

WIIFM?



[Courtney Cook](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Most of my students in my communications courses are there because they have to be, not because they are drawn to writing. One of my first low stakes assignments is a simple reflection. This task is meant to encourage them to enjoy writing and worry less about formal conventions. I still expect proper grammar, punctuation, content, level of detail, and adherence to APA guidelines, but there is more freedom to write what they know, opposed to a research-focused approach. Here is what is in it for them:

- Experience the power and usefulness of reflection and how it can impact your day-to-day decisions and career results.
- Skill of reflection -- how to practice it and apply it to one's life.
- Opportunity to write without as many boundaries that are typically imposed in academic writing.
- Practice using the APA guide through the library website that will help train them for other assignments requiring such conventions.
- Low risk opportunity to connect with learning supports, such as the Writing Centre, the Language Help Centre, and better understand what and where help is available.
- The ability to include their creativity -- their personal voice -- which will count for grades.
- Low risk, but also low-stress -- students have high anxiety levels that tend to peak during major assignments and tests -- this exercise not only prepares them with an employability skill of critical thinking, but does so in a semi-relaxed manner.