Essay One Intro

The essay I choose here is about the coming-of-age of myself. English is not my first language, so this is my first chance to tell others about my story in English. Sitting down and brainstorming the topic for a very long time, I was still unsure how to use different techniques to more vividly present this story. Then, after reading extensively about other writer’s memoir and personal narrative, I learned how to write a detailed and fascinated narrative that really drag the readers into my story.

The first key is the detailed portray of myself. Since this is the personal memoir, my characteristics are very important. I added conversations into the essay to shape my identity, as well as the thoughts at the end. The contrast of characteristic before and after unfolds my coming-of-age. The second key is writing about my feelings and thoughts, making the readers experience the entire story as I did before. For example in the essay here, I used lots of descriptive languages to describe how I felt during the riding and what was my thoughts. By incorporating these essential elements into the essay, the readers can understand and appreciate my growth more.

So here it is, my first essay about the growth of myself.

Essay Two Intro

The essay here is an analysis of outstanding personal narrative. One of the functions of an essay is communicating our thoughts and arguments to readers. Unlike the first essay emphasizing my feelings, the second essay focuses more on the logic of my opinions. Luckily, I learned to carefully organize my thoughts before I start to write them.

To formulate a strong essay requires detailed and careful planning. The beginning of this process is brainstorming. I brainstorm every argument that related to my thesis, and then list them from most relevant to least relevant. Usually, I will have 4 to 7 arguments at this point, so I link each argument to the examples in the passage. If an argument appears first on my arguments list and has a relevant and powerful example, I will choose this argument in my essay and expand its idea. After repeating these steps, my draft becomes more logical.

Essay Three Intro

The essay here is a case frame essay of Ready Player One. Writing an essay about unfamiliar frames can be challenging. Since I never write a case frame essay before, the hardest part for me is to choose a frame that strongly links to the story itself. Usually, I need to formulate my thesis and arguments first, and then decide which frame I should choose. However, the relevant frame may not be easy to find. If I cannot find an appropriate frame for my thesis, I have to change my thesis and search for frame again until I am satisfied with the frame.

My original thought about this case frame essay was writing an analysis about the impacts of virtual reality in our society (because Ready Player One is about a VR game in the future), but I was not satisfied with all frames of this topic I found, so I decided to change my topic. My second idea was the American’s culture and value in the Ready Player One. I searched in the library database and typed in some random words like “American value and culture” “future”. Suddenly a blue cover book popped up on the screen: The Modern Superhero in Film and Television: Popular Genre and American Culture. I read some reviews about the book and immediately decided to use this frame.

From writing about a case frame essay, I learn that to choose a correct frame and thesis is more like a dynamic process: choosing a thesis first and then looking for relevant frames. If the frames are not fit enough, revise the thesis and look for frames again.

General Intro

1. English is not my first language (learn to exactly express my feeling, learn to pick correct word choice)

2. Learn from other writers (their sentence structure, their description of images)

3. Formulates strong thoughts (thesis and arguments)

4. Write essay about a frame I am not familiar with

5. Dynamic writing process

I include three essays in my portfolio: my coming of age essay, an analysis of the criteria of outstanding personal narrative, and a discussion about American exceptionalism based on Ready Player One. Each essay represents a stage in my writing, and the entire collection shows improvements of my writing capability.

The first stage is writing in formal English. English is not my first language, so unlike native speaker, I am not able to exactly express my feeling and vividly present my story in English at first. This causes some problems in my coming of age essay. Although I am eager to show what I felt in my story, my peers and professor don’t feel the exact same emotions. After reading extensively about other writers’ work, I understand how to pick the strongest word that expresses the emotions, how to present a descriptive image to the readers, and how to use different sentence structure.

The second stage is formulating my own thoughts. After reading man writers’ work, I have a basic criterion of an outstanding essay. Then I use a technique called “listing and expanding”: list all the arguments, pick some best-fit ideas, and expand these ideas. In this way, my essay becomes organized and clear, and my thesis is more debatable.

The last stage is to find the best fit frame for my case frame essay. For me, to find an appropriate frame of my thesis is not easy. I need to search and read extensively of different essays to figure out which one is the best. This is like a dynamic writing process: I formulate a thesis first, and if I cannot find an appropriate frame, I will pick another thesis and search for the frame again. In Donald Murray's essay "Making Meaning Clearer, " she describes the same concept about his dynamic process “In other words, I have to have a focus before I can work on the focus. If, in each stage of the reading, the meaning does not become clearer and clearer, I go back and discover a potential meaning that can be brought into focus.” Under this idea, the essay is very clear to the readers.