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Reflection Letter

Over the course of the first semester, I attempted to progress my writing as a whole. I found that there were a few concepts though that I focused on more than others. I mainly focused on the development and advancement of syntax and structure in my writing. Both of these elements are crucial to having a successful paper and I could not have been successful this semester without making improvements. At the beginning of the semester, my writing was choppy, disorganized, and hard to follow; improvements regarding my syntax needed to be made. The structure of my paragraphs also needed improvement, as they lacked transitions between paragraphs, idea development, and analysis.

What I have tried to do this semester regarding structure is, before writing, making an organized outline so that I have already written down the key ideas I want to talk about before I actually start writing. The way in which I worked on strengthening my syntax was very similar. Instead of immediately writing, I planned my work very carefully, took my time making sure the development of the structure was clear and organized, then I focused on my syntax. I found that as I was taking my time making an outline for my writing that the words and sentence structure came more naturally to me. By having a plan, my writing became more concise, specific, and was no longer repetitive. So, though I believe I have made strides this semester regarding syntax and structure, I will continue to develop them in my writing in the future.

The first area of improvement I considered this semester was syntax. Syntax considers

word choice, sentence structure, and the flow of a piece of writing. At the beginning of the semester, my writing was generic and dull. In the “Computer Writing” assignment when we were assigned to give a step-by-step tutorial of Blackboard, my writing was choppy and hard to follow. I said things like “click on your English class” and “you will find a link to a PDF”. Though the assignment was supposed to give a list of instructions, it still could have been improved. As the semester continued, I made it a focus of mine to work on syntax.

The next assignment in which I saw my writing change was during the Proposal draft. Regarding syntax, this was an upgrade from previous writings but not as good as my later works. Again, my sentences could have been more structured, less choppy, and more descriptive. I give important information that makes sense in the paragraph, but not in enough detail.

The last assignment in which I looked at my progress of syntax was in the Curated Exhibit. Here, my syntax improved tremendously as my writing flowed much more smoothly and was carefully thought out. The ideas I presented were much more complex and more concrete and easy to understand.

I also made major improvements regarding structure this semester. In the beginning of the semester, my paragraphs lacked transition sentences, had poor idea development, and had insufficient analysis. My writing on Paul Robeson gave a summary about who he was and what he did but my ideas were cut off and abrupt. For such an interesting subject, I did not provide as much explanation as I could have, which ultimately hurt the quality of the writing. The lack of analysis took away from all of the information I presented. My writing would have benefitted from more idea development.

My next writing about the Statement of Purpose in my exhibit lacked transitions. The sentences had a lot of good information, but since there were not great transitions between the

ideas, it made the writing a bit awkward.

The last piece that showed significant improvements in my structure was Diary entry 1. Here I proposed an idea and expanded upon on it, providing sufficient explanations and analysis that got my point across and helped create a well-structured entry. The transitions between my ideas were also solid here, as I did not repeat ideas but successfully transitioned between them.

The piece that tied my work in syntax and structure was in the Narrative Essay. This piece proved to be the one in which my growth showed the most. The first three lines of the essay are much stronger opening sentences than the first few sentences in any other writing. My phrases were smooth, sophisticated, and exhibited the known-new chain. It also shows improvements in structure by introducing, explaining, and then analyzing an idea. My writing has become more thoughtful, creative, and well-rounded this semester. I obviously have worked on improving my writing as whole, but what separates my writing now from the beginning of the semester are the improvements I have made regarding syntax and structure.