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Period 3

9/3/25

Literacy Narrative

Arguably one of the most important skills a person can have in life is writing. From an early age we are taught basic skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and more. Through writing we are able to connect with others, tell stories, inform others, share ideas, and expand upon our knowledge. I have learned that my tone or “voice” tends to shift depending on who my audience is. There are various times that come to mind, I feel made me realize how significant knowing my audience is. I think this impacts me as a writer because it makes communicating my message easier when I know my audience and can understand how I would express myself to that person.

I think reading and writing tie in together well because you have to know how to read and have the skills to comprehend, to be able to write. Growing up my family would read books to me before I could even understand what they were saying. This is common in families because it has been proven to jumpstart children’s brain development. I had a basic understanding of how to read around pre-school and kindergarten; these levels slowly started incorporating tracing letters and learning how to write small words into the curriculum. The first writing assignment I had to write was called a TDA, or text dependent analysis. I had to read a very long book and answer a prompt about the characters' impact on the plot. This really taught me how to structure an essay and what kind of elements and preparation were needed to successfully execute this. I learned what a rough draft was, editing, getting feedback, and what to do with it.

Since then, I have learned a lot more about writing and I am able to add more depth and stronger arguments. The biggest influences on this have been all of the teachers I have had, who taught me different methods of writing from their own perspectives. I still have a lot more to learn about writing components to improve my passages, however, I have definitely seen progress from previous years.

The most eye opening experience that truly made me realize how my tone shifts depending on the audience I'm writing or speaking to was when I got my current job. To me, I can define tone of voice as articulating my thoughts and feelings through emotion and mood depending on the circumstances of where I am in the moment. The first time I came to the realization that having a tone shift was important was when I had just finished up with the application for my job. The interview process consisted of two separate interviews. The first of the interviews being with one of the floor managers. This was to see if I was a good fit with the dynamic of the workplace. After my first discussion with the floor manager, they had me fill out a description of myself and asked why I would be a good candidate for the position. From there I was told on the spot to come back for the second round of interviews. The next portion of the process was meeting with the general manager to make the final decision. He then showed me around, talked about the upcoming orientation, and explained the standards and expectations for their employees. After meeting with him I realized how crucial it would be for my mood to shift. I had gone from nervous and excited to professional because I wanted to create a genuine image for myself that would prove why I would be the best option for the job. My tone shifted here as a result of wanting to show off my professionalism and how I would take my place in the company seriously and prove I was going to be a dedicated asset.

Due to the fact that I wanted to create an accomplished image for myself, I created a plan in my head which I had executed by using a professional “voice” in my writing. My managers immediately saw me as a motivated and reliable individual. After just a few months of working with my company they decided to inform me that I was eligible to take the next steps to move up and work higher paying positions like being a certified trainer for our new hires. This can be attributed to the fact that my tone had shifted and set me apart from other employees by staying professional and motivated. I know that if I were to have spoken to them the same way I spoke to my friends and family prior to the interview, they would not consider me nearly as qualified for either position. The casual way I talk to my peers on a daily basis may be seen as unprofessional which is why I speak with a more skillful manner in a workplace. A German philosopher by the name of Friedrich Nietzsche has a quote that says, “We often refuse to accept an idea merely because the tone of voice in which it has been expressed is unsympathetic to us.” This shows the importance of using the right tone for certain audiences. If we as writers try to connect with the audience using a tone that is “unsympathetic” to them, they won’t want to continue reading to see the rest of what the author is saying. Our voices have the power to be the most impactful tools if we know how to use them properly. Not only the words you write, but also how you phrase them can be extremely effective.

Having a voice in writing is so important to me because it allows me to create a positive atmosphere at work, be compensated fairly to reflect my skill sets, and connect with a vast majority of people on a more personal level. I feel it is something that just comes naturally to me, however, there is always room for improvement and times I may learn new words and or phrases to better my writing. Using the ability to adapt to different voices for different audiences not only made an impact on this situation in particular, but can also be used in different scenarios such as

applying for college, communicating with teachers, etc. It signals who I am and how I want others to perceive me as a person, student, and employee. The influence people's writing voice has on culture and community creates a sense of belonging and helps people connect with these cultures and communities.

In conclusion, my literacy journey has shaped who I am today because it has created opportunities, relationships, and experiences I would not have had otherwise. Writing is something I have been using since before I can remember, and it continues to be an important skill that connects me to the world around me. Personally I really enjoy writing because it challenges me to think critically, process my thoughts, and allows me to gain new perspectives I didn't know I had. I will use writing in college on the path to getting my degree in radiology, and when I apply to my career. It will be a necessity for creating my applications, resumes, and communicating within my place of work. Overall, my literacy journey is a foundation that will continue to support me throughout life and pave the way for many opportunities for me.