

Self-Assessment Essay

Before *Writing for the Sciences*, I saw writing as a tool to write and cohesively synthesize several sources into one paper, while also making that information accessible to the general public by making scientific terms easy to understand. What stood out this semester was my exposure to writing and being constantly critiqued, while also working with other group members leading to a change in how I viewed writing.

Our literature review on “Determinants of Obesity” as well as our children’s book encapsulates my objectives the best. Learning objective one and four address my major weaknesses by encouraging me to rely and communicate more with my groupmates in creating our literature review. In our original draft, the literature review was almost completely different and focused on how a lack of quality food sources affected obesity. Our group did not have an outline, resulting in incohesive writing sections, revealing cracks of miscommunication within our group. At one point we would be discussing ethnicity as it relates to quality food resources, and then jump suddenly to a different topic. As a group, for a revamped literature review, we decided that we needed to create an outline to improve our cohesiveness and allow for better flow of communication, touching upon learning objective two for the drafting and revising of our work with how we overhauled our topic into determinants of obesity. Creating an outline for cohesiveness and communication allowed for a stronger finish to our literature review, showing determinants of obesity from multiple different perspectives while also allowing us to incorporate different research and sources. We explored sources exploring socioeconomic factors on income level, level of education, and ethnicity and how it related to obesity, while paraphrasing and synthesizing these sources into one cohesive paper touching upon objectives seven and eight.

Our children's book on determinants of obesity challenged our ability to write for an appropriate audience in learning objective three. The first draft of our children's book involved did not make sense for the audience intended, with complicated terms and long-winded dialogues that most likely would leave kids confused. We simplified our dialogue to simple phrases like, "This has been so much fun. I'm glad I decided to lose weight by training and eating well." A combination of simple dialogue and illustrations were more likely to grab the attention of our audience, an element of objective five with an intent to engage in multimodal composing. This related to my goal of simplifying science for the average layman to understand—and we were able to make kids understand our writing!

I felt that taking a strong stance in my writing and asserting my position was one of my best qualities, touching on learning objective six. This can be seen in my "Ali Speaks" rhetorical analysis, establishing Muhammad Ali as a defiant speaker who fought against racism in the United States. His words reveal a sense of indignancy at racism, "Tarzan, the king of the jungle and black Africa, he's white..." Locating strongly worded phrases like these are key to creating a strong stance. Other elements like his support for prayer and perseverance, as well as call to his people as their leader to fight against racism as an appeal to ethos also become instrumental in taking a strong stance. His words such as, "I AM THE GREATEST" are straight to the point; by locating main ideas like this, it becomes possible to take a strong stance and be assertive in the message of my writing.

These objectives have shown me that writing is a matter of a collaborated process by sharing your pieces amongst a network of like-minded students and a secondary, yet important act of criticism by giving and receiving it. Though I had highly prioritized the strengthening my ability to synthesize sources, strengthening my role as a group member and simplifying how I

write about science became a major role in my ability as a writer and overall changing my view of what writing means to me.