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WRI 39B

June 1, 2014

Reflection

        After I finished Writing 39A, I didn't have high expectation for Writing 39B. When I began Writing 39B, I had a belief that this class would require lots of reading and writing. Coming in to this class with such bad expectations, I didn't expect to have much of an interest for this class. I viewed it as just another required class for graduation. However, as the quarter progressed, I realized that I have applied and learned a lot from this class. Writing 39B is a course focusing on rhetorical readings and writing. The theme for the class is Sherlock Holmes and the mystery genre. Throughout the quarter, we analyzed the historical contexts and the conventions of the detective genre. In this class, we learned about Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and his famous detective story, *The Sign of Four.* This class did not only train me to become a better writer, but also become a detailed reader. My personal development is based on the collaboration of group work, the process of writing essays, and the critical reading analysis.

        From my experience in Writing 39A, I didn't expect group work to exist in a writing class. However, this class required many group projects and public speaking activities. On the first day of class, I did a “Self-Introduction” speech. This is the first time in college that I need ed to think of a creative way to introduce myself. Then I was assigned to a group called Mastermind. In this group, we worked on many projects like the Victorian Era, the scholarly texts, and other assignments. At the beginning, I didn't feel comfortable working collaboratively with other people. However, all four of us are willing to open ourselves up to the rest of the group and learn together. We stayed in the same group for a few weeks, so we had the opportunity to gain team spirit, and find a way that best work out for our group. My engagement in group work became more challenging when I was assigned to be the leader for the RIP Seminar. For this big project, I needed to organize the group and divide the work equally to everyone in the group. Our collaboration for RIP Seminar is effective because we have been working under team setting for the last few weeks. Our group is responsible for presenting information about the classic stage and Conan Doyle. It has many historical contexts so it can be quite boring. For this seminar, we have an opportunity to review what we’ve learned at the beginning of the class. We discussed about the Victorian Era, and the conventions of the detective genre. In this seminar, I learned about the horror genre from the other 39B classes. They presented three short videos showing what they’ve learned from their class. However, I didn't have a clear knowledge about the genre after watching the videos. They only focused on the creation of the horror genre, but they didn't practice presenting their knowledge through words. Their presentations lacked confidence, organization, and clarity. From this seminar, I practiced three habits of mind: engagement, flexibility, and persistence. Participating in RIP Seminar trains my flexibility where I need to adapt to the different groups of audience and environment when delivering the presentation. The RIP Seminar is different from our regular in-class presentations. From the group work experience from this class, now I feel more confident when I do public speaking and work with other people.

        Another element that helps me develop my personal growth is the process of writing and revision. Writing 39B emphasizes a different writing style than Writing 39A. In Writing 39A, I cannot write with 5-paragraph structure. However, Writing 39B requires logical writing, which is a well-structured essay. This class only requires 2 lengthy academic essays, and a few reflective blogs. When I wrote these blogs, I just wanted to record my learning for the week. However, writing informal blogs is another type of writing practice. I learned to express my ideas more clearly through writing. This practice helped me a lot because I have more chances to practice writing. For the Literature Review, I didn't know exactly what I need to write, so my essay structure is not as well-developed. This is also the reason why I choose to revise this essay partially. By revising this essay partially, I can mainly focus on the structure within paragraph, which requires many detailed analysis. When I come to the second essay, I feel more comfortable with writing academic essays. My rhetorical essay is better than my literature review essay. I have a stronger structure for my essay, but I need to have more analysis within paragraphs. For both essays, I have a big problem with my grammar, which is an issue that I have since high school. Now, I am working on the revision process. Before coming in to this class, I think revision is just clearing out the grammatical errors, and fixing sentence’s clarity. However, as I work on the revision process for both essays, I realized that revision is to eliminate everything that doesn't help your essays. I think for my final draft, what I would keep from my first draft is just around 40%. After having the big picture for the essay by writing the first draft, I can focus more on the details within each paragraph to make it more coherent. The practice of writing and revision help me develop my habits of mind- curiosity, openness, creativity, and metacognition. Writing is a process that requires creativity and curiosity. Without these two habits of mind, it is hard to write a well-developed and interesting essay. In Writing 39B, we read many scholarly texts and academic readings. Through our writing assignments, I learned to reflect what I’ve learned from the readings. In the process of writing, I practiced openness where I consider different ways to express my ideas, or arguments.

        The last element of this class that contributes to my personal development is the process of analysis and critical reading. At the beginning of the quarter, I expected that this class will require a lot of readings. Although we have some readings assignments, I am willing to read with curiosity. Learning about Sherlock Holmes and the detective genre is interesting because it allows the reader to participate in the plot. Before coming in to this class, I just  viewed reading as a homework assignment. Therefore, I would just skim through the readings instead of actually reading it. While reading Sherlock Holmes, I became interested in reading about the case. I want to solve the case so I was willing to pay attention to the details. In this class, we also do close reading on films. We learned about the cinematic elements in the films. Curiosity is one of the habits of mind that is really helpful in reading the film. Without reading with curiosity, I will not pay attention to the lights, camera angles, and other artistic elements of the film. Persistence is another habit of mind that I practiced as I read for this class. While readings, I need to focus on many details and watch them repeatedly in order to analyze the meaning behind the words, or techniques. When I analyze the scholarly texts, I found it is really hard to understand. In order to understand the meaning of the text, I challenged myself to read slowly and for many times.

        Writing 39B is a class that emphasizes reading, writing, and speaking activities. Throughout this 10-week of class, I developed my writing skills and reading skills. By doing many presentations, I gained confidence in public speaking. In this class, I also learned to become a leader; where I need to lead a team. From this class, the most important habit of mind that I practiced is metacognition. By writing blogs, and doing projects, I was able to reflect on what I’ve learned. Although I have improved a lot as a communicator, I still need practice more in order to gain confidence. As a reader, I acquired a different perspective on readings. Readings is not just a class assignment anymore. Readings is a good investment where you can increase your vocabulary, and strengthen your writing skills. As a writer, I developed a lot especially for academic essays. My essays are better-structured, and well-developed. As I move on to other classes later, these skills will encourage me to open myself to learn new things.