

Sarah Ildza

FIQWS 10108-CP6

Prf. Von Uhl

Self-Reflection- Expository Essay

An “exploratory essay” was a new genre of essay writing to me so writing this five-page paper was a challenge. I started reading the article *Madness and Masquerade* as soon as it was assigned to us. I read it twice and looked for connections to make between the article and the memoir I was writing my report on: “The Glass Castle”. My first-time reading the article, I was stuck and found nothing that would help me form a relationship between the article and the memoir. My second-time reading it, I automatically made a few connections. I figured that finding quotes from both sources was the basis in forming an outline for my essay. It would help me develop a thesis.

Since I had gotten a C+ on the last paper, my exigency in writing this paper was to get at least an A. I wrote my first draft of the essay before our first peer review, but it was 7 pages long rather than 4-5 as required. My first peer reviewer did not catch that mistake, she just told me to add a title and showed me the correct format for citing quotes. I fixed those mistakes, but my second peer reviewer gave me a lot more feedback. I had too much summary, my quotes were too long, and overall the essay was a lot to read. I cut down my essay, but it was still too long, and I wanted to write a good flowing and well-developed essay. I made an appointment with the writing center and they helped me cut it down. As I reread it, it was finally starting to sound like a well-structured essay with in depth analysis.

My purpose in writing this essay was to make my stance clear to the audience. Since this was a formal essay, there was no use of first-person pronouns, but I still portrayed my

understanding of the book. I compared the psychological tactics that stood out to me from *Madness and Masquerade*, and the actions of my chosen character, Rex. I elaborated on how my two sources relate by deeply analyzing my quotes and making sure that my writing is logical.

I am proud to say that devoting my time to writing this paper came with happiness. A strategy I found that helps me in analyzing texts is to write a quick one sentence summary after each paragraph. This makes looking back into texts easier because everything is organized. A writing strategy I found helpful is to brain-dump all my ideas and write including as much detail as possible. That way, I have extra information rather than a lack of information. Revising takes up more time than writing a paper. I spent over nine hours revising my essay after the second peer review because I was finding so many errors and things to improve. In high school, teachers would never make me revise my work, and high grades were easy to achieve with minimum amounts of work. In college, revising is a *must* and it helps me take a lot from my writing and discover my strengths and weaknesses. Comparing my expository essay to my literacy narrative, there are visible improvements in the format and analysis of my writing.