

Mark Bayer

3/24/2016

IB Language & Literature, Year 1

Written Task 1, Part II: Language & Mass Communication

Rationale:

In completing my written task 1, I strengthened my understanding of Hurricane Katrina, as well as how this national disaster correlated with language and mass communication (part II). In the book *Zeitoun*, you become attached to a character who was greatly affected by Hurricane Katrina and FEMA. I decided I wanted to learn more about the role of FEMA in Hurricane Katrina. The more research I did on this topic, the more evidence came to light on the mistakes FEMA made. I choose to write a speech to point out the negative effects FEMA had upon the victims of Hurricane Katrina, in particular the citizens of New Orleans. My purpose was to create awareness and implement change to the FEMA organization. My speech highlights the irony that a government program, implemented to help people, could do the exact opposite.

The conventions I integrate in my speech correlate with the mood I was trying to convey.. I am the Governor Louisiana, giving a speech exactly one year after the storm hit in New Orleans. The intended audience is the citizens of New Orleans, because they were affected most by the storm and FEMA. This speech would be very emotional to New Orleanians, so in the middle of the speech, I have a break off and the audience shouts out what they're thinking. In my speech, I also have cues where the audience claps and the speaker pauses. This mostly happens right after very uplifting or powerful messages, to give the speech more suspense and strength.

Word count: 254

Written Task 1:

From the office of Governor Mark Bayer

August 29, 2006

Location: New Orleans, Louisiana

Governor Mark Bayer: Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you. Thank you, everybody. Please have a seat. Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you so much for being here today while I talk about some of the tragic moments in our nation's history. Thank you for opening up your time, as well as your minds, and hopefully together we can change our future for the better. (Applause.)

August 29, 2005 will forever be an unforgettable day in American history. It was on this day that a ruthless, iron-fisted, storm struck the gulf coast of the United States, this storm was Hurricane Katrina. In the outcome of this storm my home, our home, this great city of New Orleans, was ripped apart physically and emotionally. I am speaking with you today, one year after this vindictive storm took the lives of 1,836 people. Many people believe that the loss of these lives were unavoidable, and to those people I would like to say that I disagree. (Pause.)

9/11 was unavoidable, Pearl Harbor was unavoidable, that storm hitting our coast was unavoidable, but the 1,836 lost lives was most definitely preventable! (Applause.)

In 1979, President Jimmy Carter implemented a program by the acronym of FEMA(Federal Emergency Management Agency) that provides aid during emergency situations in our nation. The actions of FEMA before and after the storm hit, were no less than shameful. (Applause.)

I would like to speak to you today about the cold hard truth, the failed relief efforts made by the FEMA organization. Hopefully in the future, FEMA can learn and implement change to their program so as travesty does not have such a devastating an outcome as Hurricane Katrina. (Pause.)

When tragedies strike in our country both private and public organizations send relief efforts to aid the victims, in Katrina this was not the case. Before the storm hit our nation's coast, FEMA made claims to the press that they had relief programs in place and they were more than ready to aid the people inflicted with the storm. Sadly, these claims were untrue. (Pause.)

Audience: They're crooks!

Audience: Murderers!

Governor Mark Bayer: Not only did FEMA fail to provide relief efforts for over three weeks, but they declined to accept help from many private organizations. When the storm hit the American Red Cross was ready with food, safe housing, and rescue relief, but FEMA informed the Red Cross to not engage in any relief aid. Privately owned companies such as Walmart, offered large quantities of supplies to both private and public aid, but FEMA informed Walmart not to engage in any relief aid. (Pause.)

When relief efforts should have been rushing into Katrina at full speed, FEMA was at a stand still, not allowing any other organization to help. FEMA's lack of relief and manipulation of private organizations is the reason why so many of you lost your loved ones. It is tremendously hard for me to look a survivor in their eyes, and tell them the reason that their loved ones are gone is because a government implemented program, did not fulfill their duties. (Pause.)

I would like to tell a story about my dear friend Debra Reed. Like many of you listening Debra is just one of the many Americans affected by FEMA's relief efforts. When the storm hit Debra lost her home, she lost contact with her family, and she was living under a bridge with uncertainty of how she was going to get her next meal. (Pause.)

Previous to the storm FEMA had purchased large quantities of supplies to aid victims such as Debra, she as well as many other victims, never saw such supplies. FEMA kept these mass amounts of supplies in storage for over two years after the storm struck. Still, after all that time, they ended up giving away or selling the supplies to other government organizations.

Bless Debra's soul, for she had to fight every day to stay alive after the storm. She deserved to be able to find safe housing, food, and fresh water, but FEMA failed to provide the proper care that Debra so desperately needed. (Pause.)

It is a very sad conclusion to come to that because of our own government's actions, many Americans lost their lives. We cannot change the errors in our past, but we can learn to never repeat them again. I give this speech today to bring awareness, to bring change, and to make sure that our government is held responsible for their actions. Government funded programs, such as FEMA, should never be able to play 'big brother' over innocent Americans. (Applause.)

I stand for New Orleans. I stand for new regulation. I stand for change. Federal programs must be held responsible for their actions on a state level. We will work with congress, private and public programs, as well as state officials to ensure there is strong communication and bond between the state and federal government. With your support, we can ensure that such a devastating mishap never slips thru the grasps of FEMA again. (Applause.)

It is inevitable that a natural disaster will affect the United States again, but how we respond to that disaster can be safely preventable. It is one year today from when Katrina hit, and still everything is not fixed, and the memories from the storm will never be fixed. There is still a long road ahead until the damages are repaired, and there is still a long road ahead until the victims find closure. August 29th, 2005 will forever be an unforgettably melancholy day in our nation's history, but from this sadness we can still turn it into something beautiful. You the people of Mississippi, and of the United States of America, can make a change. (Applause.)

God bless you Debra. (Applause.) God bless the great people of New Orleans.
(Applause.) God bless America. (Applause.)

Word count: 993

Works Cited:

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