

So far, this is how I've been approaching these journals; first, I step away from them for a certain amount of time, to gather my thoughts. I may spend it talking to friends and telling them about the assignment, or watching videos or movies, or playing games. Next, I unleash absolutely everything that I thought about during that time. I worry about meeting the word limit when I'm polishing it up. I may or may not stop to do other things and continue thinking about what to write. The cycle continues (see what I'm getting at?).

At any point, I may also stim to help me occupy myself and keep me from getting bored or antsy. This includes making bracelets, drawing, or otherwise doing something with my hands. Chewing gum or drinking something non-alcoholic may help too, but not nearly as much. Sometimes music will help, but other times it'll distract and/or overwhelm me, so I'll try to have either complete or relative silence. Out of all of these, the most helpful is holding onto a stuffed animal. I have a Vaporeon plushie named Splish that I either hold or have on my desk. They help me ground myself when I get anxious.

If I'm given too many instructions - or, conversely, too few - I won't know what to do and I'll get stressed out. There needs to be a level of balance between the two. Far too many times, especially in school, at least one of these things have happened. It applies to everything, not just English. Too many instructions and I feel like I'm trapped and can't do the assignment the way I intended. Too few instructions and I won't know where to start. I need at least some level of direction, otherwise I'll get lost along the way.

Earlier on with my English classes, I struggled a lot because I don't think I was very good at writing. That and I wasn't given much room to breathe. There weren't many, if any at all, accommodations for kids in SPed, so I was pretty much expected to do the exact same as the general ed students. It didn't work very well. Now I get nervous when I see the word "essay"; you're always supposed to write the exact same way, with the exact same format, about the exact same thing as everyone else. It's stifling.

Now...I have absolutely no idea how writing structures our thinking. In fact, it's the opposite for me; my writing reflects, and is structured by the way I think. If my writing looks messy, chances are my thoughts are also a mess. I've been told that my writing seems like a stream of consciousness. As I said earlier, my first goal is to get my thoughts out on paper, and worry about refining it later. This may also be why I have trouble writing fiction; I tend to write in a very matter-of-fact sort of way, e.g. "This is what's happening," "This is what this looks like," and "This is how it works."