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English 2010

Professor Brown

Reflection

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Reflections

This writing class was a challenge as I learned new concepts and new ideas on how to write. It introduced me to the use of genre which was a concept that I had never had the opportunity to explore before. I had used the idea of making outlines or brainstorming ideas before starting a paper, but the use of inventions gave me a new way to look at getting my ideas flowing and revising them.

Working together as a group was a challenging, but rewarding process. It took some time to develop a relationship with the other members of our group and understand how each person worked. It is possible that it may be a little harder to develop this relationship when you are working online and this seemed evident as we tried to choose the topic for our area of concern. Each of us had specific ideas about air pollution that we wanted to discuss and we had to find a way to bring our ideas together into a cohesive paper. I felt that as we started to share ideas through the discussions we were able to develop a civic conversation that was respectful to everyone and were able to bounce ideas back and forth. When this type of relationship developed, it became easier to merge our ideas.

One of the revised papers I submitted for my portfolio was the group argument paper entitled "The Unhealthy Utah We Breathe". The development of this paper as an argument was accomplished only after several revisions had been passed back and forth between us and the

instructor. We needed to look more at the way to approach both the positive and negative sides of an issue through the research process. We needed to be able to rhetorically analyze the opinions of others and see things from their point of view so we could better develop our argument. It was apparent that our first attempts did not fit the writing task for an argumentation paper and our paper was more of a solution paper with a title that did not match the content. Our revisions focused on including more reasoning and evidence to help persuade our readers to come to our point of view. We worked on eliminating repetition in the paper and creating a better flow between our ideas. We changed the title of the paper to better reflect our topic and included more views on both sides of the issue. We included a stronger conclusion to draw the reader to our point of view. Our strong point on our paper was the use of the citation page in the correct manner. This was facilitated by the use of resources that were offered through class websites and conversations between the members of our group.

Peer reviews were an important part of this class and it was helpful to receive feedback from the other students and also be able to look at their writing to make changes in my own writing. When I was writing the argument paper, one of the suggestions was that I needed to look more closely at opposing views on my topic. This was a good comment since I did struggle with that area in the paper. The other comment that I felt helped to guide me was one made about my commentary by a peer. They suggested that I needed to add more about why my topic mattered and changes I would recommend. These suggestions were very compatible with the suggestion given by the instructor. I felt that some of my stronger suggestions included being able to work through the citation format and helping others improve their citation pages. I also was able to talk back and forth about the type of paper one of the students was writing. I was uncertain about the type of paper he was writing and helped to define the fact that it was a

commentary and give some ideas on how that should be developed. Peer reviews gave me the opportunity to see how others approached the different genres they were using to write with. This made me look at my own writing process and see how I could improve it. I often saw ideas that I would not have thought about on my own and caught mistakes in my own writing as I looked at the changes other students made.

Writing in different genres opened my mind to better ways to get my ideas out to a reader. Deciding to write a commentary challenged me to look past just writing a report. I chose to revise this paper for my portfolio. I had created a citation page that the instructor noted was correct in its format, but did not need to be included. So this page was eliminated for the portfolio. Instructor and peer reviews indicated that I should include more recommendations about what I felt individuals or the government could do to increase better air quality and I have added those ideas to my paper. I revised the order of the paragraphs to include the comments by local doctors in the health area of my paper. This gave me the opportunity to look how to conceive, draft, and revise documents and I feel that the quality of my paper was improved due to this process.

I enjoyed working on the pamphlet for this assignment. This was probably the strongest area of my writing. It gave me the opportunity to be creative with both my writing and using visual effects to introduce the reader to the basic facts and research on the air pollution concerns in the Salt Lake Valley. This paper needed few revisions and so I did not include it in the portfolio. I felt the revisions on the argument paper and the commentary gave me the best opportunity to incorporate suggestions from the instructor and my peers to show how I was able to manage the writing processes I have learned in this class.

While I found many aspects of this class to be challenging, I realize that it has helped me to be able to understand how to express my ideas in many different ways. If I were to go through this process again, I think that I would like to try some different genres that I didn't attempt during this semester. I also would try to more critically analyze my own papers and incorporate more ideas from my peers. After completing this process, I think that it would benefit those doing peer reviews if we were able to offer constructive ideas that gave a little more depth to how the papers could be changed. While I realize that we need to develop a civic conversation, we may have been a little hesitant in the suggestions we gave to each other. I also think it would have been helpful to develop a better dialogue about working together as a team and making sure everyone understood the importance of making sure the deadlines were met so that the group leader had time to get assignments turned in. This has been a learning process that will help me understand how to work with others as I move to different employment after I finish school.