

Critical Reflection

Students both have strengths and weaknesses. It is important for us to build upon our strengths to become better, however it is also beneficial to understand our weaknesses and reflect on how we can begin turning those into strengths.

My strength as a student is that I can be very passionate. When I gain interest in a subject, I tend to spend all of my energy on my interest, which can be distracting on the task I have at hand. However, on the pieces and projects I do become interested in, I can write, explain and draw from whatever medium I am obliged to follow, and execute it with my full confidence. I also find that in one-on-one situations, I can be very personable. My friends say I have a mothering heart, so it is very easy for me to make the other person comfortable through cracking jokes and relating myself to them as much as possible.

I, as both a writer and a tutor, have several weaknesses. As a writer and a reader, I tend to overthink passages and attempt to explain them in complicated ways that only really make sense in my head. This could hurt me, in a way, as a tutor because I may see a problem that would not necessarily be a big deal to someone else, especially the professor, and could cause complication and confusion to the student. As a student myself, I find that I am starting to lack confidence in my work and somewhat be “bogged down” by my classes. It is getting difficult for me to concentrate on school and what I need to do to succeed. I do not take the time and energy to create pieces according to my own standards, which causes me to stress even more. I tend to dream really big, and when I am not going out and pursuing it, I tend to become careless about what I need to be focusing on in the moment. When I write, I tend to purge my ideas on paper, which I always found to be a weakness, however in Brooke Baker’s article *Safe houses and Contact Zones: Reconsidering the Basic Writing Tutorial*, she said “unsophisticated writing does not equal unsophisticated thought.” (Fitzgerald, 278) This quote stuck with me because I can relate to this idea substantially. I would like to work on writing everything down that I have in my head, and organizing them in a way that would be productive to the reader.

I also tend to become afraid in classroom settings and have a hard time speaking aloud. My whole life has been controlled by my fear of judgement from my peers and

teachers/professors, so instead I remain silent. I am trying my hardest to come out of my shell, however it is still a very new and uncomfortable thing for me.

In general, I would like to become better at ‘does’ statements, along with analytical writing. I think that does statements have the ability to bring a better understanding and coherence to pieces, making them a bit more organized. I want to look at a piece that I wrote, and explain to the reader exactly why I included certain parts and what it does for my argument. I am also a creative writer, so analytical writing is a lot harder for me than others. I get bored, and again, feel ‘bogged down’, dreading pieces of writing that require support. In my abstract, I stated that “being faced with a daring task, such as a research paper, is daunting for writers who focus on creative pieces.” This is very true for me, so a goal that I have for myself is to indulge that creative side of myself and execute it in my analytical writing. I would like to work on driving myself to write a short creative piece about my topic, and then pursue the research piece with a more comfortable mindset.

I would also love to learn different formats of writing. Formatting has always been very interesting to me because in my eyes, the format can control the mood of the piece. I write my creative pieces in differing formats depending on the mood. A new format I have been trying is a strange way of writing poetry in novel form. I would love to learn more about some of the typical formats and why authors choose those for their pieces.

In this class, I am somewhat struggling, not with the content, but simply because I am struggling with everything else this semester. I am confused by assignments and what they exactly entail- this is due to me not feeling exactly comfortable speaking aloud in class. I enjoy learning about the different concepts of tutoring, however I am a little bit reserved with my work because I am simply worried that it is not good enough- mostly because of my confusion with the assignments. I would like to get better at communication, which will hopefully make me more confident in my writing, which will, as a whole, make me not only a better student, but hopefully a successful tutor.