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### A Look Back on Writing

Both of my papers have a theme of human impact on the environment. I chose them because they represent something I am concerned about. I specifically chose the rhetorical essay because it was the hardest for me to write. I had never written one before, and it seemed to be the strongest out of the three papers I wrote in the class. I chose to do my final project on the International Peace Gardens because of my own experience there, and I thought it would be interesting, unique, and moving. Perhaps if I actually submit my letter to the editor, it may have a small impact on people and the Gardens will eventually see a change.

I think this semester was very beneficial to me as a writer. It cleared up previous misconceptions I had in my former English class. I now think I have a better understanding of MLA formatting and how to keep my writing interesting. I broke away from the traditional 5 paragraph essay emphasized in high school, and have written stronger papers that are greater in length. This semester, I focused less about getting the required length and more about the content of my paper. I was asked to write different types of essays, instead of the usual literary analysis. I think the ability to choose my own topics allowed me to have more interest in writing as well as made my papers stronger.

During this semester, I was required to try many different types of prewriting. I admit I was surprised to learn there was more than just one way of prewriting. All through grade

school I had to draw pro and con charts and maps. Now in college, I've learned to create result and cause charts, and use the 10 minute non-stop writing technique to add something new to the traditional writing assignments. I've learned writing is a necessary tool to convey my ideas. I think knowing that now will help me in future classes and perhaps spare me some anxiety.

I figured out a writing pattern that works for me. I first begin by prewriting in a way that changes depending on the type of essay that I am to write. I then choose and narrow the topic, so my essay will be focused. Next comes the most time consuming part, the research. After I have highlighted all the information I think would reinforce my paper, I begin trying to make my title interesting, while giving a small glimpse into the topic of my paper. From there I write the paper with my pre-write close by to guide me so I stay on topic and keep the ideas of purpose, audience, and focus in mind. Before I took this class, I would begin writing my essays the night before they were due. This no longer works for me; it causes too much stress and the quality of the paper suffers tremendously.

The purpose of my final project was to convince readers that the Gardens should be fixed, maintained, and improved, with the idea that their value is greater than the time and money they require. The audience of the project is the local community, as well as anyone that cares about the importance of understanding other cultures. The revisions in my argumentative paper were to clarify and increase flow. Things that did not help my argument or make sense were removed. Choosing what went into my genre translation was difficult. There was a maximum amount of words that I could have, so I chose strong pieces that supported my argument. When I decided on those pieces, I deleted unnecessary words, condensed parts to meet the required word count, and adjusted the format.