

Darian Church

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Reflective Essay

My name is Darian Church, and I am currently attending Old Dominion University. I am a first-year student and major in computer science. I am taking English Composition because it is a general education requirement course. Before taking this course, my highest English course was AP Literature in high school. Even though I had to write for that class they were only short sentences or a couple of paragraphs unlike the essays in this college level course. I felt semi prepared for this course because although my writing was decent, it also felt bland and common whenever I looked at it. This caused me to be somewhat nervous going into this English course and declined my confidence in my work.

My journey with literature and writing started in elementary school. My family was not financially stable at the time and in my free time, to entertain myself, I had to rely on the things around me. It was particularly two things which were my imaginations and books. It was not until late elementary school though that I discovered that I really liked to read. My teacher would give the class star and summer reading assignment. Even though I was younger, I would read the longer and more difficult books because I liked more of a story. I still read a large amount of book to this day. My favorite genres are fantasy, mystery, sci-fi, and partially romance. In these types of books and stories, I get fully immersed in the words and the world that is created by them. However, although I liked reading, writing was more of a dislike for me. It has always

been hard for me to write my thoughts or feelings onto a page. That has remained like that till a quarter into the semester in this English Composition class.

In the start, I was scared because was one of my first college classes. The first time writing in the class the professor gave us journal entries to write. The journals were themed after a topic the professor chooses. The journals were assignments that were meant for us the free write or write down our feeling on the theme. The first journal asked the class where we thought we would be in the next five years. The first couple of minutes, I was confused about what to write because I did not want to do a bad job. However, after beginning at a point, the words I typed just came out naturally like I was replaying a memory. That also applied to the journals I completed throughout the semester too. When writing the journals, I was more inspired to write because the themes were fun and frequent questions. In addition, they allowed me to be more relaxed and calmer because they were more about personal opinion and talking about myself. These journal although given to express our opinions and feelings, felt like they were preparing me to write the major writing assignments. Due to writing in the journals throughout the semester, I got less stressed from the writing assignments.

The Literacy Narrative Essay was the first writing assignment that we had for the class. The essay was about us writing about our story of our past and leading events that brought us to Old Dominion University. Being the first assignment, it stressed me out quite a bit. Although the assignment was fairly simple and was one, I had done before in another setting, it made me nervous being the first major assignment in class. At first during the essay, I could not find the correct words that I wanted to use and where to start the essay. As I continued drafting the essay and incorporating feedback from my professor, the process became noticeably easier. The writing

assignment prepared me for next assignments I would have for the class. I was better able to maintain good flow with my words and consistency in my writing.

The rhetorical analysis was the second writing assignment in the class that served as the midterm. The assignment was to examine a song or book and make an essay on the summary, tone, and appeal. With this being the second assignment after writing more journals, I was more relaxed than I was when doing the literacy narrative. I drafted the essay about one of my favorite songs which gave me a closer connection to what I was writing. This made it easier to get the words out and have fun writing. Furthermore, the song gave me better focus because I liked the lyrics and the beats. This allowed me to interpret the words being said better and create connections to literacy devices. This assignment similarly to the literacy narrative and journals gave me an increased understanding of what I needed to do when writing.

During our in-class period, I was, of course, taught several literary techniques and devices by my professor. This has helped me effectively grow my writing skills and mind to what it is today. However, learning these did not only help me with my writing, but it also helped me understand others writing. She taught me to not only look through the writer's point of view, but also the readers point of view. This would allow me to know my audience better as I could appeal to their emotions and senses better. This class also taught me additional lessons on how to utilize tone and emotion in writing to connect with your audience. This serves to captivate the reader and draw them in to the story. Moreover, it lures the reader into the story further by appealing to their emotions and interests. In addition to teaching me about ways to enhance my own writing, the class taught me to analyze the stories and papers of others. I learned numerous ways to annotate the writings of others.

Although this class has helped me grow significantly, I have had some negative moments within the class that came at a considerable cost. For example, there came times when I would procrastinate on the work in the class. Furthermore, there were times where I had poor time management and could have been doing assignments instead of unimportant tasks such as gaming and watching movies; I spend a considerable amount of time on social media, talking and betting apps that I should have done at a time where I was freer. This cost me to regretfully miss and be late on some assignments that I could have completed at the time. After thinking about it, I determined that I could definitely have done more by having better time management and organizing my work with my English class and other classes in a better manner.

In conclusion, by giving me techniques and devices this class has vastly improved my writing skills. The most important lesson I believe I have learned is to have good tone and emotion in your writing because that is what draws your audience in and keeps them interested. The assignments given have also improved my personal skills by helping me relieve the stress that I had when writing. Through the assignments, I have also become more comfortable with writing longer papers and gained confidence that I did not have before. However, despite the improvements I made to my writing during this time, I also experienced some personal setbacks that made the process more challenging. This including the poor time management and procrastination on my part that resulted in late and missed assignments. This class has set me up thoroughly for my future classes at Old Dominion University.