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Writing for the Humanities

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Self-Reflection Assignment

Writing for the Humanities was my first English class as a college student. I found that this class allowed me to get very creative with my writing in a way that is very different from the other English classes I have been exposed to. I was able to explore different types of writing assignments different from a typical research paper. With assignments like the Op-Ed, Visual Essay, and the Critical Analysis Essay, I discovered new ways to express my opinions, and skills to utilize sources in a more analytical way.

Prior to taking this class, I was only exposed to writing traditional essays and research papers. I feel that these assignments did not let me truly express my opinions. The Op-Ed assignment was a very unique way for me to explore new genres of writing. I chose to pitch my op-ed to BuzzFeed News. Since BuzzFeed is typically known to appeal to a younger audience, I had to pay attention to my tone and my vocabulary. Instead of trying to sound as sophisticated as possible, I was able to use my own voice in this assignment because it was opinion based and I had to appeal to an audience of people around my same age. Additionally, the visual piece was something that I was unfamiliar with prior to being introduced to it this semester. I enjoyed creating a meme because it gave me more freedom when it came to the writing portion. I found that writing about something I created gave me a bigger platform to express my message and my opinions.

Furthermore, I was able to discover new skills to utilize sources in a more analytical way. The classwork and blackboard assignments which required me to write rhetorical analysis taught me to identify parts of an article such as the rhetorical situation, genre, and exigence. Rather than providing a summary of a quote in my pieces, these skills encouraged me to find deeper meanings to quotes. I was accustomed to utilizing my sources in one way. That way was by finding sources relevant to my writing piece and using those sources to support my thesis statement. The Critical Analysis Essay exemplifies a way in which I utilized my sources in a unique way. I chose to write a piece that went against a statement made by New York's governor, Andrew Cuomo. I used my sources to add further emphasis to my thesis instead of finding a source that simply reiterated my opinion.

If I could retake this class, I feel that I would become more informed on the purpose of a critical analysis essay because it is the assignment I struggled the most with. I received a 5/10 on the topic proposal and I struggled to come up with a clear thesis which made it difficult to even begin my paper. I also struggled to find scholarly sources and feel that I should have taken advantage of the CCNY library website. I overcame these obstacles by restarting the entire process and coming up with a brand new thesis and finding new sources.

Overall, I would say that this class exceeded my expectations. I normally do not enjoy English classes. However, this class made me enjoy writing and taught me many skills that will be very helpful for future writing assignments. I expanded my creativity and I had fun writing papers.