

Student Sample

ENG 112.0012

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25 February 2015

Final Reflections of English 112

English 112 has provided me with the foundation for successful academic writing within three main disciplines that are known as the humanities, social sciences, and the natural and applied sciences. Each discipline utilizes a separate writing style: MLA (Modern Language Association) is used for academic writing in the humanities, APA (American Psychological Association) is used for academic writing in the social sciences, and CSE (Council of Science Editors) is used for academic writing in the natural and applied sciences. The curriculum of this course required a major work of writing within each discipline to demonstrate adequate understanding of the characteristics that accompany them. The composition involved with each of these major works has proven to facilitate familiarity of the three disciplines that will be useful for many of my future academic endeavors. I have used MLA prior to English 112, but writing in each of the disciplines during this course has allowed me to attain an understanding of the purpose and reason for which there are different writing styles for each discipline. By examining the critical reading, critical thinking, and critical writing that I exercised within this course, I can exhibit my understanding of the three major disciplines as well as my increased comprehension of amputations as a physical disability.

The topic that I chose at the beginning of this course contributed significantly to my writing experience within the disciplines. By reviewing suggestions by my instructor, I decided to direct my focus upon amputations as a physical disability. At the time, I was very unfamiliar

with amputations and the potential complications that are associated with it. This initiated my interest because I lacked common interaction with anyone who has had an amputation and I desired to know more regarding their condition. After choosing my topic, I decided to read the short story, “Good Country People,” by Flannery O’Connor as the literature for my literary analysis in the humanities. Reading this short story allowed me to attain an understanding of my topic by studying the symbolic meaning that an amputation had within a character. The social complications that I was able to perceive in the short story, such as complications related to body image, influenced my research within the social sciences. Through my review of the literature in the social sciences, I was able to conclude that amputees experience significant complications related to body image that affect the way in which they interact socially. My review of the literature in the sciences was guided by the complications of phantom limb syndrome and the treatment of this condition. As I completed my writing throughout the disciplines, I was able to become informed on the complications of amputations and the varying perspectives that each discipline may take within the same relative subject.

Critical reading is a strategy in which the reader is aware that the material being read is an individual perspective on the subject, therefore its validity and meaning should always be questioned and critiqued. The ability to read critically is an important and necessary skill to understanding an array of literature. As I explored my topic through each discipline, I began to recognize the value in which the critical and secondary sources contribute to my overall understanding of amputations. Within the humanities, “Good Country People” provided a substantial amount of information regarding the effects of a lower-limb amputation on one character. This critical source allowed me to seek a variety of knowledge by analyzing the literature through my perspective. As I read secondary sources pertaining to my piece of

literature in the humanities, I found the value of having multiple viewpoints to be contributive to a successful comprehension of the original literature. Throughout the social sciences and sciences, critical and secondary sources were essential to building a legitimate and supportive understanding of each subtopic. As I read many scholarly journal articles that encompass all of the disciplines, I realized that it is difficult to take a stand in support of which discipline is most effective in communicating their knowledge to the audience. Each discipline has a different audience in which they contribute towards. The humanities orients to an audience that is trying to ascertain the meaning of something or the different ways in which it can be understood; the social sciences, acting as a bridge between the humanities and the sciences, attempts to address topics that may have meaning in the humanities in a more controlled fashion; the natural and applied sciences delivers information to an audience in an efficient and precise manner that relates to science. Each discipline, using different structure, reference, and language, effectively communicates to their anticipated audience.

Through critical thinking, I was able to evaluate the progression of understanding my topic from my literary analysis and reviews of the literature. Reading the initial piece of literature for my literary analysis in the humanities, I could examine the symbolic meaning of an amputation as well as the psychological effects that may occur in amputees. This led to my analysis that concludes with the detrimental effect of amputations on an individual's body image as well as the social complications they may experience, further contributing to my knowledge of amputations. After completing my literary analysis, I decided to direct my focus in the social sciences to the psychosocial effects related to body image in amputees. After reviewing the literature in this discipline, I was able to conclude that depression and anxiety is commonly prevalent in amputees and that these conditions indirectly contribute to psychosocial

complications. To guide my review of the literature in the natural and applied sciences, I decided to concentrate on the treatment of a common complication of amputations known as phantom limb pain. After reviewing the literature within this discipline, I learned the common therapies that have potential to treat phantom limb pain consist of mirror therapy, neuromodulation, and nerve blocks and the variation in methods that may enhance efficacy. The original piece of literature that I read in the humanities opened a variety of possibilities to explore my topic and further my knowledge within the field. Writing the literary analysis in the humanities, as well as reviews of the literature in the social sciences and sciences, has allowed me to extensively increase my knowledge regarding amputees and related conditions.

As I have written within each of the disciplines, I have employed an approach that involves critical writing. This approach consists of facilitating a broad perspective on the subject matter in which I am writing about in order to create a document that communicates justly with the audience. Writing critically can prevent an isolated view towards any subject matter. Throughout my writing process, there are several factors that as allowed me to develop an increased knowledge of my overall topic. The use of common knowledge research substantially aided in my general understanding of amputations as it allowed me to become much more familiar with important information necessary to begin research of professional literature. Becoming familiar with electronic databases has allowed me to research my topic in an effective manner. This involved the use of certain filters that allowed me to search for exact phrases, words within the title, the most recent research available, and other useful clarifications. After finding adequate research within a subject, the creation of an annotated bibliography was done to address the value of the articles in terms of my objective. I think that the combination of the common knowledge research, familiarity with search engines, and the annotated bibliography

created for each of the disciplines facilitated a remarkable foundation for which critical writing can best be implemented. With adequate research and knowledge of the subject, a comprehensive viewpoint can be held rather than a single perception. Writing critically is essential to the final drafts that I produced within each discipline as it contributes to effective communication.

As this course comes to an end, I can reflect on my general writing abilities as well as the particular information that I learned throughout my academic journey within the disciplines. While I have had some difficulties during this course, I have recognized some factors of my writing that can be seen as my strengths. I would consider my research capabilities through online databases to be a skill that shows well in this class. Through my research, I was able to decipher some critical articles that portray important concepts to my writing in the disciplines. In the humanities, Oliver's article presented the concept that Hulga, a character in "Good Country People," has an altered body image in which she cannot legitimately replace through an artificial substitute like a prosthetic (235). This was a critical source as it supported my research within the social sciences and the natural and applied sciences. Coffey, L., et al. presented a study that concluded with a prevalence of body image disturbance as well as anxiety and depression in those with diabetes-related amputations (1066). The occurrence of phantom limb pain as a complication of amputations prompted my research in the sciences. Darnall and Li presented a study concerning thirty-one amputees who agreed to use mirror therapy in which it effectively decreased the mean phantom limb pain of the group, noting that those with higher education experienced a greater reduction in pain (259). As I exercised my research capabilities, I found articles that presented valuable information to my topic. I will further enhance my researching abilities as I continue to pursue research in other areas of study. By reflecting on each of the

individual disciplines, I can recognize which areas of my writing that I need the most improvement. I would say that my vocabulary needs the most improvement, as I regularly feel that my ideas are not fully expressed through my current writing abilities. As I exit this course, I hope to improve this area as well as reflect on the heightened capabilities that I attained through my writing experiences across the designated disciplines. I have changed my outlook on writing by realizing the vast amount of directions that I can take as a writer. This course has shown me the importance of becoming informed through common knowledge research and annotations of important sources. I am sure to include detailed research into my writing strategy in order to become a subject matter expert in areas that are necessary for my academic career. The structure of English 112 has also benefitted my writing as there is designated instruction for peer review and group interaction initiated through affiliated topics. I am certain that this writing experience has improved my writing skills for my future academic endeavors.

As a result of the critical reading, critical thinking, and critical writing that I applied throughout this course, I have attained an expanded understanding of the three disciplines and my topic regarding amputations. Each discipline establishes a different way of viewing complications that are associated with amputations that permit a diversified understanding of my topic. The challenges that I faced throughout the semester will contribute to my writing experience in a positive manner. As I progress my experiences within writing, I will recognize that writing within the disciplines has supported my future in academia by letting me see the different disciplines in my research as well as the writing that I prepared for each discipline.

Works Cited

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