

Dear Portfolio Assessment Committee,

I came into the semester with some great struggles in my writing, many of which I did not think I would be able to ever improve. I searched long and far for the simple solution, but this semester, in Dr. Cooke's Writing with Archives class, I discovered the solution; practice. The main things I was truly struggling with were transitions and syntax. These were things that I had struggled with since a young age. All throughout the semester, we did an abundance of writing assignments in class, some of which we only spent ten minutes at the end of class on; whereas others we spent nearly a month on. No matter the assignment, we were always given feedback on what could be improved, and with this feedback, I was always able to look over my work and analyze how I could improve it for next time.

Each time I had a new assignment, I strived for excellence, doing nearly everything I could to improve my work further, making both my life easier, and that of my teacher, because I knew he would be much happier reading an unflawed paper, rather than a flawed one. I will never forget when I finished my proposal for my curated exhibit, not only did I feel a great sense of relief for being done with it, but I also felt as though I had been extremely efficient throughout the entirety of the writing process and felt good about receiving my grade back. Through each step in the process, Dr. Cooke provided us with sufficient feedback on how we could improve that particular part of the assignment. I read over them thoroughly and went back to pick apart my essay, looking for ways to improve it without getting rid of my unique writing style and voice. Each and every time I received feedback, I noticed that my feedback was on the same two topics: syntax and transitions. I became frustrated, because I did not know what I could do to fix it, so I just kept practicing and practicing.

Throughout this semester, I turned the negative energy of my frustrations into something a positive; a desire for success. I spent an abundance of time in the library analyzing each and every comment that Dr. Cooke gave me, and going back to improve it, because I knew in the end the payoff would be worth it. After many coffee filled nights in the library, stressing over whether or not my assignment would be successful, I hit the send button, and in an instant, my hard work would be graded. About a week later, I received an email from Dr. Cooke with the rubric from the assignment. I opened it anxiously, and to my pleasant surprise, I received an A plus! That is when I discovered that the key to success and improvements in certain aspects of writing were all attributed to practice.

Through the final portfolio assignment, I was able to truly portray all of the improvements I had made in my writing throughout the semester. The point of the assignment was to take two components of your writing which you improved on throughout the semester, and take concrete examples from the semester to show how you had improved these things. I clearly chose transitions and syntax, because those are two things I have really struggled with, and I truly do feel like I improved. I was able to take various examples of my writing throughout the semester that I saw as examples of syntax or transitions that exemplify how I have improved these throughout the semester. These pieces of writing ranged anywhere from diary entries I had to do, to parts of my curated exhibit that may have required very few words, but those words I had to choose very wisely. I wrote a brief summary on each of these in order to qualify how I had begun with something scrappy and unaligned and turned it into a well put together piece of writing once I had gone back and revised my work based on comments made by my professor. The final component to the assignment was to include a featured artifact that showed a cultivation of the improvement of the two different areas of improvement. I used my final piece

of writing from the semester for this part; the narrative essay. My narrative essay required lots of work on my behalf, and I believe that the success of my narrative essay was due to an accumulation of my hard work and the work I had put throughout the entirety of the semester, in order to improve my writing as a whole. The final portfolio assignment really helped me to realize the extent to which I improved my writing this semester in those various topics.

Best,

Sophie Frostbaum