our friendship began so effortlessly; it was like we knew each other for so many years already. It was surprising we got along as quickly as we did because I was shy, and he was as well. After a week of knowing each other, we started walking home together and we were surprised that we were basically neighbors, since he lived a block away from me.

Throughout middle school, we would always walk home or hang out with our other friends too. This was such a normal thing that we both started to think what would happen once we went to different high schools. We both thought that maybe our friendship would fade out like most friendships tend to. Nonetheless, we graduated from middle school and went to different high schools; of course, we didn't see each other every day like we used to, but we both still made time to go to different places or facetime each other.

One day, I remember walking out of school, and he was there. I was so surprised because I didn't know he was going to come, and he always told me that he doesn't know how I do it to get myself to go to my school since it's so far. I remember being so happy and shocked because I wasn't having the best week and seeing him there made me feel better.

Throughout high school, we remained so close, and I remember the day he was accepted into his dream college. His dream college was in Wisconsin, and I remember questioning if our friendship could fade out, but I saw how happy he was, that none of that mattered. I knew that we had a solid friendship, and I just wanted my best friend to do what he always wanted to do.

I have so many great memories with my best friend that I could go on and on. Despite the distance when we're reunited again it is always like he never left.

Short Story

It wasn't a beautiful Sunday morning for Kayla's family. They were a very dysfunctional family; the mother and father kept picking fights with Kayla, meanwhile her two younger siblings were living without any parental punishment. Kayla couldn't understand why her parents didn't love and treat her the same as her other siblings; she felt isolated and disconnected from her family. Despite this, the family still tried to appear as the "perfect family" by putting on their Sunday best for church.

As the family made their way to church, Kayla stayed behind and kept thinking how she could get out of going to church. She knew her parents do this because it's a tradition to see the whole family attend mass, but she didn't feel like putting on a fake smile today.

"Mom, I don't feel so good. Can I go home?"

"Don't start Kayla. You can make it through church."

"But Mom, I can't. My head hurts too much."

Kayla's mom ignores her and proceeds to entering the church. Kayla just stood by the steps and decided to leave despite what her mother said. As Kayla walks back to her house, a navy color van pulls up behind her. Before Kayla could realize, she was inside the van with a bag over her head. Kayla yelled for her mother or anyone who could hear her.

Meanwhile, Kayla kept screaming the man continuously apologized that it had to be this way. The man kept reassuring Kayla that he did not want to hurt her and to forgive him in the future for what he had just done.

From crying so much, Kayla fell asleep and finally woke up. She couldn't tell what time it was anymore and asked the man why he did this.

The man asked her if it was okay, he could pull over and speak to her face to face. Kayla was hesitant but agreed. The man pulls over and proceeds to remove the bag.

"Please don't be afraid. I really did not mean for any of this to happen, but I couldn't stand to see you be treated like this, especially by someone I thought I could trust."

"What do you mean? What are you talking about?"

The man takes a deep breath. “Kayla, I know this will be difficult news, but I still hope you can understand. I’m your dad.”

Kayla looks puzzled and in shock, but says “How/Where have you been my entire life? How do I even know you’re telling the truth?”

The man pulls out an old, stained book filled with pictures. With a few a tears here and there, the pictures were still visible enough to see the man and Kayla’s mom holding her.

Poem

Title: Benny

Benny

Fur mixed with white, grey, black, and gold

Playing with his favorite monkey toy

Brightens everyone's day

With always wanting to play

Dialogue

It was a sunny Tuesday. My friend and I decided to meet up and get matching tattoos. When we arrived to the place, we were indecisive if the tattoo artist could do what we wanted. We went with our gut feeling and decided not to and got piercings instead.

Me: let me know when you leave

Janely: just left. I'm reaching the train

Me: I'm waiting for the train

Janely: Ok I'm waiting on the 7 too but at 74th

Me: We're gonna be on the same train

Janely: Yeah possibly cause I didn't want to take this one. It was packed.

Me: Bro there's no way he was gonna be able to do it. Imagine we got it. It would've came out so bad

Janely: For real, at least we did something though.

Journals

Journal 7

I didn't think I would enjoy writing poems as much as I did. I always thought a good poem has to rhyme, but this showed me that it is the opposite. Out of the four poems, the one about my dog has to be my favorite. I found it easier to write because I connected more with the poem. I think it's important to connect with your writing somehow and I like that writing poems allowed me to do that.

Journal 2

To be honest, I haven't really thought about when I've felt anonymous. I usually try to not take anything personal or think much about certain things. But, now thinking about it more I'm realizing that sometimes my friends and family disregard how I feel about certain situations. I've realized that my opinions are not always heard when it comes to family gatherings or large friend group gatherings. I'm typically a reserved person, but I don't think that means when I do have something to say that it should be ignored either.

I think everyone's opinions should be heard, but that doesn't mean everyone has to agree either. I don't expect this at all for everyone to agree, but to at least be understood would be appreciated. I think a lot of people go through this because that's the way society works. Typically, if you have a very different opinion than others, you're almost always automatically excluded. I think if society's way of thinking of what should be considered normal changed, this would influence people to have more of an open mind to new ideas. Being able to understand and not judge someone for voicing their opinion and not be closed minded can change the way society works and probably change the way we feel about expressing our thoughts.

Overall, what I'm trying to say is that if society can somewhat try to change, then there's less of a possibility for people to feel anonymous.