

Self-assessment essay

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The writing for social sciences course has been a mind broadening experience, which has helped me to become a better writer, thinker, and fieldworker. We've been doing assignments and activities such as posts writing, reading relevant material, essay writing, research, interviewing, peer reviewing, and fieldnotes taking. I'll be highlighting the activities that have impacted me the most.

The first activity was the poetry discussion post, which consisted of writing a piece of poetry inspired from "Where I'm From", a poem written by George Ella Lyon. My poem was about the nostalgia that my memories from childhood evoked, which I portrayed as a "melody". and the perspectives I remembered to embrace as a kid. But after writing my poem I had to read and reply to a poem written by a classmate. This was an experience full of learning; I had to open my mind and cultivate empathy to put myself in others' shoes and make a genuine effort to understand the poem to its fullest extent. This approach ultimately assisted me in achieving one

My grandmother birthing ten kids, one of them being my dearest father, then me having over 20 cousins,

So yes, I have enough "friends",

My mother and father installing in my head to be a strong, secured woman so I am truly thankful for that.

I am from the smell of soul food on a Sunday evening,

My mother would cook but I will still have to go to my grandmother's house to grab some grub because I adore her cooking.

I am from playing "Red Light Green Light", Double Dutch, Hop Scotch, etc. on my small Harlem block,



Carlos Rodriguez

3 months ago

Where I'm from POEM

Is that melody that reminds me of those afternoons when an uncanny sense made me value the silly jokes of little Sergio or the dreams and anecdotes shared in the daily meetings with "Los ninos de la cuadra" in front of the park. Is that melody that foreshadowed my nostalgia, the orange skies, the warm weather, and the company of kids like me; We were all and nothing. Running in the streets and playing. But now, I return, and there's nobody. Now, my melody is lugubrious. The trees, the ground, and the skies are the ones who took over that loop of happiness which in another space of reality is still repeating again and again. And I know where I was, but it's hard to realize that time becomes dust.

Reply

Quote

of the course's objectives: recognizing the diverse range of linguistic differences among individuals as valuable resources for developing rhetorical sensibility.

I read more than one poem, and I could identify the diversity within language, expression, and rhetoric. As for me, other classmates had a native language different than English, which made the activity more fun, because I stumbled upon many perspectives that I identified with. Overall, expressing myself through a poem and reading others' poems enhanced my perception of individual people by showing me the uniqueness and similarities of those around me.

During this class there were several assignments that sharpened my drafting, revising, and editing skills, while considering important factors such as my writing goals and audiences. Also, I learned how to use and implement social and collaborative aspects of the writing process. An example can be the classmate interview essay, which consisted of interviewing a classmate to get information about a subculture he or she was part of. And I was partnered with Runkang, a 20-year-old Chinese classmate that comes from the Guangdong Province. He and I asked a series of open-ended questions to each other that helped us to have a fluent conversation where we shared the subculture we practiced, our perspectives and backgrounds. After the interview, I wrote a verbal portrait; I had to reflect on the full spectrum of the interaction between Runkang and I. The verbal portrait was an essential part of my learning process, because I had to analyze and interpret things that I see every day, which are often of little to no importance: mannerisms, body language, physical context, and clothing. "It was a calm evening when I met Runkang, a

shy and introspective young man with short hair and glasses. As we sat down to begin our interview, I could sense a nervous energy emanating from him, but he seemed to quickly compose himself and focus on our conversation.” (Rodriguez, 2023).

One important lesson taught in class was using the pronoun “I” when writing. As many of my classmates, I was not comfortable enough to use that pronoun. We were told that using it was informal, and that our opinion was not relevant in most academic writing. But in this class, I had to think and write as a field worker, so using “I” was crucial. So, as part of the class, I had to choose a subculture that I wanted to know more about, and *I* was certainly included. I wrote about homemade Korean food subculture (Subculture Research essay), even though I was already familiarized with this subculture, I had to research a vast amount of information to understand the practices, main culture, and insiders’ perspectives. This assignment helped to achieve two of the course goals: using library resources, online databases as well as learning how to integrate, evaluate and quote from these sources. In the images below the use of citations is displayed:

One of the most important characteristics of traditional Korean food and its preparation, is fermentation. This practice dates back to the Three Kingdoms¹ period, and it was used to preserve and store food. And according to KOCIS (2018), fermentation is a metabolic process that transforms the food by changing flavor, improving taste and maintaining its nutritional values for longer periods of time. There is a wide variety of fermented foods that are a must-have for most Korean households.



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The Writing for Social Sciences course has been a transformative experience for me, both as a writer and as a thinker. Through a variety of assignments and activities, I have developed essential skills such as drafting, revising, and editing, while also learning how to incorporate social and collaborative aspects into the writing process. The poetry discussion post was particularly impactful, as it taught me how to be open-minded and empathetic towards other people's perspectives, and how to strive to understand a poem to its fullest extent. Reading and responding to my classmates' poems also highlighted the diversity within language, expression, and rhetoric, while allowing me to connect with them on a personal level.

Moreover, the classmate interview essay was a crucial part of my learning process, as it required me to analyze and interpret everyday things that might otherwise go unnoticed. Interviewing Runkang and writing a verbal portrait of him helped me hone my observation and writing skills, as well as my ability to reflect on my own experiences. Finally, the assignment on using the pronoun "I" challenged my assumptions about academic writing and taught me how to write like a fieldworker, which was an essential component of the course.

In addition to the mini-ethnography, another essay I was assigned was the personal artifact essay, which required me to select an object of personal value. I chose an old family photo album for this assignment. Writing this essay proved to be an enjoyable experience as it challenged me to view the album from a fresh perspective. To provide an engaging description of the object, I had to pay attention to details that I often took for granted. For instance, I noticed that the album was typically stored in a closet “Stored in the profound and recondite corner of my mom’s closet, it is protected by a leather book cover that prevents dust from entering it, accumulating a layer of dust over time.” Rodriguez (2023).

While crafting the personal artifact essay, I took into careful consideration the expectations of my audience, my writing goals, and the rhetorical situation at hand. I needed to express the true value of the photo album by describing it distinctly and compellingly.

To meet the expectations of my audience, I aimed to create a vivid and emotional connection between the readers and the album. I wanted them to understand the significance it held in my life and the cherished memories it encapsulated. By presenting a thoughtful and engaging portrayal of the album, I hoped to evoke a sense of nostalgia, curiosity, and empathy among my readers.

In terms of my writing goals, I aimed to go beyond a mere inventory of the photographs and delve deeper into the emotions and stories behind each image. I wanted to evoke a range of emotions through my words, from joy and laughter to tears and reflection. It was important for me to bring the album to life, transforming it from a mere collection of photographs into a gateway to my family's history and cherished moments.

Considering the rhetorical situation was also crucial. I recognized that this essay was an opportunity to convey my connection to the album and its value in a way that would resonate with others. I wanted to create a narrative that would engage and captivate readers, urging them to reflect on their treasured possessions and the stories they hold.

With these considerations in mind, I approached the essay with a meticulous eye for detail. I carefully selected descriptive language, employing vivid imagery and sensory details to paint a vibrant picture of the album. I aimed to create a sense of intimacy as if the readers were leafing through the album themselves, experiencing the faded pages and worn edges firsthand.

The last assignment that I will delve into is the mini-ethnography essay. This particular task served as a natural extension of the subculture research essay, requiring me to immerse

myself fully in the captivating world of homemade Korean food. The objective was to gather not-so-obvious information of insiders' perspective and firsthand experiences and meticulously document my observations through detailed field notes, encompassing everything from the physical context and sensory aspects to the language and the individuals themselves.

Embarking on this mini-ethnography was an exciting and enlightening journey. It demanded my complete engagement with the subculture, as I sought to capture its essence and unravel the intricacies that lay beneath the surface. I wanted to go beyond surface-level observations and truly understand the cultural significance and practices associated with homemade Korean food and get information that is often not widely known.

To achieve that, I decided to visit Korean friends at their houses, and a restaurant (Mrs. Kim), so I could interact with them face to face. I visited four friends: Joon, Hyejin, Mrs. Kim and Ji-hye. I asked them open ended questions guided by keywords, and I implemented some of the information into my essay. That helped me to achieve two of the class objectives: engaging in genre analysis and multimodal composing to explore effective writing across disciplinary contexts as well as formulating my stance as an outsider. I analyzed the genre of my essay to effectively translate my notes into the essay, "Joon explained that for him and his family, homemade Korean food was more than just a meal; it was a way of maintaining their cultural identity and preserving their heritage. In a country where fast food and prepared meals were at hand, homemade Korean food was a way to stay connected to their roots and pass down traditions to future generations." Rodriguez (2023).

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