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Mid-Term Self-Reflection Essay

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Professor Rodwell

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Reading and writing. When it came to reading, I had a strong dislike for reading ever since I was young. When I saw the cover of a book, I didn't acknowledge reading it because I was so fascinated by creativity, I never looked for the deeper meaning of the text. One book I loved reading was diary of wimpy kid. Every Christmas I would ask my Aunt to get me the latest book and I would finish it in a day or two. Reading that book inspired me to write diaries which I ended up pursuing later on in my 6th grade year. I would write my thoughts, how my days went and what I experienced throughout the day. I eventually broke out that habit in my 7th grade year, but when it came to writing compositions, I always had the passion to write. Being able to express myself when others couldn't understand me and being able to write my thoughts down without any shame. Throughout my time at Achievement First, whenever I moved onto the new school year, scholars were tasked to express how we feel about the transition and if we have any goals for the new year. From the start of my middle school year towards the end of my high school year my writing has significantly changed as I initially didn't know how to write or construct essays to me writing exploratory essays, creative essays, and deep analysis essay's. My love for writing increased throughout those years and now I am in college where we are constructing more arguments consistently. As I wrote my creative non-fiction essay, exploratory essay, semi-weekly reflections and discussions with peers, My writing has improved tremendously as I started off writing with the purpose to sound good but lack meeting the answer to the prompt, to being able to shift gears and provide subjective and objective point of views.

The first essay that I wrote was a creative non-fiction essay about the significance of identity and factors that contributed to my idea with the use of media. Reading this essay I started off finding 3 factors that contributed to my identity. Those factors I discovered were my environment, my education, and my peers/surroundings. Reviewing the outline for my essay, I wasn't as vulnerable as the professor told us to be and I went into naming more detail on my personal life and not comparing both situations and forming a connection back to my thesis. I wrote this essay to provide insight and gather an understanding of the importance of identity and how much volume identity speaks. Readers will get an understanding as they read the stages I have gone throughout my childhood years to the present time that led up to who I am today. With the genre of creative non-fiction, I presented this written text by naming vulnerable moments I have faced living in East Flatbush, Brooklyn, NY and presented this to a general audience where people from Brooklyn are able to resonate with me and people who don't live a

similar lifestyle that I do, can comprehend what I am saying. As I finalized my essay, I was confident in my work as I named various scenarios of my life which can relate to my identity. When I submitted my essay and received my grade I was confused. I got a 1/5. I received feedback and understood that my essay consisted of one of the two, great format but I lacked the prompt and the connection my identity has to media. I also made my argument narrow where only people who lived similar experiences can relate and not as broad and universal as I should've. Instead of trying to write an essay that names the impact of how the friends you hang out with allows me to be more socially aware, I overwrote the events that took place and more of how I felt in those situations and not how it changed my character later on. After reviewing my essay I had the ideas of what I wanted to write about, but it was the format of how I present my argument and connecting my personal experiences to media and the impact it has on me whether it was a positive or negative shift on my character. I also could've been more universal because from a New York standpoint, some people would understand what I was writing about but from a universal standpoint the ratio would be severely different.

The next essay I wrote was an exploratory essay where we were tasked to explore the course of media and identity and construct a question that relates to the topic. I struggled with finding a question, I changed my question almost 3 times until I decided I wanted to write about persona and identity. I read an article by Adriana Manago, and she named the impact media has on person and self-worth. I gathered my arguments and wrote my essay, and I had all the ideas, but I didn't know whether it had to be subjective or objective. I came to class to give my teacher my first draft and she gave me feedback saying I was very subjective, and the ideas didn't come from the reader and came from my own personal experiences. I was afraid to ask for help and thought I could do it on my own which led to me having to make significant changes to my introduction and my body paragraphs as it related to me and shouldn't have been opinion based. Another problem I had with my essay was that person was very vague and I should go into detail on what type of person, so I was assisted and used self-perception as an idea for my question. My main argument was mainly on self-esteem but later on transitioned to how personalities influence social media and how fame or one's status has an impact on their influences. Researching media and identity, I wrote this non-fiction research essay to construct ideas on the impact that social media has on one's self-perception, low-self-esteem, and persona. Presenting this argument in written text I was able to research different topics by many psychologists, scientists and other researchers who were intrigued by this topic and provide a paper people are contribute to the impact that media has on them.

The next impact on my writing is my semi-weekly reflections. Semi-weekly reflections are weekly reflections that we have to analyze and the transition of how our writing initially started off to how it is processing currently. In my week 3 prompt I was asked to find the rhetorical situation of my creative non-fiction essay. I didn't know how to start that off, so I just wrote anything, but I changed that once I reviewed my annotations and realized that once naming my purpose, I have to name what the author wants the reader to know. That related to my stance

because I had to discover what my position is in my argument. Looking back at my creative non-fiction essay I looked for my purpose in the essay and the message that I was sending. I wanted people to know the importance of identity and how much volume speaks in our daily lives. Moving on to my week 6 prompt I was asked what has been helpful to my writing progress and started off telling me being versatile. Then I went into depth on different writing formats I wanted to work on and how I want to know when it's the time to be objective without a stance and subjective with a stance. Semi-Weekly reflections are a way of getting a better understanding my writing and viewing the transition of my writing throughout the semester and the growth I have obtained.

Lastly, discussion boards. I didn't think there was a purpose for discussion boards because when it comes to receiving feedback, I had the mentality that my peers couldn't help me like a professor could. I also didn't like sharing because I was afraid of getting judged from others because everyone thinks differently. I didn't start writing in my discussion boards until late September when I looked over some of my peers' responses and seeing the feedback they gave each other. I posted on the thread for the introduction discussion while giving feedback to others for problems they had in their writing. I then checked my discussion board comments and I saw that one of my peers, Deenika gave me some constructive feedback to help me with my access to finding arguments and evidence. That was one of my writing flaws and I received genuine feedback from her. I am very grateful for that response because I was able to get an understanding on how to start my exploratory essay and not have to overthink it. I started engaging in more discussions and received a lot of feedback from my peers both positive and negative and that has impacted my writing tremendously from the start and allowed me to engage more my peers because their ideas could be full of insight that I wasn't even thinking of.

In conclusion, the main things I have learned from writing essays is that I shouldn't be afraid to ask for help and that goes for everybody. You can always learn something when you put your mind to it and that is what I am learning to do. Being in college is very rough but it will be even more complex if you think you know everything when you don't. Asking for help is essential when writing essays especially when you are genuinely confused. I was able to learn more about how to conduct essays from my professor and from my peers. I am still writing in my weekly reflections, and I am seeing tremendous growth in my writing from the start to now. When writing research papers depending on whether I have a stance or not I have to be objective compared to other essays like my creative non-fiction where I was able to be subjective. I have to work on sticking to my claim and having evidence and a strong interpretation to relate back to the purpose I am sending to the readers. I have to provide a general message and stick to it and not narrow down.