

I have never been a writer at heart. Honestly, when I started out in this class, I had nearly no drive to write anything; I was in the class just for the credit. But something changed as the semester went on, and even more so when we reached poetry. When we first started making original works for workshops, I was terrified to take any step at all. I constantly started pieces over, threw some away, and I felt like nothing I was writing was good enough. Working through that first workshop was difficult, but I continued moving along, and that workshop taught me what could be the most important lesson I have learned as a writer in this class; it's okay to not be perfect. By receiving criticism from my peers, and criticizing their own works, I was able to accept that I should not expect perfection from myself during the first phases of a piece. Getting over this hurdle allowed me the freedom to pursue my own ideas and styles without the fear of hunting myself down for it later.

Flash fiction was a new topic for me while taking this class. Looking back, I wish I would have focused on flash fiction rather than creative non-fiction. It was quite the experience to see just how much authors could cram into only a fraction of regular fiction piece, and I would have loved to see what ideas I would come up with for it. Regardless, reading some flash fiction in class and some pieces online has introduced me to a genre that I would like to explore some more in my own time.

I do not have much to say about fiction and creative non-fiction; I know that they are my big weaknesses as a writer. I struggle a lot with narrative, and even more so when a story gets longer and longer. That's why I like to stick to shorter works. However, since I have discovered that these genres showcase my worst works, I can actively pursue to better my skills in them and become a more rounded and balanced writer overall.

Poetry was perhaps the most interesting genre for me out of the four that we touched upon. Despite my critical views on the liberal arts as a whole, I have always had a soft spot for poetry and the freedom it provides to a writer. I was most inspired about writing for the class when it came to poetry, and I think it really shows in my work. Through this class, I was able to appreciate the visual aspect of a poem on a deeper level, taking into account all of the cool visual tricks that you can hide in one. I wrote a lot of very personal works in the poetry genre for this class. It was actually very relieving to get some of my emotions down on paper and make something that I'm proud of; to turn negative experiences into positive ones. Poetry has showed me that I am a more imagery-driven writer, and I plan to write more poetry outside of class for both fun and stress-relief.

In the beginning, this was a class that I just wanted to get over with; I did not expect to become a more active writer after taking this class. The lessons and skills I have learned thus far have given me the confidence to believe in my own writing just a little bit more, and to pursue higher horizons as an amateur writer. Writing may not be my true passion, but if this class has taught me anything, it's that we all have an inner writer, and releasing it from its shackles can set you free as well. If a stubborn guy like me can do it, so can anyone else.

Thank you for everything you have done to make this class an enjoyable experience. It has been a very rough semester, even in this class, but it has all been worth it.