

Timothy Taylor
November 26th, 2023
Professor Sherron Gordon-Phan
ENGL 110C

Improvement: A Brief Self-Reflection

Introduction

Sun Tzu once said, “If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat.” At the beginning of this course, Professor Phan made clear to us that the principal objective of the course is to prepare us to be effective writers. In doing so, I was challenged with many obstacles in my path. From these trials, I learned to stop discouraging myself, uphold an optimistic outlook, and differentiate my style of writing.

August 29th, Journal 1

On August 29th, I was assigned my first journal entry. The prompt I was tasked to answer was, “Where do you see yourself in five years?” In this initial writing, I opened up with a story about an exquisite landscape, a challenging job, and a loving household. I lived atop a beautiful sloped forest in an expensive villa with my dog Trixie and my husband whom I later named Giveon. Although it was a free-write, it helped me express my interest in creative writing and decide on a genre to use as a focal point in later excerpts.

September 17th, First Writing Assignment

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On September 17th, we received our first graded submission. This assignment required me to reflect on how I became the writer I am today. I outsourced much of my information from my mother, as I faced the challenge of memory. I failed to include a page heading to indicate that I wrote the page. I faced criticism for my indentation inconsistencies that did not format correctly from document to PDF form. Undoubtedly, some MLA elements were not present in my citations. Despite my poor submission, I had one point deducted for my failure. I made sure to note the key differences between an 'unprofessional' journal entry and a 'professional' writing assignment submission.

October 1st, Second Writing Assignment

Unlike the first assignment, which delved into my creative approach to writing, the second one was exponentially different. For our second task, we had to conduct a rhetorical analysis of a book of our choosing. For this analysis, I chose *The Sun and The Star* by Rick Riordan. This assignment created a lot of stress for me due to my habit of overthinking. I rewrote the initial paragraph for this essay before I could make it flow nicely. Professor Phan's encouragement and reassurance helped me realize how straightforward it is to write an analysis paper. I learned how overthinking can impact one's ability to work promptly and effectively.

October 21st, Mid-Term Assignment

Lastly, we were assigned an optional choice assignment for our midterm. We could pick a prompt from a handful of options, or add on to a previous journal entry. I was adamant about

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adding on to my first journal entry, as it was my favorite piece thus far. I found this to be especially easy thanks to the many improvements I made over a short period of time. I was proud to see how smoothly I transitioned my writing from a personal to a professional style of writing.

Conclusion

Ultimately, I managed to learn how to adapt, uphold, and improve my writing skills. Professor Phan has greatly helped to improve my writing by making the classroom a more fun and enjoyable place to learn. I greatly appreciate her enthusiasm and encouragement to do as strongly as possible. She has provided me with so many great resources to help me adapt and overcome my challenges. I do not think I could have done better with any other professor.