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College Writing

Before I started college writing, I was just another senior exploring my options and opportunities of classes I could take. I didn't want "normal" classes, especially not English 12. So I signed up for college writing. I expected the class to be about writing at a higher level, and not about certain matters such as reading a book and doing a report on it. It turns out I was right. My biggest writing weakness before this class was elaborating on details, and because of that my second weakness was the length of the paper. My experiences with all my other English classes do not compare to that of this class. College writing is way better. In regular English class you don't really get to choose what you want to do. The only decision I made for myself is which book in a certain genre I wanted to do my book report on. In this class, I got to choose my own topic, come up with my own information, and be as imaginative as I wanted to. The possibilities of what I could have written about are endless. Before this class I was already good at managing my time but I tended to be a procrastinator. Now that I've gone through this class my time management skills are sharpened, and I still procrastinate. "Go Gryffindors!"

The Resume and Cover Letter was a very useful topic to learn. It was something that I hadn't done before so I was glad we did it. We covered this type of writing in this course because it is necessary to know how to make a resume and cover letter in order to get a job and make it somewhere in life. I feel that resumes and cover letters are relevant because you will not get very far in life if you can't prove to people, bosses in particular, that you have experiences, and even interests of your own that will show that you are a good person for them to hire. The most important things to remember in this type of writing is to word things in a way that will hold the readers interest, and make sure all of your facts are straight. In the cover letter

especially, make sure that you are as polite as you can be and show a great deal of interest in the company you are applying for. It's not good to sound overconfident in this type of writing. Originally I did well showing my interest and telling the employer non-directly that I would be a good asset and addition to their company.

We wrote the graduation speeches because it could be useful someday to be able to write a speech and maybe even deliver it to a crowd of people. I don't entirely feel that being able to write and deliver a speech is relevant. Very few people give speeches in their lives. On the other hand if you are conducting a business meeting, you will need to know how to talk at people, but not necessarily write a speech and deliver it to them in the conference room. You might use this type of writing if you are part of a political campaign, or if you are leading a seminar. The most important thing to remember for this type of writing is to keep it interesting. If it is not interesting to the people you are reading it to, they are not going to pay attention. And if they aren't paying attention to you, all the time you spent writing and practicing the speech has gone to waste. There was no point in writing it. Originally I did well being inspiring. After I wrote my paper over, I made it longer and added some humor in with my seriousness.

The narrative descriptive was an easy piece to write. It took me a long time to think of a topic though. We covered this type of writing because it is good to know how to tell a story and go into extreme detail about something little. I feel that writing a narrative descriptive is relevant. Doctors and nurses need to be able to write detailed reports on their patients just from the short amount of time spent with them. Police officers need to write detailed reports on everything in their cases. The most important thing to remember when writing a narrative descriptive is that they are about a short period of time. If it is about something long, like your life, it is no longer a narrative descriptive. In this case it would change into an autobiography,

totally different. Originally I did good explaining things in detail. Then I changed the topic to something I could elaborate on and that made all the difference.

The informational writing was a fun piece to write. I think this piece gave the most independence as to what I wanted to write about. We covered this type of writing because it is good to be able to explain in detail how to do something, or inform someone in detail about something. I feel being able to relate information in written format is relevant. There are so many “how to” pieces everywhere on the internet these days, you could make your own “Do it yourself” website. The most important thing to remember when writing a process or informational is that if you have the slightest uncertainty in your own writing, the people reading and trying to learn something will not understand what you are trying to teach. You have to act as though the reader doesn’t know anything at all about your topic. Originally I did well organizing my ideas and getting them down on paper. It was the detail in the explanations that I struggled with. Once I got my facts and details established, I was able to focus on what I wanted the reader to know, rather than thinking about how I was going to explain what I just wrote.

The compare and contrast piece was another one of those pieces where the detail is a crucial part of the writing. We covered this type of writing because it is good to know how to compare different objects or ideas. I don’t really think being able to analyze items in written format is relevant. I don’t know that I would ever write a compare and contrast piece out of school. If I’m going to compare and contrast two things I’m not going to write a paper about it. If I was going to write something like this on paper, it’s really only going to be something like bullet points or a venn diagram. The most important thing to remember when writing a compare and contrast piece is to make sure that your facts are organized. If you don’t have your facts straight, it will be really confusing to both you and your reader. Originally I did well getting

my thoughts down on paper. After I got my facts and details organized, I was able to explain exactly why the two items were different.

The argumentative persuasive was one of my favorite pieces to write. We covered this type of writing because it is necessary to know how to argue something you believe and persuade people to think the way you do. I feel that being able to build and express an argument in written format is relevant. There are many different situations out of school where you could write an argumentative persuasive piece. You could write one to your congressman on a topic you feel needs to be brought to light, fight a ticket, write an article just to get your ideas and thoughts out to the public, complain to your local store that the greeters aren't friendly. Anything you disagree with that requires someone to be persuaded in order to make a change; this would be great to write an argumentative persuasive piece for. The most important things to remember when writing an argumentative persuasive piece is to stand firm and really believe in what you're writing, and after you state the opposing view, smash that idea as hard as you can to make your own point sound way better. At this point the reader will know on which side they stand, so you will either make them agree with you more, or make them angry at you. Originally I did well getting my point across. I just wrote what I was thinking because I already had strong opinions on my topic.

I have grown tremendously as a writer since the beginning of this class. I started with a one paragraph graduation speech, and now I'm writing this four and a half page response! I've really learned how to get my ideas and thoughts down and turn them into a quality piece of writing, which is something I couldn't really do before this class. My work ethic has changed dramatically even though I still tend to procrastinate. At the beginning of this class it seemed as if I was just trying to get it over with and rushing through a piece not thinking about quality of any sort. Now that I've gone through the class, this has changed. Once I start I usually don't stop

until I'm finished. I also really try to make quality pieces instead of just doing it because I have to. If I have to do it, I might as well make it great. The most important things I can take away from this course is that whether I'm at work or in school, no matter what I'm doing (writing about) I'm always going to make mistakes, but it's how I deal with those mistakes and learn from them that is going to make the difference between success and failure. I believe I should receive an A on this portfolio. This portfolio represents all the mistakes I dealt with and learned from throughout the semester that made these final pieces possible.