

Jane Doe

ENGL 3351

Dr. Moreira

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Reflecting on My Experience in ENGL 3351: Intro to Creative Writing

At the beginning of the semester when I walked into your English 3351 course, I had no idea what to expect out of the class. I walked in there a bit nervous because the last time I had written any stories or poems was in my third grade journal, which is long gone and I could no longer get inspiration from them. The good thing was that there were other people within your class who were also very unsure of their abilities of writing creatively, so I didn't feel the pressure of being the "ugly duckling" with no confidence. We were all there to learn and grow as writers. My journey throughout your creative writing course went from me being unaware of the different writing styles and strategies that I could use to make my writing more effective, to figuring out how to implement them in my stories.

Not only did you aid me in analyzing different texts, Dr. Moreira, but you helped me develop critical writing skills. I also learned the importance of focusing on my intended audience when producing a piece of writing. You mainly focused on teaching us about what creative nonfiction, short fiction, playwriting, and poetry is about and how to compose them. I really liked the fact that you did not branch into other genres of creative writing because it gave me just enough time to explore these four genres and challenge myself to write in different points of views; the extra time encouraged me to try writing something I had never done before. Another thing that I highly benefited from that helped with my choice of writing style, were the readings

that we did throughout the semester from David Starkey's book, "Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief." The examples and information within this book helped me understand what those four genres consist of and how every person writes differently depending on what emotion they are trying to get out of their audience. I learned how structure, tone, dialogue, and verisimilitude play such an important part when writing a piece. The multiple writing assignments that we did for our portfolio were definitely hard to create because I did not think I had the ability of being so creative or descriptive. I believe that if it wasn't for you letting us do peer revisions and having open conversations within our classroom, I would have had a harder time enjoying writing these pieces and would have not learned about the many ways texts can be interpreted.

It was difficult to keep up with the readings and responses each week, but I surely benefited from all of them. Having to analyze each reading and do a response on what I observed or the theme I picked up from them made me interested and eager to begin writing my own pieces. These readings were perfect examples for people like me, who are new to the creative writing world, and caused me to become an active student in your classroom. You structured your class in a way that always kept me and my classmates busy, Dr. Moreira, and you taught me the importance of challenging my writing abilities, because there is always room for improvement.

The main thing that I had a tough time with in your class is the uneasiness that I got from never knowing what grade I had. I am the type of person who has to know exactly how they are doing and fix my mistakes along the way. After speaking with you during your office hours and talking about your pedagogy, I understood why you chose to not give direct grades to us. Of course there were days that I was frustrated at the fact that I did not know if I was doing well or

extremely bad, but after doing peer reviews and working with your feedback, I saw how much my pieces improved along the way. I eventually recognized that grades are not needed when what you were trying to get us to do was discover where we stood as writers and slowly improve on our critical and creative writing skills, it worked.

The main thing that I have noticed about my writing that I did not appreciate at the beginning of the class, is that I have no trouble elaborating on my characters or settings. I enjoy putting a high focus in detail and tend to give humorous twists to my short stories. I am now aware of how I take into consideration the many senses that people get and express it in my writing and I use figurative language to make a situation funny, vulnerable, or serious in my stories. The reason why I do all of these things when I write though is because of everything that I learned throughout your class. If it wasn't for you having us break apart the meaning and different elements seen within a story, play, or poem, I do not think I would have grown as a writer that much. Your feedback on my assignments really helped as well. At first, I really did not like the fact that you had asked me to delete what I had written instead of having me work on it and perfect it. I felt like my work was not good enough, so I had to start over. It was not until after I actually took your advice in re-writing my fiction piece and my play, that I realized that you were not trying to tell me that my first drafts were bad, but you were trying to get me out of my writing comfort zone. I appreciate the fact that you pushed me to challenge myself because it led me to expand my knowledge of the genres and helped me gain confidence in my writing.

I learned a lot in your English 3351 course this semester, Dr. Moreira, and it is all important information of writing that I will be carrying around with me for my future writing assignments and my personal projects. Your class caused me to gain a new hobby, encouraged

me to continue writing short fiction stories, and influenced me to find new ways to make my writing stronger. There are some things that I noticed I have to work on with my writing, like sticking with present or past tenses and making sure to address the audience effectively, but now that I've acknowledged the problem, I can begin working on it. I am glad I was able to be a part of your class this semester, Dr. Moreira, because I gained so much from it. Even if it was a little frustrating at times, I now see potential in my writing and look forward to use the knowledge I gained from your class in my future writing and education courses.