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ENG 101

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Letter to My Younger Self

Dear my younger self,

Time sure does fly, doesn't it? It feels like yesterday I was staying up late to finish the book I was reading at the time. Reading used to be something that brought me joy, and I was excited to get further into whatever story I was reading. As I got older, I started to realize that reading and writing go hand in hand. Writing had never been my forte. Before I started high school there wasn't as much focus on writing as there was reading. Yes, I had to write papers in middle school, but they were mostly fiction and could be about whatever I wanted them to be.

This made writing a bit easier because my imagination could run wild. Once I got into high school things became more challenging. I couldn't write about whatever popped into my head and I was told what to read. High school changed how I felt about reading and writing each year.

I grew in both skills technically but my outlook on both have changed.

My freshman year took my love for reading away. The books that were required reading for English class bored me to tears. Due to the higher workload that comes with high school there was less time for pleasure reading. All my time went to the homework from other classes and reading the books I didn't want to read, which led to me avoiding books even when I did have free time. Freshman year English was more reading than writing so my writing skills didn't develop at all. Sophomore year was similar in that aspect, but the teacher made English much more enjoyable.

In sophomore year my teacher was the best English teacher I had throughout high school. He really tried to engage with me and make the class interesting for people who usually didn't enjoy English. He would make games and competitions from the book the class was reading. This made reading less of a chore and added a bit of fun back into it. This teacher gave us the freedom to choose some of the books we read as well. Having that freedom made the assignments more enjoyable and I didn't dread English anymore. I went into my junior year ready for the challenge but hit another snag, procrastination.

Junior year was my biggest workload by far in high school. I would be up at crazy hours just trying to get all my work that was due the next day finished. I guess that's what I asked for in taking four AP classes. Since English wasn't one of those AP classes it was put on the back burner. I would procrastinate working on papers because I struggled in writing and was so stressed from my other classes. There were some projects that I did horribly on because of my procrastination issues. I can pump out work under a time constraint, but it is never my best and is more than likely not going to meet the requirements of the assignment. This is when I realized the importance of having multiple drafts for a paper. I would wait to the very last minute to do papers and wouldn't have time to have multiple drafts. This would show in my grades because of the mistakes that would have been fixed with a second and third draft. Writing is a process, and the first draft is only part of it. Writing must be refined and reviewed before it can be complete. Junior year was the year that taught me the most about the writing process. If it wasn't for junior year my writing skills would be far worse than what they are right now. I am working to develop my skills from what I learned junior year because senior year taught me nothing.

Senior year was completely online. That isn't a good thing. I struggled to concentrate and would allow myself to sign into the online meetings and not pay attention. So, when I say senior

year taught me nothing it isn't the teachers' fault but my own. I didn't make myself pay attention and I regret that now. English was the class I had the least amount of interest in. My teacher had us working on college essays, speeches, etc. and I was not interested. I could tell my writing had gotten worse over this year because of my lack of interest. Coming into college showed me how underdeveloped my writing skills really are.

Even though my writing skills aren't where I want them to be I am working on them. I am trying to avoid procrastination so that I can have multiple drafts and be able to refine my writing into better work. I am also giving myself time away from my writing so that when I come back to it, I can see mistakes more clearly. I still have a way to go but the more I work on it the better my writing will become. My advice to you, my younger self, is to give yourself more time to focus on writing and make as many drafts needed to produce work you are satisfied with. I also recommend taking a break if you have been writing for a while. Coming back to your work with fresh eyes can show mistakes that couldn't be seen before. I wish you the best.

Sincerely,

Your future self.

P.S. Pick up a book occasionally. I want to like reading again.