

Chris DeVisser

ENGL 109

Prof. Jay Dolmage

Dec. 4, 2017

Final Reflection

More than anything, writing these essays has made me realize how much I prefer informative writing over other styles. Throughout the course, I consistently used informative writing in my essays more than was appropriate. The feedback I received for the narrative pointed this out. This isn't necessarily a bad thing. As a software engineer, informative writing is the large majority of what I will use throughout my career. If nothing else, I can stick to my strengths. For writing that I don't do by choice, I realized how important it is for me to have some kind of gimmick to entertain myself. If my mind is detached from what I'm writing, it inevitably turns out to be very poor in quality. The most important thing I can do is find some way to integrate a topic in a way where I can relate to things I'm passionate about. I have previously written for hours at a time about things I have a passion for. Length is no problem, making it interesting is easy, and bringing it all together is also straightforward. In contrast, being at all distant from my topic makes it nearly impossible for me to write well. No motivation ever comes unless I have a vetted interest in what I'm writing.

My narrative was something I have some passion for. Where it fell short was that I couldn't properly present that passion. In truth, I'm willing to go into the proper detail of the most interesting pieces when I tell this as a story to someone aloud, but I'm unwilling to do so for this particular story in essay form. Looking back at the essay, I didn't capture my enthusiasm very well at all, particularly at the beginning. This was easily the most fun I had through high school, and probably in my life as a whole, but you wouldn't know it from reading the essay.

When I revise it, I'll look at it more as if I were telling the story to someone so that my enthusiasm can come out. I'm still not comfortable going into as much detail as I do when I tell new people the story, but I can compromise there. In addition, I plan to theme the essay more toward the things I had the most fun doing while this was going on. I hope that moving away from the dry and informational feel will allow it to be read more like I'm there telling the reader directly, which should engage them further.

Between the other two essays, I'm not happy with either of them, but the argumentative essay is the right choice for me to continue. This essay was really hard for me because I lack a passion for almost every conceivable argument. Rather than align myself with one side or the other, I tend to simply not care. Instead, I prefer joking around where neither side is safe. Of the things I take seriously enough to argue at all, none of what I thought of was appropriate for a classroom essay, let alone related to the Maclean's issue. This left me settling for my topic and not having the passion to argue well for it. The only thing I have going for me there is my own personal experience in the matter. I care about the topic, but I don't care enough. In fact, I care about having enough of an open mind to see why people do the things they do far more than I care about the actual topic at hand. With that said, it's hard to significantly improve my essay and find compelling arguments. I've come to realize how much I prefer longer sentences, so applying the feedback to shorten them will be interesting. The same goes for using simpler language. I pay close attention to the repetitiveness of the vocabulary I use and that essay was already on the fence for some. It will be a challenge to choose simpler language and maintain the more interesting feel of varied vocabulary. Apart from this, my focus will be to improve the arguments, but given the circumstances, that will come as I read through and revise rather than as an up-front change in the skeleton.