In my journey as a writer this class has changed the way I think about almost everything. It has taught me a lot about how to learn about the genre we are focusing on, and how to discuss as a class, ways to write in the genre.

The first writing I did with these new strategies was out profiles. Going into it I was very concerned with the lack of construction created by a lack of guidelines. We were only given examples of profiles to use as reference which I had never done before. We also learned about discourse community which greatly helped in my understanding of a reason for writing a profile. A discourse community, as described by John Swales is a group of people with similar interests and share ideas about the interests. People do not need to know they are a part of the community to be in one. Understanding this gave me an idea to write to the people in the discourse community of students in math classes. I have always been taught about writing to an audience, but I have always ignored this because I did not see the purpose of it. Now after writing the profile with an audience in mind, I feel like the writing has more meaning and a reason for others to read. I am very proud of this writing and think it is the most meaningful piece I have ever written.

The next piece I had a role in making was our groups photo caption. I have had very little experience writing in a group of people, so I found this challenging. It was not challenging in a way that it was a lot of hard work, but that it was hard to bring everyone's vision together. Like in the profile, we were only given examples of the genre to understand how to write using the genre. I have never enjoyed working in groups with projects and this one was no different for me. As we went through writing and revising, I had a hard time seeing our piece as purposeful and meaningful. There was very little text and it seemed like we did not a lot of work. A lot of my ideas on it began to change as we read different articles. My idea of the genre was very different from everyone else's but after reading *Genre in the Wild* by Lisa Bickmore, I finally realized that genre is not a set structure that needs to strictly be followed. In the article she writes this,

"Genre is a word we use when we want to classify things, to note the similarities and differences between kinds of writing. But we don't identify genres solely by their formal markers. For instance, memoranda use a specific sort of header, and lab reports typically have commonly used section headings. But it's not the header that makes a memorandum a genre (or subgenre); it's not the section headings that make a lab report a genre (or subgenre). In other words, the formal features or markers don't define the genre, although they are often helpful signals. Rather, it's a situation in which the memorandum or the lab report typically recurs, and it's also the fact that such situations seem to call repeatedly for a kind of writing that answers the needs of that situation. We begin to classify a kind of writing as a genre when it recurs frequently enough and seems to perform the same functions in recurring situations".

I know this is a very long segment, but it completely changed my whole understanding of genre. I have always been used to genre in music and how you always found the same types of chord progressions and stylistic choices. I used this understanding of genre everywhere else. If something did not fit a genre in my mind, it was wrong. I really disliked our photo caption in the beginning, I thought it was wrong. After reading Lisa's article, I realized that it was not wrong and that I just needed to realize that everyone's understanding of genre could be very different.

The next major writing I did was the midterm reflection. This was a very different type of assignment for me as I had never done a large reflection on anything before. My only real experience on this was what

we had done in our Green books. In the books we had done short reflections of the other works such as our profiles and photo captions. My reflections made in the Green book were not well written. An example is when I wrote a reflection on my profile. The opening line to that entry was, "I wrote an article with information I gathered from an interview". The rest was just like this. It was just a step by step guide on what I did to get to the final piece with no real information about what I was learning, feeling, or experiencing. There was no audience or goal of this piece. That was also similar to how my midterm reflection was. I simply answered the questions given to us and nothing more. In my rough draft there was no order to anything I wrote, just a long jumble of answers. Then, we shared our drafts with our groupmates which taught me a lot about writing reflections. I read AJ's draft which made me understand that a reflection is much more then the steps I took and answering questions given to me. His draft showed organization and emotions. This really inspired me in this reflection to make it more about me and how I grew from the experience than just the experience alone.

One type of writing we did throughout the whole semester was journaling in out Green books. I have never been into journaling, so it was not easy for me to create nice entries. I have a hard time writing when I am not motivated so my works were lackluster in my opinion. I do not think that I grew a lot in my journaling because of my mood towards writing with little purpose. My answers to the questions given to us were short and we did not really receive any feedback on them. When we were given more open topics, I really struggled to just keep writing for the given amount of time. I think that journaling was and still is one of my weakest areas of writing.

The switch to online work was very challenging for me. I did not originally think it would, but because of other events added on top of the switch made it challenging. My workload for some of my classes greatly increased and on top of that I had a hard time keeping a regular schedule of working. I started to do worse in all of my classes, and I have missed more assignments and deadlines this semester then ever before. I would say that since the switch, I have learned less and had to work more. I did not focus any of my time to reading or writing, so I did not really develop in anything related to this class. The only thing I really gained was the ability to apply my new understanding of reflections in this work.

My understanding of discourse community come from this class. I did not know anything about discourse community before this course. I learned from the CCCC's poster that discourse community is a group of people that share the same interests such as fans for a sports team or classmates working to learn a subject. Similarly, most of my understanding of genre came from this class. I mentioned that my whole idea of genre was redefined by that article. My understanding completely shifted from a structured definition of what a genre was, to a more general idea that genre is what people agree it is and that it can always change.

This class has tremendously changed the way I will write anything. I t helped me to really understand that there is more to writing then what I am asked to do. I will be able to take my new learned knowledge of writing and apply the idea of writing to a community and how to determine what genre best fits my work.

Citations:

Bickmore, Lisa. "GENRE in the WILD: Understanding Genre Within Rhetorical (Eco)Systems."
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