Discussion 3

Reply from Emre Isler

In her essay "Becoming Literate: A Lesson from the Amish," the writer wanted to understand how literacy functions within the culture. She didn't just focus on school, she also looked at how a young boy named Eli Fisher learned to read and write at home, in church, and in his daily life. She found that for the Amish, literacy is important and is connected to their religion and core values. For example, Eli's family often read from The Martyrs Mirror and sang together, which helped him practice reading. Fishman wrote that because singing is so important to Amish religious life, understanding the songbook means understanding the words and the music for them. She even believes that Amish children become literate just by growing up in an environment where reading and writing are a natural part of everyday living.

Then, in "Simple Forms of Dance and Movement Literacy," Madeline Halvey asked whether dance could be considered a type of literacy. As a student at UCF, she studied how dancers observe movement, timing, and create meaning (through choreography). She compared this to reading a language, saying that dancers learn to interpret bodies and directions just like how readers interpret words. Her research showed that literacy isn't only about books, but it can also live in the body and in movement.

While Fishman used longterm observation to show the cultural side of literacy, Halvey used her own experience to make it more personal. I think Fishman's method is a little stronger because it clearly shows how literacy is tied to a community's values and identity.

I also see literacy in my own life, especially in the gym and fitness community. At first, working out seems only physical, but there is a lot of "reading" involved. You have to understand workout plans, nutrition labels, follow instructions, and use apps to track progress or track your diet (depending on your goals). Like Halvey showed with dance, fitness has its own kind of literacy, but it's more physical and practical.

Word Count: 334