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The Idea of an Essay: Reflecting on Rockwell, Contending for Cursive, and 22 Other Compositions

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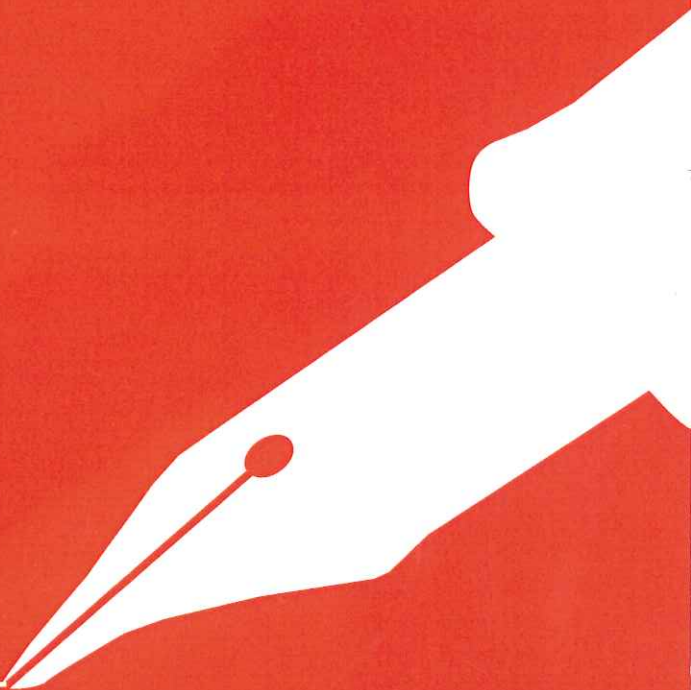
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THE IDEA OF AN ESSAY

REFLECTING ON ROCKWELL, CONTENDING FOR CURSIVE,
AND 22 OTHER COMPOSITIONS

CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, LITERATURE,
AND MODERN LANGUAGES



The Idea of an Essay

Reflecting on Rockwell, Contending on Cursive, and 22
Other Compositions

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Cedarville, Ohio 45314
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Dear Readers,

Welcome to Cedarville University. We are excited to have you in our composition classes. This anthology is meant to serve as a learning tool, and we will use it together over the course of this semester as we engage in the process of writing.

Cedarville University values writing. Regardless of your major, writing will be an intrinsic part of your education during your years at Cedarville, as it is a primary means of expressing clear, organized, critical thought. Perhaps more importantly, the writing you will do as part of your academic life will serve as practice for the various writing tasks each of you will complete as part of your chosen professions, as well as preparation for the writing you will do in your various communities, interpersonal relationships, and your daily devotions with God.

Cedarville University commits to preparing each of you to be successful writers by requiring a first-year composition course taught by a member of the English, Literature, and Modern Languages Department. As composition instructors, we recognize the excellent writing created in our classes, so we host an annual composition contest for students who completed the course during that year. The anthology you are about to read consists of the winners of that contest for the 2012-2013 academic year.

In the following pages, you will find models of university level writing, as well as examples of how to structure, organize, support, and document various genres of essays written for different purposes and with specific audiences in mind. We do not suggest these essays are perfect, as one of the most exciting aspects of writing is that it is a process that includes revision, so a text can always be improved upon or recreated as something different.

Each essay begins with an instructor's note that provides context for the essay and asks questions to prompt further ideas. The instructor's note is followed by a short biography of the student who wrote the essay to hopefully illustrate that, although these students are now published authors, they are not much different from you, the reader. You should find this encouraging. If these students can write successfully at the university level, then so can you.

Sincerely,

The Cedarville Composition Instructors

Cedarville University's Department of English, Literature, and Modern Languages

Hello from Cedarville University. Thank you for your interest in the Department of English, Literature, and Modern Languages. Our programs produce men and women who communicate effectively and think deeply, cross-culturally, and creatively about the ideas that have shaped and continue to shape our world.

Our mission is to challenge students to go beyond expectations. Henry David Thoreau once wrote that we hit only what we aim at and thus ought to aim at something high. We agree — aim high. Who will write the definitive scholarly treatment of Don DeLillo's work? Who will share Christ by teaching English to migrant workers in west Michigan? Where is this generation's C.S. Lewis or Flannery O'Connor? At Cedarville University, we want our students to aspire to such heights.

Meet Our Composition Instructors

Greg Belliveau

Assistant Professor of English



Biography

Greg Belliveau is a 2008 Christopher Isherwood Recipient. Brady Udall (New York Times Bestselling author of *The Lonely Polygamist*) has called his work "funny, sad and exuberant; I believe he has the potential to be a major figure in the literary scene." Belliveau is a 2002 Christy

Award Finalist for Best First Novel *Go Down To Silence* (Multnomah: A Division of Random House, 2001) and has written non-fiction: *Say to This Mountain: The life of James T. Jeremiah* (RBP, 1999). He is currently the Senior Fiction Editor for the literary journal *Silk Road*. He has an MFA from Pacific University, Oregon, where he worked with Brady Udall, Mike Magnuson, Kellie Wells, and Ben Percy.

Education and Credentials

- M.F.A. in Fiction from Pacific University
- M.A. in English from Kent State University
- B.A. in English from Kent State University

Interests

- Creative Writing: Fiction, Non-Fiction
- Screen Writing
- All things publishing
- Romanticism
- Shakespeare
- Contemporary Fiction
- The Contemporary Art Scene

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Daniel Clark
Associate Professor of English



Biography

Professor Clark teaches courses in composition, advanced grammar, contemporary world literature, film, and the graphic novel. Along with Dr. Andrew Wiseman, Professor Clark developed Cedarville's foreign film series. He also serves as co-sponsor of Alpha Kappa Delta, Cedarville's chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society. Before coming to Cedarville, he taught at the University of Maryland Asian Division in Okinawa, Japan. He also taught English as a Second Language (ESL) at the Okinawa Prefectural Language Center. Professor Clark has been at Cedarville since 1999.

Education and Credentials

- M.A. in English, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
- B.A. in Secondary Education (with proficiencies in English and Bible), Tennessee Temple University

Interests

- Theology
- Film and contemporary world literature
- Japanese culture
- Comics, comix, graphic novels, manga, and bandes dessinées

- The Atlanta Braves (chop on!)

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Melissa Faulkner

Associate Professor of English



Biography

Dr. Faulkner teaches Basic English, Composition, and Visual Rhetoric. She also serves as the coordinator for Writing Across the Curriculum. Her research interests include memoirs as retention and critical thinking tools, story analysis, and the organic connection between WAC programs and assessment. Dr. Faulkner has received multiple Excellence in Teaching awards, including one from the Southern Ohio Council of Higher Education.

Education and Credentials

- Ph.D., Miami University of Ohio
- M.A., Wright State University
- B.A., Wright State University

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Heather Hill

Assistant Professor of English



Biography

Dr. Hill taught at the University of Washington for four years before coming to Cedarville. Her research interests include composition theory and pedagogy, rhetorical genre studies, contemporary rhetorical theory, history of rhetoric, knowledge transfer, critical discourse analysis, language and identity, language ideology, the rhetoric of sports culture, qualitative research methods, student-athlete advocacy, indigenous language revitalization, and sociolinguistics.

Education and Credentials

- Ph.D. in English (rhetoric and composition), University of Washington
- M.A. in English (rhetoric and composition), University of Washington

- B.A. in English Literature, Western Washington University

Interests

- Riding horses
- Long distance running
- Seattle Mariners baseball
- UW Husky football and basketball

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Isaac Mayeux

Assistant Professor of English



Biography

Isaac Mayeux has taught Composition at Cedarville since 2012. He also serves as the university's Director of Debate, Assistant Director of the Writing Center, and co-sponsor of Alpha Kappa Delta, Cedarville's chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society. Before coming to Cedarville, he taught Composition at the

University of Dayton while studying for his M.A. He also taught English as a Second Language (ESL) in Seoul, South Korea for one year.

Education and Credentials

- M.A. in English and American Literature, University of Dayton
- B.A. in English, Cedarville University

Interests

- Graphic narrative (AKA comics)
- Animation
- Sport coats
- Christian poetics
- Complicated strategy board games
- Cultural criticism

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Cyndi Messer *Associate Professor of English*



Biography

Professor Messer taught several years in secondary education before joining the faculty at Cedarville in 1998. She teaches general composition and literature courses as

well as methods courses for future English teachers. She currently serves as the program coordinator for the Adolescent and Young Adult Language Arts (AYALA) majors and is a key contact for questions concerning the English education program. She also serves as faculty advisor for *The Miracle*, Cedarville's yearbook.

Education and Credentials

- M.A. in English, Wright State University
- B.A. in English Education, Cedarville College

Interests

- Favorite Places Visited: Paris, Puerto Vallarta, and San Francisco
- Hobbies: playing board games with family, exercising, reading, playing piano, gathering family and friends around a bonfire
- Favorite Authors: C.S. Lewis, Amy Tan, Thomas Hardy, John Steinbeck, Marilynne Robinson, Erik Lawson, Shakespeare

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Julie Moore
Associate Professor of Literature



Biography

Professor Moore directs the University's Writing Center, and in 2008, she received the Dean's Service Award for her work. She is also the author of the poetry books, *Slipping Out of Bloom* and *Election Day*. Professor Moore has been nominated for the Best of the Net anthology and twice for the Pushcart Prize; she has also received the Editor's Choice Award from Writecorner Press, the Rosine Offen Memorial Award from the Free Lunch Arts Alliance, and the Janet B. McCabe Poetry Prize from Ruminare. You can learn more about her work at www.juliemoore.com.

Education and Credentials

- The Ohio Writing Project, Miami University
- M.A., University of Dayton
- B.A., Cedarville University

Interests

- Broadcasting poems on "Conrad's Corner" on WYSO, 91.3 FM
- Watching foreign films and movies based on literary works
- Cheering for the Philadelphia Phillies and Eagles

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Nellie Sullivan

Assistant Professor of English



Biography

Helena “Nellie” Sullivan’s poems, reviews, and translations have appeared in *eXchanges*, *Moist Towelette*, *Hover Project*, *Drunken Boat*, and *Shampoo*. At Cedarville, she teaches Poetry Workshop, Advanced Poetry Workshop, Contemporary Poetry, Introduction to Literature, and Freshman Composition. She has been at Cedarville since 2006.

Education and Credentials

- M.F.A. in Creative Writing with emphasis in poetry, University of Iowa
- B.S. in Cultural Anthropology and English Literature, Central Michigan University

Interests

- Travel/Road trips

- Canning food
- Film
- Lateral logic puzzles
- Illuminated manuscripts

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Michelle Wood

Associate Professor of English



Biography

Professor Wood has been at Cedarville since 1995. Before coming to Cedarville, she taught English in the United States and in Beijing, China. She has presented papers at national conferences, including the Conference on College Composition and Communication, the National Council of Teachers of English, the College English Association, and the Society for the Study of American Women Writers, speaking on topics such as Multigenre writing and American women writers. Her research focuses primarily on 19th century American women writers. Professor Wood is a member of the College English Association and the Society for the Study of American Women Writers.

Education and Credentials

- Ph.D. (ABD) in Literature and Criticism, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

- M.A. in Composition and Rhetoric, Wright State University
- B.A. in English Education and Speech Education, Cedarville College

Interests

- Travel
- Recreational biking
- Reading
- College football

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Narratives/Memoirs

“Door Slammed Finger,” by Deborah Obielodan

Instructor’s Note

In a Literacy Memoir, the writer must accomplish multiple rhetorical goals at once. The writer must create a dramatic scene in which characters move, speak, and interact. At the same time, the writer must analyze from present perspective how a literacy event has taught her something about herself or about others. Literacy Memoir writers tell a story about one specific “literacy moment” along their literacy journey and evaluate how that literacy experience has been significant in their lives. Literacy Memoir writers are also conscious of the fact that even though they are writing about their own lives, they are writing for an audience. In “Door Slammed Finger,” Deborah Obielodan depicts the courage that helped her navigate new cultural literacies after she moved from Nigeria to the United States when she was a young child. How does Deborah create a scene that allows the reader to see and hear what she experienced when she was small? Explain how Deborah conveys the emotions she felt at this time. What does this essay suggest about the relationship between cultural narratives and education? What might be significant for a reader in this essay?

Writer’s Biography

Deborah Obielodan is a freshman Business major. She is originally from Nigeria and has been living the United States for the past ten years. She enjoys reading and listening to music.

Door Slammed Finger

My fourth grade class gathered in front of the huge auditorium steps to take a picture. The girls giggled in their old fashion dresses and Amish looking hats while the boys looked stiff in their trousers and suspenders. We were headed to a colonial school. After teaching about the colonial times, our teacher, Mrs. K, decided to expose us to colonial schooling for a whole day.

We all loaded into the yellow school bus for the hour drive to our destination. The bus swerved and rocked.

And we all rocked with it as we went down the narrow road to the one room school house. The white washed school building stood alone in the middle of flat moist ground covered with grass. Tall evergreen trees overshadowed the building. And birds chirped overhead as the wind dispersed the fragrance of the spring flowers surrounding the trees.

The bus halts to a stop and my classmates and I hopped down from it. We paraded towards the steps up to the building with caution, pretending to be well trained colonial students. I slipped through the lone door located at the back of the building, careful not to slam the door behind me. The first thing that I saw was a huge black wood stove. The stove must have been inactive because the room was damp with the smell of old pine wood, probably from the rows of pews surrounding the stove. Our guide and teacher for the day, Mrs. Smith, positioned herself on the stage at the front of the room. The middle age woman, who looked like she has lived in the colonial time all her life, told us all about the life of a colonial student.

Each student had taken a seat before her and waited turns to correctly spell whatever word she dictated. Apparently the colonial students take part in this sort of spelling bee on weekly bases. "What torture," I thought. A spelling bee once a year was enough humiliation for me.

"Next," Mrs. Smith said with a stone face and I stepped up in front of her.

"She just got here from Africa," said Mrs. K, standing across the room right behind the seated children.

"What does she know how to spell?" our colonial teacher asked Mrs. K. Mrs. Smith's haughty posture, or maybe just these words that came out of her mouth, makes me cringe every time I see a colonial looking school building.

"Try something simple," Mrs. K replied.

My heart skipped a beat as I realized what was going on. Mrs. Smith had to give me a simpler word than all my other classmates because I could not spell at their level. I felt the hot shame rush to my face. I stood as if I had just slammed my finger in the door. Slam. I remained still and calculated my emotions. Should I become angry, cry, or fake a smile? Of course I never thought of myself

as having a disadvantage. I was repulsed by the thought of Mrs. Smith graciously giving me a first grade level word while my classmates received fourth grade level words. Mrs. Smith dictated a word and I spelled the word. A fake smile on my face, I stepped away from the stage. And as I sank down into my seat my pride also sank.

I knew I should not hold a grudge. Mrs. K's and Mrs. Smith's decision to give me a simple word made sense. After all I was still adjusting to the new way of learning in America. I had just moved from Nigeria a few months earlier. I started at a new school in a new country two weeks after I had left my country. I knew the two women were just being logical, I just wished they had not made the decision before the whole class, or worse, in front of me.

I refused to admit that I could not spell the same words my classmates could spell. I rejected the thought that my American classmates were smarter than I was. Back home I was considered one of the smart students. So I convinced myself that the women were mistaken. They noticed my accent and automatically thought I could not spell. But I knew deep inside that my spelling ability did not meet my new school's fourth grade requirement. I would have to try harder than my fellow classmates to keep up.

Back in our modern classroom, Mrs. K sat on her stool behind her preacher's podium. Facing the students she asked, "Who was the president who helped freed the slaves?"

This time the door slammed harder on my finger. Slam. And I felt anger. I had heard about the slaves. They were related to my ancestors. The white people took them to their land and made them slaves. That's all I knew. And I was angry. I was embarrassed. Why has no one told me more? Why would I have to learn about the history of my ancestors' friends and relatives from a foreign land?

"Abraham Lincoln helped freed the slaves," declared the know-it-all of our class.

Abraham who? Lincoln—more than a type of car—who would have thought? Mrs. K later assigned us to memorize the whole list of the United States presidents. Of

course I was given only the first twenty presidents to memorize. I recited my twenty over and over until I knew them by heart.

I knew just what to do. I was going to prevent further embarrassment like this to insult my intelligence. I needed to prove myself. I needed to prove that I did not need an advantage. So I devoted myself to studying.

I worked on my weekly vocabulary list more than any other fourth grader I knew. I went home, took down the encyclopedia from the shelf, caressed its cold red cover, and digested any baffling subject I encountered at school. The encyclopedia taught me the difference between the penny, dime, and quarter. I went to the library to study the map of the United States and the rest of the world. I checked out all the American Girl Series Books I could lay my hands on. Through them I learned the history of this new nation I was now a part of. I was exposed to the life of these girls who, like me, lived in a changing world. I read about the native Indian American girl and about the pioneer girl who left her home country to live in America. I lived the life of the girl who endured slavery and the one who lived a rich life in a grand house. My heart broke for the girl who cried during World War II and for the one who survived the Great Depression. I realized how much amusement I received from discovering new information and a new culture.

All my hard work did prove me. I ended fourth grade with an AB average. But as soon as I thought I was academically stable the door slammed my finger again. The sound of the phone vibrated the whole house. I did not flinch on the sofa as I sipped my ice cold strawberry popsicle. I wondered who was calling on such a humid summer day. My question was quickly answered.

“That was your school,” my parents informed me. “They think it best if you enroll in the special education English class.”

I dreaded being known as the kid who went to the “stupid” English class. Another hit to my pride. I could feel the hot tears coming, fighting for a chance to run down my face, but I forced them down.

And again I took this as a chance to prove myself. From the beginning of fifth grade, I took advantage of my special English class. I tried my best to understand everything, devoted myself to reading, and by this time I could communicate fairly well without my accent getting in the way. I was delighted when my hard work resulted in straight A's that year. I had proven to myself that I did not need an advantage. I had lost my pride but now gained confidence and a love for gaining knowledge.

In fourth grade I thought I was alone in my endeavors to succeed in school. I soon realized that many children are struggling like I did. I now tutor English, of all things, to students at an elementary school. These children are experiencing the same issues I had. Their pride wounded as their fingers slammed into the door. My experience has prepared me to help them not only academically but emotionally. I instill in these children the fact that they do not need an advantage in life if they can change their own circumstances. And every time the door slams on their fingers—after their anger has left, after they have cried or faked a smile—they are motivated to improve their circumstance.

“Oh Boy!” by Kristen Laaman

Instructor’s Note

In her literacy narrative, Kristen Laaman successfully uses detail, dialogue, and description to tell a story about her road to becoming a literate person. Her journey through time ends in the present day, helping to tease out the significance of her story. It can often be difficult to convey critical thinking through story telling. If you were peer reviewing this essay, what advice might you give Kristin to increase the evidence of critical thinking in her story?

Writer’s Biography

Kristen Laaman is a freshman Molecular and Cellular Biology major hoping to go into medical missions. She is from New Hampshire and loves running for Cedarville’s cross-country and track programs, as well as being barefoot and spending time with her family.

Oh Boy!

We don’t have TV in my house. I watched *Arthur* or *Blue’s Clues* on occasion if we got a video from the library, but reading has always been my family’s pastime. To be entertained, you also had to work—you had to read.

If you were to visit us on a weekday morning when I was little, you would find most of us in the room that my family has branded “the school room.” My older brother and sister and I spent a lot of time in this room learning. It has white walls. Most of the rooms in our house have white walls because my mom, though an artist, never spent time with interior design while we were growing up—she was too busy teaching us or drawing paper dolls for me to make dresses for. When I was little, the top of the walls around the room were covered with sheets of paper. On each sheet was a letter of the alphabet and a picture. The picture for E was an egg, but my mom turned it into an Eskimo face.

“The e you say in the word Eskimo is more typical of an e sound than the one in egg,” she explained.

My mom taught us phonics using “sing-spell-read-and-write.” It was fun. We learned rules of the English language with songs. “Mr. Gh is a funny little man. He silent in the middle but goes ff at the end.” That demonstrated the difference between how you pronounce the word “thought” compared to “enough.” There were also twenty six thin paperback books. The first one was green, and it had a red apple on the cover. It was the A book. Some of the books didn’t focus on a single letter, but instead on certain sounds. They were phonetic books. Book 13 was blue with a red boot on the cover. It introduced –tion and –oo sounds. I lay on my stomach in the middle of the school room and labored through each of these books. Reading was fun, and a challenge for me to strive to overcome, and I wanted to learn to read because everyone in my family loved it. I’m the youngest child, so I couldn’t wait to be able to read for myself like the rest of my family could. My life has often been spent trying to catch up to my siblings, trying to get to the experiences, which they had already gone through, trying to one day find something that I knew, but they didn’t.

My mom read to John, Reina, and me around the kitchen table. At breakfast, we read the Bible. When we studied first and second Kings, she created an outline of all of the kings on a blackboard and when each of them reigned, comparing Israel to Judah. At lunch, she would read *Little House on the Prairie*, or *Treasure Island*. Her pirate voices were fantastic. “You need to be recording books on tape, doll,” my dad told her. He pronounced the o in doll like an a as in apple—maybe it was because he was Estonian. He needed to learn phonics too. Listening to my mom, stories came alive, and I was part of the adventure.

In the evening, my dad read us *Lord of the Rings*. He lay on his stomach in the middle of the living room, like I did when I read, and I sat on his back. It was the perfect perch to look around the room. I didn’t understand everything that was happening in J.R.R. Tolkein’s masterpieces, but I enjoyed listening. I pictured Gollum to

look like Sebastian from *Little Mermaid*. The Ents were my favorite. They had deep, slow, calming voices. “Much too hasty,” they said, and I smiled at their thick wisdom.

Even John, the oldest, read to Reina and me. We sat up in his room, the only room on the third floor of our house, under the skylight with its patch of blue, and he read *Wizard of Oz* to us. It took years, but he made it through all fourteen books with us. The series was funny and odd. It presented crazy ideas and silly characters. It was another adventure that I fell into while listening.

I wanted to read too. The books I read weren’t exciting, though. They were the colored paperbacks in the cupboard of our school room—the A book, and the I book with an American Indian on the front, and the Truck book, which talked about all the different vowels. The stories were about kids playing together or finding a cat and playing with the small cat, the kitten. If the stories were going to be interesting, I had to find something to make them interesting. Then I discovered the exclamation mark.

“The exclamation mark is kind of like saying ‘oh boy’ at the end of a sentence,” my mom explained to me. When I read aloud to my mom, I read, “The cat is black. He likes to play! Oh boy! He likes to play with a ball! Oh boy!” Exclamation marks made me read eagerly. I could not wait to get to the next point in the story where I could exclaim, “Oh boy!” It became a favorite expression in daily life. Reading was an adventure with “Oh boys” to find. I read to Toffee, my own kitten about the cats in the story. I alerted him about the good parts of the story by proclaiming, “Oh boy!” when I saw the exclamation marks.

The exclamation mark was my friend. It called, “Hey there! I make things interesting around here! I just pop into a story every now and then to make sure that you’re still having fun with this book!” And then I would see another one, and it would blurt, “Hi again! Things are pretty exciting right now, aren’t they?” How could one line and a dot say so much? It was magic. Sometimes, though, when I came upon an exclamation mark, it would say nothing to me except the familiar, comforting, “oh boy!” I liked those ones the best.

“Read this page out loud, Kristen,” my mom instructed me.

“What is at the door? It’s a dog! Oh boy! The dog is big and red. The dog runs with Tim and Pam. The dog is fast! Oh boy!”

I loved to read! I loved oh boys! I loved my friends, those dear exclamation marks!

One day my mom broke the news to me. “When you see an exclamation mark, you don’t actually say ‘oh boy;’ you just know that the sentence is excited.”

“Oh.”

I think a little part of me died that day.

If you saw an exclamation mark, weren’t you supposed to exclaim something? Why else would it be called an exclamation mark? Reading was still important to me and exciting. But it was just silent exclamation mark exciting, not “oh boy” exciting. If I came to an exclamation mark in my reading, I could still feel my spirits rise, but they were not allowed to rise enough to spill over into a whole expression of delight. The exclamation mark and I were just old acquaintances now; we were no longer close friends. I could be happy for the dog if he ran fast in the book. I could even add a little pleasure to my voice if I was reading aloud, but I was not allowed to add my own two cents to the story. I was not allowed to say “oh boy.”

Somehow, I survived this setback to my reading education because I still love to read. I wanted to be able to do what my big brother and sister and my mom and dad could do. I knew that someday the stories I could read would be as exciting as those they read to me, and it was true. Over winter break, one of my biggest joys was getting to read just because I wanted to, not because it was assigned. We still read as a family when we’re all together, but now we read something that my sister, the aspiring published author, has written. I love it, and I love her. Occasionally in my reading, I’ll come across the exclamation mark. He’s like a childhood friend. He is a childhood friend, an old, familiar, comforting sight. He’s a

reminder that things are still okay. Unless, that is, he ends an angry sentence and not a happy one.

I still say “oh boy.” It’s no longer after I see an exclamation mark. I do say it when I’m excited, but it’s different now. The exclamation marks in my life don’t always shout out at me like they used to. But I remind myself what I knew as a child: sometimes it’s the little moments that are the most “oh boy” worthy— and each day is an adventure, a search party, as I seek out my exclamation marks and celebrate them.

“When You’re Gone,” by Caleb VanDyke

Instructor’s Note

Not all of the “literacy moments” that shape our lives happen in classrooms. In fact, for Caleb VanDyke, one word influenced him to think more about others and less about himself. In “When You’re Gone,” Caleb frames a cemetery scene with a scene in which he is riding in a car and reading a poem. The poem triggers the memory that he depicts in the remainder of the narrative. How does Caleb’s Literacy Memoir balance description and analysis so that the narrative is both vivid and reflective? What theme does the memoir convey that might be significant for a reader? What words have influenced you in ways that changed your perspective about yourself or about others?

Writer’s Biography

Caleb VanDyke is a freshman Pre-pharmacy major from Michigan. He enjoys creative writing in his spare time as well as reading anything to do with mythology. When he isn’t reading, he enjoys playing videogames, learning new facts, and practicing a variety of interesting tricks.

When You’re Gone

“It isn’t the fact that you’re dead that counts,
But only how did you die?”

-Edmund Vance Cooke

I slowly finish reading the words from the poem, “How did you die?” The rain outside pounds against the roof of the car. I raise my head and gaze out the window. The world passes by in a black and white blur. As my eyes become unfocused at the stream of water flowing across the window, I think back to a memory, a memory when my brother and I took an ordinary bike ride to a cemetery. That

day, I read a word on a grave. And that word changed my perception on life.

The wind swept through my hair as my younger brother and I pedaled to Assyria Cemetery down the road from our house. He was working on a merit badge for Boy Scouts that required him to go there. He was geocaching, trying to find a hidden box using a Global Positioning System and Latitude and Longitude coordinates. I followed because I was afraid of what might happen to him if I was not there. It was a hot summer day, and the wind gave little relief on my sweaty skin. “I should have stayed at home,” the thought flashed across my mind, leaving as suddenly as it had come. I did not know that the graveyard on this day would change my view of the world and my view of how I should live.

We parked our bikes at the entrance and began following the instructions my brother had earlier printed off. Eventually we arrived at the “final” destination, and spread out looking for the box. I glimpsed the gravestones as I passed them, reading the names. I imagined what each dead person did when they were alive and how their friends remember them. I tried to picture their lives, their desires, their heartaches and their missions. Then I saw one that caught my eye—one tombstone in the cemetery made me stop and think. The grave was a dull gray stone, but the grass around it was lush and vibrant. The grave stood alone on the edge of the cemetery under a small tree that offered little shade. The tombstone was not ornate and it did not have a long story. Only one word was engraved on it, “Mother.”

“Mother,” was the word that some person decided to put on that stone. “Mother,” was the word that someone thought that this person’s life was all about. The grave did not a name or a description of that person’s life. Suddenly, the only thing that mattered was that the person lying beneath the dirt was a mother to someone. As a lump formed in my throat, the world seemed to go into slow motion. I took a deep breath. The grass slowly rippled with the cool breeze. My heart beat within my chest. The birds became silent. The hum of cars diminished. Tears started to

flood and sting my eyes. I read the tombstone again, “Mother” Tears slowly dripped from my eyes. I used the back of my hand to wipe them away, but more replaced them. I envisioned my own mother, and all the things she had done for me.

I thought back to my childhood. I was stricken with scarlet fever, my skin burning to the touch. My forehead slicked with sweat. I lay on the couch while my mother stood over me, placing a cool rag on my head to ease my suffering.

I thought of the time that I took the part of a shepherd in the Church’s Christmas play. I remembered staring into the audience and seeing my mother, exhausted from her night shift. But she was still there, smiling at me—proud of me.

I thought of the many times I would fail when my brother succeeded. When I would need help with Calculus or Chemistry. I remembered my mother sitting beside me encouraging me and helping me understand.

I thought of all that she had done for me, how would she be remembered when she died? What would her children put on her tombstone? What memories would she leave behind?

As I thought this last thought, I could not keep trying to hold back my tears. I blinked and they poured from my eyes. I ducked my head, as they slowly cascaded to the ground, soaking into the dirt where they landed. The breeze whispered high above the trees and dried the tears from my face. The birds resumed their singing. The steady thrum of cars slowly brought me back to reality. As I stood there staring at that one word on the stone, the last of my tears fell to earth. “Mother”

“Caleb! Let’s go back I can’t find it anywhere!” my younger brother yelled to me. I breathed in deeply, detecting a hint of salt in my mouth from my tears. I wiped my face with my shirt to dry my face and make my eyes stop glistening.

“Be right there!” I called back, my face turning toward my younger brother. I gazed back at the tombstone. I thought of the impact that one word had on me. I cried because of a word written on a random grave on a hot summer day in a cemetery down the road.

After another moment lost in my thoughts, I turned and strode to where we had parked our bikes. My younger brother was already on his. “See you at home.” He shook his blond hair out of his eyes and sped off down the road back to home.

After glancing over my shoulder at the gravestone, I whispered “See you,” then slowly followed.

I rode slowly down our road, contemplating what happened to me at that grave. I pondered what my mother had done for me. How she impacted me. She had given so much of herself to the good of others—to the good of me. She endured my tears and my tantrums. The sicknesses I had and my joy, she was my mother.

When I think of that moment, when I rode down the road pondering about the word on the grave that changed who I was. That word reminded me of my mother, how she acts and how I will remember her when she is gone. It changed me, made me who I am today. After that ride, I tried to make her job easier, and become someone that would make a difference. I wanted to follow her example—not by caring for myself as much. But by caring for others. I wanted to make a difference in someone’s life—like the difference my mother made in mine.

The car slowed as it came to a light. The world slowly came into focus. I breathed deeply as if I had been holding my breath for a long time. A few years later and that tombstone still lingers in my memory. I glance at the poem again. That poem reminds me of that day, when I stumbled upon a grave with the word “Mother” written upon it. While pondering over the connection to the poem, I realized the true significance of that day. The tombstone, “Mother.” “Mother” made a difference in someone’s life—her child’s. It wasn’t that she was dead that made her important or remembered—it was how she influenced

someone or changed their life for the better. The word “Mother” did not describe her as she was now, dead—it described what she did while she was alive.

My gaze turned out of the window to the gray clouds. The rain had dripped as it ended and we neared our destination. The heat blew into my face, carrying the scent of lavender from the car’s air freshener. Leaning back in the soft velvet-type seat, I close my eyes in contentment. In that moment, I whisper, “Thanks mom, for everything.”

“Always Playing Ketchup,” by Jonathan Gummel

Instructor’s Note

Stories are powerful because we empathize with the characters we meet in them. These characters reveal something to us about ourselves and encourage us to persevere. In Jonathan Gummel’s Literacy Memoir, “Always Playing Ketchup,” Jonathan depicts himself as a child who struggled with pronunciation. His narrative reveals the emotional pain that he endured as he tried to learn standard pronunciation. The essay analyzes how a children’s story gave Jonathan the courage to persevere. Notice how Jonathan uses what author and writing teacher Tom Romano calls *repetend* in this essay. A *repetend* is a repeated word or phrase that represents multiple levels of meaning at the same time that it suggests a significant theme in the essay. What is significant about the repetition of “ketchup” and “catch up” throughout the essay? Why do you suppose the author uses the word “Ketchup” in the essay’s title?

Writer’s Biography

Jonathan Gummel is a Business major from Springfield, Ohio. He writes about what he loves: family, friends, sports, and Jesus Christ.

Always Playing Ketchup

“Could you please pass the catchup?” I have asked this question hundreds of times in my life.

A person at the table would frequently chime in, “I’m sorry, but do you mean ketchup?”

I always wanted to tell that person, No. I have been saying it this way all my life, and I am not about to change because you are a snobby know-it-all. What came out, however, was slightly more polite: “I did mean ketchup. Thank you very much.”

As a kid, I was a master in the art of perpetually mispronouncing words. My brothers loved to tease me because of this. I often stood on my tiptoes, peered over the kitchen counter, and said, “Mom, could I have ceweal for breakfast?”

“Sure, honey.” She gently replied while removing the milk from the fridge. “What could I get you?”

“I’d wike to have cinnamon wife.”

“Jonathan,” my brothers teased from the other room as they mashed the buttons of Nintendo controllers, “are you going to marry a cinnamon wife also?”

In the same way, cheering for sports teams was difficult. My dad followed Michigan. Because I wanted to be just like my dad, I did too. My brothers, however, liked Ohio State. Before the game, we plopped on the couch with a bowl of snacks. My brothers would ask, “Jonathan, who are you rooting for?”

“I am wooting for Michigan, the bwue team, just wike Dad.”

“Why don’t you root for Ohio State, with us?” They asked while munching on pretzels.

Sensing the animosity in their voice, I retorted, “No. I don’t wike the wed team.”

I gradually grew out of these elocutionary errors with practice and steady encouragement from my parents. But my most deep-rooted blunder was the pronunciation of the word “ketchup.” To this day, I do not say the word correctly, and I blame my favorite children’s book: Ketchup, Catch Up!

Ketchup, Catch Up! is a book written by Fran Manushkin. The story is set in a jungle full of red monkeys. It follows a young monkey named Ketchup who is slower than all the other monkeys. Because of his sluggishness, he was consistently last in every monkey activity. He could not scamper up the trees to get to the bananas before any of the others. He could not catch any other monkey in games of tag. During these games, the other monkeys teased him.

“Ketchup, Catch Up!” they would jeer. Soon after, Ketchup became deserted in the dense jungle because he could not maintain the pace.

Ketchup was not in trouble, however, because he discovered a pair of roller skates. After donning these strange shoes, he realized that they made him fast. He practiced skating, then quickly caught up with the other monkeys and whizzed past. After enjoying the look of astonishment on their faces, he became afraid. He was approaching a cliff, and he did not know how to stop! Ketchup flew off the rock and landed on the deck of a ship.

After introducing himself, Ketchup impressed the crew with how fast he could clean their ship. Afterward, the crew returned him safely to his family. Upon returning home, he realized that he no longer needed the skates to go fast. They taught him how to be quick and gave him the edge he needed when competing against the other monkeys.

“Ketchup, Catch Up!” was my favorite line in the book. I repeated it to myself again and again. To a six year old boy who had struggled with pronunciation his whole life, “ketchup” sounded just like “catch up.” Soon, “Ketchup, Catch Up!” became “Catchup, catch up” — a phrase I solidified in my vocabulary through frequent repetition. At the time, I did not realize how deeply this simple mispronunciation would impact my life.

“Mom, could you please pass the catchup?” I once called from across the dinner table, hoping to drench my fries with my favorite condiment.

When the bottle reached my dad, he did not hand it to me. Instead, he said, “Jonathan, saying ‘catchup’ instead of ‘ketchup’ is nothing more than a bad habit.”

“Dad,” I answered. “I know it is just a bad habit. What’s more, I am confident that I could successfully break the habit if I tried. I just don’t want to. I love saying ‘catchup.’ The pronunciation makes me unique. I don’t want to be a cookie cutter for standard english! But most of all, ‘catchup’ is a cord that connects me to my childhood. Mom, do you remember practicing the correct

pronunciation of words with me when I was a little boy?” I asked as I grabbed the ketchup from my dad, popped the lid, and poured the sauce onto my plate.

“Yes,” She said with a grin. “You would say, ‘my favorite ceveal is cinnamon wife!’ And I would reply, ‘No, Jonathan. Your favorite cereal is cinnamon life. Now, say that back to me, cinnamon life.’”

“Exactly!” I blurted through a mouth full of soggy, ketchup-stained fries. “Saying ‘catchup’ reminds me of all the ‘L’s’ and ‘R’s’ I replaced with ‘W’s’ as a child.” I took a second to swallow. “‘Catchup’ reminds me of the practice, encouragement, and maturation I needed to overcome my difficulties. Dad, saying ‘ketchup’ would allow me overlook the work I have done to become the speaker I am today.”

“What do you mean, ‘the speaker you are today?’” My dad laughed. “Right now, You are breaking the first rule of speaking — never talk with food in your mouth!”

Although my dad was joking with me, he learned that “catchup” connects me to my past speaking difficulties. These difficulties have made me empathetic towards people with long-term speech impediments. While my speaking setback was not drastic, having an impediment gave me valuable experiences. Through these experiences I identify with those who are frightened and discouraged by how they speak. And because of these experiences I desire to aid and encourage others in any way.

As a result of my mispronunciations, I have learned the importance of speaking well. A good leader must be a good speaker. He or she must effectively communicate both interpersonally and in public. No future president says, “vote for the wepubwican pawty.” No business executive refers to his staff as “empwoees.” No pastor declares, “Jesus woves you.” Instead, leaders speak flawlessly. And because they speak flawlessly, they speak powerfully.

My favorite children’s book has become much deeper to me. Ketchup’s story, ironically, applies to and parallels my life in many ways. Like Ketchup, I am a slow.

I work slow, write slow, read slow, talk slow, think slow, and move slow. But I believe this slowness is a blessing and a curse. On one hand, I am able to take the time to enjoy each moment, each sunset, and each conversation. On the other hand, I am frequently late, last in line, and barely make deadlines. I have the capability to be fast. In fact, I love to race, and I'm good at winning. I just prefer to take things slow. I like to think that Ketchup did too. By becoming fast, he earned the right to be slow. If the others teased him for going at his own pace, he would win a race — reminding them of his new abilities.

Before finding the skates, Ketchup struggled with his ability to run and keep up with the other monkeys. He endured torment, teasing, and humiliation because he was slow. When I read this, I identify with the embarrassment Ketchup suffered. Like him, I also suffered from a set back that I was not responsible for. I couldn't speak properly. The impediment wasn't my fault! Yet, I suffered teasing, ridicule, and shame. Humiliation unites us.

I think Ketchup risked his well-being on the dangerous skates because he was tired of not being taken seriously. As the slowest monkey in the jungle, no other monkey paid attention to Ketchup. He could not rush through the trees to pick bananas. He was consistently last in every competition. No one took him seriously. "Ketchup, Catch Up!" they would jeer.

Similarly, I felt as if no one took me seriously when I struggled to pronounce my favorite cereal, my favorite sports team, and any other words that contained a "L" or an "R." Most of all, I hated that my brothers teased me, even though it was playful. "Cinnamon wife, Jonathan? Is that your favorite cereal?" Their teasing fueled my desire to fix the problem. Their teasing inspired me to work hard and improve. I wanted to be taken seriously. I did not want to play catch up.

“My First Speech,” by Kristen Sabo

Instructor’s Note

In “My First Speech,” Kristen Sabo depicts one of humanity’s greatest fears—public speaking. This Literacy Memoir describes and analyzes Kristen’s anticipation of her first college speech. Kristen uses transitions well to help her readers follow the narrative as it moves among different places and as it moves forward in time. What strategies does she use to make sure the essay is coherent? How might this Literacy Memoir be significant for a reader? What bigger themes does Kristen’s essay suggest?

Writer’s Biography

Kristen Sabo is a freshman Nursing major from Xenia, Ohio. She doesn’t consider herself a true writer. However, when she connects with the topic, writing comes easier and is enjoyable. When she is not studying, Kristen enjoys hanging out with friends and practicing her photography hobby.

My First Speech

Half asleep in class, I jerk awake at the sound of my name.

“Kristen Sabo, Garrison Reeves, Kara Starkey, and Derek Renner. You four will deliver your introduction speeches on Wednesday,” says Professor Wheeler.

My heart does a somersault inside my chest. Inside I am screaming. I have my very first speech this Wednesday. I need to throw something together in just two days. The introductory speech has to be about something that is unique only to me. *I am going to die*. I just know it. Finally 9:50 comes and class is over.

As we all pack our bags up, Professor Wheeler cheerfully sings out, “See you all on Wednesday! Can’t wait to hear your speeches!”

Her peppiness irritates me. I have no desire to make this speech and can wait just fine. *Just get through the rest of this day. You can do this.* For the rest of the day, I can hardly pay attention in my classes. My mind is frantically trying to think of a possible way out of this. Fight or flight mode has set in. And I'm leaning more towards flight. Being homeschooled has certainly not helped me be comfortable in front of an audience. I have never given a speech in my life! As I drive home, I blare some country music hoping to take my mind off this upcoming speech. But nothing works. When I get home at last, I tell my family about the speech I have to do, and they offer to help. I guess living at home during college does have its perks.

Tuesday flutters by in a blink. Before I know it, it is Tuesday evening and I haven't even begun working on my speech. I can start to feel my blood pressure rising and the nerves kicking in.

I manage to calm myself down enough to think clearly. *What can I say? What is something unique to only me?* I search my brain for a while for an answer but find nothing. So I trudge downstairs to ask my family. They are all crowded around the TV watching who knows what. All I can hear is the clashing of swords and men shouting. I march right in front of the TV and manage to tear their attention off the screen so we can talk.

"Alright, let's put our heads together and think," my Dad says.

"I have an idea," my older sister Katie suggests. "You could talk about how accident-prone you are!" Her eyes twinkle as she speaks.

I roll my eyes. But after thinking for a bit, I realize it's actually a good idea. She speaks the truth, despite the fact I don't like to admit it. I drag myself back to my room to think of what to say. I begin to write down the many, many incidents I have experienced and all the injuries that went along with it. Ran over by a horse, knee injury, torn ankle—the list when on and on. I pick a few of the most interesting and start to put my speech together. Nothing is coming out right. *How am I supposed to do this?!* My mind

is hopelessly trying to hold onto my sanity. The more I think about it, the worse I begin to feel. My stomach is already all in knots and I'm not even speaking until tomorrow! I attempt to eat dinner. The usually irresistible spaghetti meal looks unappealing to me now. Just the smell of the warm red sauce makes my stomach churn. I try to force a few bites down, but my stomach can hardly take it. The tangy flavor of the sauce doesn't taste like normal. I leave the table feeling even worse than before. I have to get this speech together. I only have to talk for one minute. How hard can it possibly be?

The old clock chimes ten o'clock when I finally finish writing my speech. Slightly elated but still exhausted, I bounce down the stairs to give my speech to my parents. I confidently deliver my speech and watch for their reaction. They smile and say it sounds great. My Dad suggests adding some humor. I'm afraid it won't come out very funny when I'm nervous. But I think it sounds like a good idea, so I throw it in anyways. Satisfied with my speech, I slip off to bed. I lie there in the dark trying to tell myself to calm down. *It's nothing to be nervous about...it's only one minute in front of twenty people. No big deal. You can do this.* Despite my own encouraging words, I cannot sleep. I toss and turn for hours, but still sleep avoids me. I flip the pillow back and forth to the cold side but my mind will not rest. Finally giving up, I rip the covers off and turn to look at the clock. I sigh deeply at those bright green numbers that read three o'clock. I slide out of bed and down to the kitchen for a glass of water. The cool water trickles down my throat. Hoping that will calm my stomach, I crawl back up to bed. A few more hours pass until I am completely exhausted and can no longer remain awake.

All too soon the sound of my iPod's cheerful alarm wakes me. I can smell crispy bacon, my favorite food. But the thought of eating makes my stomach groan in misery. Food is not an option this morning. I rush to get ready and go over my speech one more time. I quickly leave the house, leaving the bacon on the table where my Dad had set it out for me. The cool morning air helps to relieve me some. I rehearse my speech numerous times on my drive to

school. First I have to get through chemistry class and then to speech class. I'm fine for the first ten minutes of chemistry. Then the nerves really begin to set in. I can't focus on what my professor is saying. I feel sick to my stomach and a little light-headed. The next forty minutes tick by slowly, but at the same time, all too fast. My friends try to encourage me.

"You'll do fabulous, my dear!" Julie says. "Don't stress about it."

"God is with you and will give you strength to get through this," Ayana adds cheerfully.

Their words lift my spirits but only for a moment. I drag myself to speech class. My feet fight to run the other direction, but I force them to remain on track. I have to do this. I really don't have much choice. I pause outside of the classroom in an attempt to compose myself. Having no success, I slowly walk into the room and take my usual seat in the front row next to Mr. Crocks-with-socks. Even his attire doesn't amuse me today. I decide I will go second. I am definitely not going first, and not last because that is what everyone always remembers. I simply want to be forgotten in the midst of all the speeches. Mrs. Wheeler calls Kara first. Her bubbly personality catches everyone's attention immediately. I try to pay attention but I can't focus on her words. I try to recite my speech in my head but I can't remember it at all. I notice her speech coming to an end, and my whole body begins to tingle. I can hardly hear a thing as blood pounds in my ears. I think for sure everyone can hear the thundering of my heart. Everyone applauds for her and I wait for Professor Wheeler to ask for the next speaker.

"Next speaker may go on up now."

I hesitate for just a moment wishing somehow to skip over this terrifying experience I am about to endure. I look over to see Garrison smirking slightly as he stands to give his speech. *NOOOOOOOO!* I scream inside. He knew I wanted to go next. He knew! *I am going next no matter what*, I resolve. Before I know it, he is finished and now it's my turn. I stand up immediately, determined not to go

last. The front of the room seems so far away. I stumble along, praying my wobbly legs won't give out beneath me. By some miracle, I reach the front without falling and move behind the podium. I look out and to my horror see everyone staring at me. I feel my cheeks turning bright red as I look down to my single note card.

“You may begin now.”

I can not tell where the voice comes from, but it sounds far off. The room feels as if it is spinning through a tornado. My head is throbbing and my hands are sweating. I close my eyes and take a deep breath. My first word comes out as a squeak. *You got this. Just relax.* I pause to clear my throat and start again. My own voice sounds so strange. I don't even sound like myself. I can't make eye contact with anyone. I fear I'll freeze up if I do. My speech comes to a sudden halt when I hear muffled laughter. I look at the faces of my fellow classmates to see smiles on their faces. I then realize I've reached the humorous part of my speech, and I feel relief that it wasn't as dumb as I thought it would be. Only now I have lost my place. I lift my note card so I can read what I had scribbled onto it. My hand trembles and I immediately put them back on the coarse podium where they had been glued. But I have found my place and continue my speech in a rather hurried fashion. I want nothing more than to run away and hide. My final words come out and everyone applauds. I believe it's only out of courtesy. I know my speech had been terrible. I collapse into my seat feeling a wave of relief wash over me. I can breathe again. My muscles still twitch after being tense for so long. I listen to the final speech of the day and am able to understand it.

As class concludes, Professor Wheeler reminds a few of my classmates that they will be speaking on the next day. I smile though, because I can now relax and no longer worry about it. My smile falters when I think of what my grade might be. *Well, I am going to fail this class for sure.* I slowly start to walk out of class when the girl behind me stops me. I remember her name is Claire.

“Kristen, I just wanted to tell you that you did an excellent job up there. You looked so composed and at ease and you spoke clearly so that I could understand you.”

“Really?” I ask, astonished. “I was terrified! You couldn’t see me shaking?”

“Oh, no. Not at all! You did so well!” She flashes a smile and bounces away.

I can’t believe what I’ve just heard. *Maybe I’m not as bad as I think I am.* A smile creeps across my face.

I got this.

“Unstoppable,” by Dylan J. McKevitt

Instructor’s Note

Dylan’s assignment was to recall an event in his life that had a transformative effect on him. This assignment allowed the writer to experiment with tension (conflict), how to pull the reader through an event so she continually asks: What happens next? He needed to have three scenes (a beginning, middle, and end), and he had to create the illusion of place and person with concrete details. Dylan experimented with both external tension and internal tension. How does Dylan create tension in each of his scenes? What is the internal conflict Dylan’s narrator struggles with? In both the external and internal conflicts: What does he want? Why can’t he have it? How is it resolved?

Writer’s Biography

Dylan McKevitt is a sophomore Geology major from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. He runs cross-country and track outside of a busy class and work schedule. Dylan loves the outdoors and enjoys woodworking and reading in his free time.

Unstoppable

A couple years ago, I was unstoppable. I really did fly, almost recklessly, through, over or around whatever laid in my path. Sometimes that was a dirt road that flicked up dust with the touch of my feet, or sizzling blacktop, or ice glazed with fresh snow waiting to send me skidding with the smallest awkward stride, or even the forest floor flexing and branches reaching, bending, and sometimes snapping as I glided by. The truth was once I slipped on my running shoes, yanked the laces tight, stretched my legs forward and gained momentum, nothing really fazed me. Nothing could catch me, and nothing was beyond my reach.

Never has this feeling been as strong as during the early cross-country season practices preceding my senior year of high school. I cherished those late August early morning runs that blended into midday, before the stress of classes. I could just take off and cruise through town and over back roads with Steve – my one fast teammate – hanging at my shoulder. I remember one morning especially well. Even at 9AM it was hot and humid, with a glaring sun jumping up from the horizon. My coach's training plan for the day was no surprise: a long, slow run to recover from the previous day's workout. Translation: a quick ten miles with Steve and me alternately picking up the speed and pushing each other faster. So we took off.

Steve and I quickly left the other guys behind. However, a couple minutes later at the one main highway crossing in town the light stopped us. Cross-traffic picked up, and our coach and the rest of the team caught up. Then I had to endure once again my coach's warning to be careful crossing the roads, and to always wait for the light to change even when it looked safe to cross. I was almost 18 years old and knew what I was doing. When running, I was beyond those childish notions of being over-cautious. Fate was on my side- I was unstoppable. As soon as the light changed I sprinted ahead.

The next nine miles literally flew by. Every stride, every graceful stretch of the legs, smooth swing of the arms, and rhythmic cycle of the lungs brought me more in-touch with myself and the beauty of exertion, of flowing adrenaline-powered motion like a flooding river. Skirting along the edge of exhaustion has a way of bringing one's mind, body, and soul back into rhythm, of leading them to a refreshing peace. This particular day's run was no exception. Steve and I skimmed over the abandoned crumbling blacktop back roads, over the red sands of ATV trails that send the foot shifting to the side only to be brought back into line by the body's natural momentum. Leaping over a fallen tree, strongly pushing to accelerate up a short hill, a couple quick steps here and there to maneuver over uneven rocks or across a field of potholes, with every step calculated, visualized and realized in the runner's mind

and soul before the foot actually brushed the ground, the runner's reality constantly rolling forwards and always a step ahead, with the physical present struggling to keep up. Perhaps it was this combined with the weather that gave me a near out-of-body experience. By now- midday- the sun was really beating down from a cloudless sky. My body poured sweat. My eyes stung. But I was alive, reveling in the joy and beauty of what I was doing, in the competition and fellowship with my teammate trailing at my shoulder. We were more than human, almost immortal, flinging miles behind us like dust in the wind with impossible dreams stretching before us, only a few strides away. The heat didn't faze us, nor did fatigue. Nothing could.

Everything around me moved sluggishly under the thick, humid air as I glided back into town. Muffled sounds of barking dogs, a humming lawnmower, and children yelling as they darted around their yard registered like a faint memory. Yet from the confines of my detached mind, I sensed everything: the rustle of a gray squirrel jumping along branches; sunlight glinting off glass shards; butterflies fluttering up from flowers as I blew by. A car slowly backed from its driveway towards the sidewalk a few strides ahead, and then halted suddenly with red brake lights as the driver noticed me. I slightly altered my course, slipping casually past the rear bumper.

This triggered a memory, and my mind wandered. During my summer training, while running near home on remote backcountry gravel roads and logging trails, my dad told me I should carry a gun. His concern made sense; more than once I had seen some wolves, coyotes, and bears on my runs. But a gun was awkward to run with and nothing had ever come of these encounters. Not to say I was fearless, but I trusted my own judgment and knew I could either avoid trouble or deal with it when it did show up. My dad's warning still hung in my ears. Except now the wild animals were the cars and drivers that didn't pay attention. And now as I had told him then, my protection was my alertness and unstoppable momentum.

The approaching highway intersection and traffic light dragged me back to the present, but I was still riding a

high. My mind and soul remained settled in a peaceful, nearly disconnected awareness of my surroundings. At that time, all my being wanted to do was keep right on rolling across the highway, a mirage flashing before the eyes staring from vehicles bound in immobility by red brake lights. And yet in that moment I approached a similar fate at the mercy of the streetlight's heartless, tyrannical rule.

I unconsciously threw the words "Wait for the light" over my shoulder to Steve, a natural albeit unnecessary caution, the instinct of a runner to watch out for not only himself but also his fellow runners.

However, as fate would have it, as I approached the crossing the light changed colors. That's all that registered in my mind. My body and soul breathed a sigh of relief, and let my momentum continue to carry me forward. My legs continued to smoothly roll, arms rhythmically swing, heart pound, and reality struggled to keep up. But Steve did not.

Of course, I didn't realize this fact- that Steve had stopped- until shortly later. Until after I realized the light had changed to the wrong color. Until after my mind and soul flew from peace into chaos. Until after my perfect, peaceful, unstoppable dream-like state of being came crashing down around me. And suddenly I was in the middle of the highway, in an all too real moment. Time slowed to a crawl. Sound died away. Out of the corner of my right eye, my gaze still locked forward, a monstrous gray van sped towards me. As did other vehicles that I sensed to my left, right, ahead and behind me. And I say sped, even though time seemed to crawl, because I was slow and small and they were moving large, fast, and truly unstoppable.

In that moment a strange image came to my mind. It was not fully formed because the human mind can only think so fast, and this moment was instantaneous. It involved me another stride or two into the future. My right foot kicked up and back in perfect fluid running form as the gray van's front right fender nipped my shoe's black sole, a perfectly color-coordinated match. Then it gained a grip on the rest of my foot, then my leg. I spun, thrown off balance

like a rag in the wind. Then I toppled forwards, my unstoppable momentum brought to a halt by unforgiving blacktop. It warmly raked my arm and face, heated from the friction of rolling tires and beating sun. That same sun glinted off the shiny chrome bumper of an approaching truck, bearing down upon me amidst the smell of exhaust and roar of V-8's.

Still prisoner to this instantaneous moment, my mind jumped rails and snapped back to the present. It did not want to accept that fate. My soul and body were in perfect agreement. And yet realization came like a downpour- seemingly unavoidable surrender.

Suddenly a spark of hope sprang forth. The imagined was not yet reality. And in that bit of illumination my mind's image of the future gave up the ghost, replaced by a few quick thoughts. "There can be no turning back. No stopping. Just move forward, as fast as you can. Frogger. A mad dash across."

Like a flash my soul jumped and body strained for a burst of speed. That shattered the silent moment and time returned in a flood, fast and furious. As did everything around me. My mind blanked.

The next thing I knew I was reigning myself to a halt on the sidewalk to the cheer of honking car horns. The sun was bright, the sky was blue, sweat ran into my eyes, and I was breathing. Hard. My heart was jumping, skipping. I just turned around and looked back across the streaming highway to see Steve waiting for the light to change, to cross, with a look of shock on his face. Unconsciously I balanced myself against a light pole with one hand and bent my opposite foot up, gripped my ankle, and proceeded to strike a nonchalant stretching pose. In that moment of vulnerability I spoke some encouragement to myself and hoped to mirror the same by my pose. "Yeah, I meant to do that. Sometimes I just race across traffic for fun. I like to flirt with death. Dare-devil, you know."

In reality I was shattered inside, nerves completely scattered. The light changed, Steve crossed the highway,

and I just turned to stride in-sync with him. We jogged the half mile along the sidewalk back to our run's end in relative silence. Steve simply said something short that I vaguely remember, like "Boy, that was a close one," and I replied in equally inadequate terms with "Yeah, I guess I just wasn't thinking." Then I tried to make a lesson out of it and half-jokingly shared some advice; "That's why you always have to pay attention!" Neither of us laughed.

We finished our run, went home, and returned the next day for more miles. And I thanked God. But nothing more was ever said about that moment. I never told Steve about what really got me into that mess- my blindness.

A couple years ago, I was unstoppable. Or else I wouldn't be here to tell this story. I still run. I still fly. I still don't carry a gun along. What's changed then? Like I said, I *was* unstoppable. Now I know better.

“Learning to Faith,” by Michael Kuhn

Instructor’s Note

In “Learning to Faith,” Michael Kuhn had to write a faith and learning paper that included both a narrative of his faith journey as well as an application of that faith perspective on his role as a college student. As a result, he traces his journey with God from before his salvation experience through to his current spiritual growth. He then transitions into the impact of his faith upon his worldview and his “perspective on knowledge, [his] definition of success, and [his] perception of student responsibilities,” fully exploring both requirements of the essay. How does Michael use specific images and language to develop his narrative? How does he demonstrate critical thought and avoid typical Christian clichés?

Writer’s Biography

Michael Kuhn is a freshman Mechanical Engineering major from West Virginia. Although he does not consider it his calling, he enjoys writing and also dabbles in poetry. When homework and studying are not occupying his time, he fills it with intramural sports, Calculus tutoring, refereeing soccer, working on the Supermileage team, hanging out with friends, playing Fifa ’13, and maybe catching up on sleep.

Learning to Faith

Faith. As simple as it is incomprehensible, faith influences our lives every day. Faith is foundational to how we build our worldviews, attempting to define life and explain it. Faith is also immensely powerful, whether it is the fiber forming bonds of deception and slavery to idols or the catalyst that motivates ordinary people to change the world. Jesus said, “. . . if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can tell this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for

you” (Matthew 17:20). However, the awesome power and true value of faith is wholly dependent upon Whom this faith is placed in. As a Christian, my faith is in Christ. Since first believing in Him, I have grown in this faith, and this faith affects my perspective on knowledge, my definition of success, and my perception of student responsibilities.

I was born privileged. Not necessarily with regard to money, and not necessarily with extraordinary opportunity to be considered “privileged” by common world standards. But I was born to Christian parents. Their parents were Christians as well. At the very beginning of my existence, I am sure that many were already praying for my salvation. Not everyone is blessed with these same circumstances, and not everyone God intends for such, but as a young child I was brought to church. I grew up in church. However, church does not save sinners, and even as a little boy going to Sunday School I was, nevertheless, a sinner.

My parents emphasized salvation, and before long, I knew I needed to be saved. At the age of four, led by my dad, I accepted Jesus into my heart. I do not think that I completely understood the magnificence of God Eternal or the unfathomable depravity that is the Human Condition, but I knew that Jesus had forgiven my sins, including the ones I had not yet committed. I knew that Jesus would save me from Hell. And I knew that after I died, I would go to be with Him.

So my faith began. I didn’t feel a miraculous Spirit-filled wave illuminate my Winnie-the-Pooh decorated bedroom with other-worldly light. I didn’t feel a supernatural embrace, either. But I had the assurance of God, who cannot lie, and I had a personal relationship with Him.

While I grew up physically, I grew up spiritually as well. Church, Sunday School, AWANA, and the Christian atmosphere of my home were all sources of spiritual enrichment and Biblical knowledge. I had the privilege of Christian education for nine of thirteen years of my past schooling. I am exceedingly thankful for the influences of

those pastors, teachers, and mentors that have disciplined me through the years. Because of these people, I learned to have godly priorities and pure thoughts. I learned how important taming pride is, despite when others' compliments constantly puff it up. I learned God's word, and I learned how all pursuits other than God's glory are purposeless vanities.

However, I believe that God also uses life events and experiences to teach us lessons in faith better than any person can. Such is the case in my life. For example, unhealthy friendships and an overall tumultuous year in sixth grade God used to teach me to rely on Him. The despair I felt drove me into His arms, even if anger had been my first resort. God, through my circumstances, emphasized to me that my fulfillment is not in others' thoughts about me, what I am valued in their eyes, for in God's eyes I am worth enough for Jesus to die for me. Jesus defined my value by the price He paid to save me, that being his own life. This valuable lesson reached even beyond emotional value, though. Only four years later, I faced moving from Florida, leaving the school I had attended for eight years, leaving the house I had lived in for ten, to live in West Virginia, almost eight hundred miles away. I would leave behind my friends, my teachers, my soccer team, and my private school life to live in an area which many assured me would carry with it an unpleasant culture shock. Nevertheless, I knew that the opinions of others' do not produce my fulfillment, but solely God does. Therefore, I did not worry excessively about first impressions, new teachers, or public school fears, and God gave me the best junior and senior years of high school I could have desired. There are so many other ways God has moved in my life, even since I have arrived at Cedarville, but I suppose only God could accurately and comprehensively describe all that He has done for me.

Not only does my faith mold me as a person and shape my views of God, but it also outlines my worldview and is the structure of my perspective on knowledge, my definition of success, and my perception of student responsibilities. As a college student, the purpose of my

classes is to help me grow in knowledge. This knowledge, though, would lack application if I could not discern truth. As a Christian, I discern truth by and through the Scriptures. Jesus, the Word, called himself “the Truth” (John 14:6), and Psalm 119:160 teaches that “All your [God’s] words are true.” Tieg Laskowske, my Getting Started small group leader and senior Cedarville student, asserts, “Everything that the Christ-following student learns must be submitted to Scripture.” God is, by his nature, the truest Truth, and by his Word we know what is true.

However, God has also given us secondary tools by which to discern truth. Our senses and our abilities to reason additionally provide us means to discern what is true. I am majoring in mechanical engineering, a field closely related to science and the scientific method. Observing experiments, employing logic, and testing reality are methods that God designed humans to use in order to learn about the world He created. I discern truth first by God’s word, the supernatural, and second by the natural abilities given to all humans by their Creator.

My faith also transforms my perspective on acquiring knowledge. Proverbs 1:7 states, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.” This verse reveals that beneficial learning is firmly rooted in God. Viewing the entirety of Scripture, it is evident that learning is an act of godly worship. My learning involves being a faithful steward of my abilities and earnestly desiring to employ the skills that God has given me for His glory. Additionally, my learning is an attempt to understand more of God’s creation and all that is His, which is everything.

While the desire to serve God is ample motivation for me to pursue knowledge, the world labels the eventual goal of obtaining knowledge as future success. A “good student” goes to college so that he or she can be successful in the real world. This idea of success pervades and saturates schooling at essentially every level. At colleges and other places of learning, everyone talks about success. Even the enthusiastic chant of my elementary school displays the permeating quality of this grasped-for ideal:

“S-U-C-C-E-S-S! That’s the way we spell success! Forest Ridge, we’re the best!” The spelling isn’t so hard, but the definition is much harder to come by. Typically, the teachers and school board committee members so forcefully promoting this idea fail to clearly define it. As displayed by modern culture, society bases its image of success on vain, passing entities—wealth, power, fame, happiness, etc. Even through history, the American public has so greatly emphasized its philosophy of success that it, the American Dream, is known as one of the distinguishing characteristics of our nation. However, true success does not consist of effectively obtaining some earthly ideal; rather, it consists of service. As a Christ-following student, the message of 1 Corinthians 10:31 describes success for me: “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” Contrary to the world’s illustration of success, my success is wholly based on Christ. Adhering to this verse opposes apathy, laziness, and self-centeredness while demanding the entirety of my effort for the only worthwhile cause — the glory of God. To truly pursue glorifying God as a student, I also must have an accurate perception of my student responsibilities.

At the commencement of this fall semester, we had a convocation ceremony. At this ceremony, the student body of Cedarville pledged to “love God and others, live with integrity, and pursue excellence in all we do.” Pursuing excellence in everything embodies true success as a learner, and living with integrity encompasses the responsibilities of a Christian student. Ultimately, my loyalty is not to my professors, the college, my future, or even my conscience, but I am accountable to God, the Holy Spirit working in me. Colossians 3:23 instructs, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.” Laskowske expounds, “With regards to integrity, people who want to be like Christ will shun evil forms of deceit, including academic deceit. Why? Because such deceit is contrary to God’s ways of life.” Ultimately, God desires his followers to be truthful and trustworthy — not performers of intellectual theft. If I do not live with integrity, it is inconsistent with who I proclaim myself to be, and it is disobedience to God.

My foundation is Christ. It is he who saved me, and I am helpless apart from Him. He defines my faith, my existence, my knowledge, my success, and my responsibilities. In the words of Laskowske, “Christ must always come first. Education and career are not ultimate things. Seeking God is.” Here at this place of higher learning, I pray that that would be my story: seeking, pursuing, and knowing God.

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Observation/Description Essays

“The Garden,” by Alison Logan

Instructor’s Note

This paper fits into the genre of an observation essay. For this particular essay, I instructed students to observe a setting of their choice and to visit that setting at least twice. Once they had taken careful notes in the place—recording both concrete details and their impressions—students took those notes, and wrote about what they had learned. In her essay, Alison Logan shares with readers what she has learned from her careful observations of a setting—in this case, a natural setting. From her notes and repeated observations, the author has learned that whatever humans place in a natural setting will always stand out. Moreover, she comes to the realization that she does not fit in here. To succeed, an observation essay must always transcend mere description, and Alison Logan’s essay does just that.

Writer’s Biography

Ali Logan is a freshman psychology major from Indianapolis, Indiana. She loves to run and spend time outdoors. When she isn’t working out, you will probably find her singing or listening to music.

The Garden

College dorms. Churches. Neighborhoods. I gradually pass each of them as I slowly turn the pedals of my bike. I know there is no need to hurry because my destination will be there no matter when I arrive. It will always be there.

I finally come to the street onto which I have turned countless times. As I pedal past more houses with their lush green lawns, I speed up a bit in anticipation. When I arrive at the red gate, I tuck my bicycle into the bushes and climb over. After a few more homes, trees line my left side and an open field springs up on my right; I know I am

close. I follow the road several more yards before I duck into the thick woods and onto a gravel path. The gravel turns into small rocks decorated by tall weeds, and then all signs of civilization vanish, replaced by forest and a narrow, rocky trail. Along the trail, across the wooden bridge, down the stairs, and there it is—the Garden.

The Garden was not planted by hands—it rooted itself in the unforgiving ground. Each element has worked hard to find and secure its place in the scene. The Garden sits in the middle of a large gorge, preserved as a natural park. Most of the gorge is composed of the thick forest I initially entered, but the Garden is a clearing where the river narrows into a quiet, rocky brook. I follow the edge of the wide clearing to a rock. After hoisting my backpack on top, I climb the rock and perch on its small plateau. I take a sip from my water bottle, brush a piece of spider web from my arm, and fade into the background.

Several feet above the boulder, a cliff of large melded rocks overhangs half of the scene. The rocks stretch so far that it seems they could fall at any second, yet they create a sense of safety in the shelter they provide. Together, the cliff and the canopy of the trees cast a shadow over most of the clearing that keeps the air cool and moist. The sun, as it threatens to disappear under the horizon, hardly reaches this place. A garden of boulders lies scattered across the scene, adding to the array of gray hues. It is as if they were once cast off from the cliff, and yet have made peace with the ground below, now planted and unmovable.

My gaze now wanders from the grayness of the rocks to where life emerges. Plants sprout gaily from seemingly random places, their flashy green leaves calling loudly as if unaware of the serenity they interrupt. My mouth turns up in a smirk as my eyes are drawn to the center of the scene where two worlds meet: a single mighty rock towers over the smaller pebbles at its base, but its top is haphazardly decorated by an array of green. Lush plants sprout from the rock's crest like a head of early morning hair. Upon looking upward, one realizes the cause for the odd splash of vegetation—above this rock is the only break

in the forest's canopy, thus allowing both rain and sunlight to reach it. How the plants dig their roots into their harsh terrain remains a mystery.

Behind my perch, the living and the lifeless come together again where moss crawls up the crevices of the notched cliff. The moss is better seasoned than the ferns and grasses that attempt to assimilate. It knows how to thrive in the damp and shadowed atmosphere. It knows how to join the rock without disruption. Dark, murky green complements the browns and grays of stone, but the fuzzy feel adds warmth to the rock's cold sleekness. The moss demonstrates the harmony to which vegetation and stone may come; two worlds collide and live as one.

Trees are the rocks of the plant world. The tall, still stalks tower over the boulder garden, kings of the natural world for which they provide. Large green leaves create a canopy to guard the scene, but are so distantly high that they cannot intrude upon the gray hues. Brown trunks contribute to the Garden's serenity in their jagged roughness. Dark clouds settle over the clearing and begin to spit rain over the canopy. The tree leaves do all they can to keep the water from reaching the ground with the understanding that in the shaded clearing, drops that land on the forest floor may remain untouched by the drying sun for days. However, the trees know their duty to let enough rain through to sustain their smaller and weaker family members—the ferns and grasses below. Small pools of water left from previous rains ripple and splash as rain hits their surfaces. Leaves tremble under the weight of the fattened raindrops. But the trees stand firm as silent protectors of the elements below.

A third world presents itself in the scene: my own, that of man, in the form of three large cement blocks. The cement attempts to homogenize with the rock garden, but fails in its sharp contrast. Composed of a lighter gray color than any other part of the clearing, the blocks are cleanly cut with smooth sides and sharp corners. One side of each is jagged where the block has been broken as if a large structure was dropped from the sky and crumbled upon landing, leaving pieces of a puzzle never to be put together

again. As water drips from boulders and pools in their crevices, raindrops bounce off of the smooth, resentful surfaces of the concrete slabs. Nature rejects these objects of civilization; the cement tries and fails to make the same peace with the ground that the boulders have. Instead the blocks lie sadly atop hardened ground in their undeserved place among the natural serenity.

I feel like the cement—hard as I try to fade away, I knew my part is the alien. I take care to blend into the tones of solitude as I write quietly and dare not utter a sound. I lack the serenity of the moss and the innocent gaiety of the bright grasses. When a guest enters another man's house, he is welcomed but expected to behave properly and with certain etiquette; he does not walk immediately into the kitchen and help himself, but instead only accepts what is offered to him. Nature welcomes us as a hospitable host, but we must take care not to tread beyond our boundaries. We are guests and can never be anything more.

Of course, other life moves through the Garden, but only fleetingly. A frog occasionally pops out from under a rock to splash through a puddle. Mosquitoes quietly buzz through the damp air. Leaves gently rustle in the presence of a chipmunk. Birds sing sweetly from distant trees. A brook bubbles over rocks along the Garden's perimeter. But even among the noise, there is silence. The plants, the trees, and the rocks hold steadfast, never moving, never speaking, never acknowledging each other's presence.

“The Mystical Ridge,” by Dylan J. McKeivitt

Instructor’s Note

Dylan’s assignment was to recall a person or a place and describe it over time in order to show “characterization,” differing emotive qualities that create a sense of roundness. This was an imaginative paper whereby the writer must create the illusion of place or person using concrete details, tags, or repeated images that give a sense of change. How does Dylan create the emotive qualities of place as he wanders to the ridge? How does Dylan capture the sense of change from one moment to the next? Identify the “tags” or repeated images that create emotions. What are those emotions?

Writer’s Biography

Dylan McKeivitt is a sophomore Geology major from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. He runs cross-country and track outside of a busy class and work schedule. Dylan loves the outdoors and enjoys woodworking and reading in his free time.

The Mystical Ridge

During my teenage years back home in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, I was restless. That in and of itself didn’t make me different than any other confused or changing young person. What made my situation unique was that I could not go hang out with my friends down the street, jump on the internet and chatter emotions and opinions over social sites, or numb my churning mind and soul by lounging in front of a big screen and thumbing controller buttons for hours on end. I lived in the back country, with no running water or electricity or cell service, surrounded by gravel roads, logging trails, and hundreds of acres of wilderness- trees, swamps and mountainous terrain. My nearest neighbor was a hippie a mile down the road. So my

restless heart, upon finishing a hard day's work, had only one outlet- going for a walk.

And walk I did. I grew to intimately know the miles and miles of woods around home. Of course I had my favorite spots: the old-growth Hemlock Stand just behind the sheds with its chattering red squirrels and spongy humus; the Yellow Dog River a short bike ride down the road, where freshly-gnawed sticks wedged up against the bank as unfinished beaver dams, and plump silver brook trout rolled at the water's surface, breaking the dawn's calmness; the gravelly, washed-out, two-track, dead-end Ho-Chi-Minh Truck Trail that had more wolf and deer tracks than tire tracks, lined with loaded blackberry bushes that held their tasty treasure into the late fall. But these pale in comparison to another location.

One fall, I must have been 16 or so, my heart was exhausted. The stress of schoolwork, athletics, trying to find my niche in a group of classmates who didn't understand me, that I was isolated from, struggling with what type of man I would become and how I'd become him, and constant financial and family struggles formed an unbearable weight. And it wasn't remedied by the gray-cast skies that hung stagnant over my house. I had to get away into the embrace of the woods to think and set my mind back on level ground. So, late one weekend afternoon, I strolled down my driveway and across the gravel road. I packed light with only a walking stick in hand and a piece of gum to chew on, attempting to leave my concerns and worries at home.

At first it seemed I had. Stresses passed with my fading footsteps. Thoughts about overwhelming school projects and how my family would afford to fix our junk car vanished. Yet my heart's load didn't lessen. Those worries and concerns just took on a new form, or maybe they were finally stripped down and exposed. It was irrational, something I couldn't wrap my mind around. It was a sense of sadness, grief, loneliness... a melancholy gloom that sneaks into my heart every late fall and swells up- ugly, unbearable, feeding off of my surroundings. Those cherished rivers and streams that had gurgled so

happily now slowly slide along beneath bare banks with no trout to break the surface. Blackberry bushes grow brown and brittle with a few shriveled black crusts remaining. The maples, oaks and birches stand crooked, dead, bone-dry inside for lack of blood. Their beautiful, multi-colored cloaks of only a couple weeks ago now lay molding on the forest floor, colors leached into the damp soil. The pines sit quietly in their own shadows. Trunks and empty branches are coated in hanging lichen and mosses, putrid-green in the dim light, thriving in a cold, damp fog that leaves water droplets clinging to the slimy bark. That thick, heavy gray air... summer's dying breath. It hangs still and silent like a burial shroud. And then comes that wind... It tears away the few remaining birch leaves, dropping them curled and brittle like yellowed desert parchment. It whispers of the coming winter and consuming grays and whites, of the summer vigor that has sadly once again been sentenced to an unjustly long banishment. It foreshadows short gray days and long nights, huddling around the kitchen table listening to the radio or straining to read by the light of a kerosene lamp, constantly shoveling wood into the woodstove, embracing the warmth and dreading the backed-up suffocating smoke it was sure to puff out as the winds whipped outside.

This *feeling* that wrapped around my heart was familiar, but never before had it been so heavy. I was drowning. I needed relief. An animal-like instinct urged me towards higher ground, upwards to fresh air.

I'd been wandering along a small, snaking stream, the Little Garlic, my feet squishing over the soggy floor and decaying mushrooms as cedar boughs grasped at my flannel shirt. Now I forced my steps away. Dense conifers soon gave way to hardwoods, and the more open view revealed a pair of deep tire ruts overgrown with saplings and crisscrossed with fallen limbs; an abandoned logging road. Rotting stumps dotted the area, evidence of a select cut that allowed me to see the trail head off up along a hill. This was new territory to me, and with enthusiasm I pushed my legs up the winding trail, straddling dropped trees and muddy ruts.

Eventually the trail began to level off and fade, and I could tell the loggers hadn't touched this area. A few ragged, wind-sculpted coniferous behemoths stretched skyward from the virgin ground, too remote to warrant the loggers' attention. Some gnarled maples intermingled with the hemlocks, their roots often wrapped in a death grip around the fractured head of this granite mountain. Scattered ironwood trees rose from the thin soil, giving testament to the high elevation and grim conditions.

I could feel it. My unknown destination was close. Southward, a couple hundred yards distant, filtered light squinted at me from just beyond the trees. To this I hastened, crawling over a knoll of jumbled granite blocks, their cold, slippery edges interlaced with curling worm-like roots. A thicket of maple whips and shrubs greeted me on the other side. Bowing my head I bulled forward, the branches' bony fingers grabbing, pulling at my clothes as I tripped onwards with arms outstretched, waving, bending open a path. I finally broke free. In a single stride my shoes went from mushing on spongy decaying leaves and twigs to crunching on sparse, short, dry green lichen and firm bare rock. I looked up.

A vast emptiness stretched before my sight. Nothing but air lay beyond the straight precipice which extended to each side just feet in front of me. A few hardy shrubs hung in cracks along the cliff face, level with the tops of forest pillars that reached far down to the floor below. Naked hardwoods and pointed evergreens rippled in wind-driven waves for miles and miles arching to the horizon, rising here and there over hills like swells over the deep, dark ocean, blending to a faint haze on the world's edge. The winds whipped from the direction of the setting sun to my right, summoning in the chill of night. Shadowy fingers slowly reached northeastward to my left and drew a blanket of stillness and quiet over the land. Yet where I was standing glowed golden in the sun's late rays, and a few final birdsongs graced the air. In the illuminated branches behind me fluttered those little feathered bodies of joy and contentment. I slowly sat down, cross-legged on the granite platform, and just took it in.

The sky was changing. The falling sun left a fading halo of vivid hues, oranges and yellows and reds that blended into pastels of darkening purples and blues as my gaze swept to the east. A few thin clouds sat high and light in the sky, such a difference from earlier in the day. And a couple bright stars shone brightly, forerunners of a great company quickly approaching. The flat surface of Lake Superior met the sky beyond the sea of rolling wilderness to my far left.

I took a deep breath. Nature's chill, fresh incense filled my lungs. I closed my eyes. The heat of the sun-warmed rock rose through my jeans to my skin. Beyond me, all around me, the wind roared like an ebbing tide hailing from exotic places far off, not loud or overbearing but both close and distant at once, connecting this vast creation.

I opened my eyes. Dimness surrounded me now, but a few last sun rays graced the crowns of a dozen ancient white pines that reared up along this ridge. They were battered, half-bare or broken, some peppered with woodpecker holes. Yet they stood straight and towered over everything else like giant, proud, ancient sentinels nearly impervious to the passing years and seasons. And then their crowns too shortly faded, the birds fell silent, and the western sky welcomed the royal blues and purples from the east while more pinpricks of white light appeared.

"Wow, amazing," I said. I spoke quietly, motionless, eyes and ears still wide open, yet my breath took the life out of the wind, interrupted it and made it silent. For a moment the magic was broken. Then the wind gradually stirred back up. I understood. I was a privileged guest on this almost holy ground, and I had nothing to give and no words that needed to be shared.

I gingerly stood up and stretched tall, flexing my legs to get the blood back into them. It was time to head home. I slowly turned my back to the cliff and began to push back into the brush when a flash of red caught my eye. I stooped and stared. It was a hand-sized scrap of fabric, faded, thinned and torn around the edges, snagged on a root. A tent fragment. "So..." I silently said to

myself, “I am not the first person here! But who...?” My eyes swept the area for clues, but nothing else stood out.

In the thickening darkness I hurried home, in such a single-minded rush that it wasn't until I got back at the kitchen table and settled down to dinner that I realized I'd left something back on that ridge. No longer did a lead weight hang from my heart. My mind was clear and the engulfing gray haze had been swept away. I'd gained something too, although I didn't know it at the time.

Mid-winter came with three feet of snow in the woods, perpetually gray skies, freezing metallic-tasting air, and an emptiness broken only by a random gust of wind or zigzagging line of mouse tracks terminated at each end by small, dark holes. It came with monotonous days spent rotting in classrooms, frustrating work and failing snow blowers that sent tempers flaring. It came with an instinctive tugging on my heart, growing stronger and stronger with each passing day. I had to obey. And so I strapped on my Alaskan style snowshoes and took another pilgrimage to that mystical ridge.

Once again I wove through the cedar marsh, ducking under the snow-laden boughs and shuffling carefully along buried logs to cross over the ice-covered Little Garlic. The abandoned logging trail appeared as I emerged into the hardwoods, its twin ruts now barely visible in the snow blanket's contour. Subtle mounds marked underlying stumps like headstones. A bleak calm stood guard over... nothing.

I gradually marched up along the logging trail, snow crunching under-shoe the only sound. As the trail leveled off though, an amazing transformation took place. Even though the trees were fewer and scattered, scarred and wind-burnt, a sense of timeless life permeated my surroundings. Surprisingly fresh deer tracks punctured the windswept snow drifts. By this time of year they usually would have moved out of the area, closer to the lowlands near the lakeshore, and with the lack of sign elsewhere I thought they had. Now I imagined a few remaining grizzled old bucks striding this ridge and surveying their

vast kingdom one last time before following the rest of the herd.

I stepped gingerly over the uneven knoll, careful not to wreck my snowshoes on the rocks. The snow blanket thinned closer to the cliff, even blown down to leaves in some places. I glimpsed the weathered tent fragment poking through a powdery dusting, an out-of-place red blaze. Like a tripwire it sent anticipation and excitement flaring up inside me.

I forced my way through the ice-coated, tangled shrub-wall to once again stand in awe on the bare rock. I was respectful and did not speak this time, but just listened. The sky sat completely cloud-covered, an even gray, the sun a dim orb whose filtered light barely illuminated the vast rolling sea of trees. Heavy snow snakes lay draped over bare branches; bunches of green needles sat iced-over, stiff as blades. The drab white terrain blended with Lake Superior where ice had extended out from the shore. Beyond, a flat, frigid blue ran to the horizon. It was as if the land had been swept clean and primed, a blank canvas awaiting the blooming colors of spring that were sure to come.

Still standing strong were those ancient white pine sentinels. And still blowing was the wind, colder now than before but purer, cleaner, having stripped away the last scent of stagnant decay from the valleys. White crystal flecks burst tingling against my bare face, driven by the wind and causing my eyes to water. Besides its low, pulsing roar and random dried and yellowed birch leaves rustling lightly on their branches, there was no other sound. The land rested and was purified, patiently awaiting spring and the continuing cycle as old as creation. The land did not speak. In its silent majesty hung peace and confidence, the fruit of some sort of unshakeable faith.

Years later and far away, with new stresses and concerns threatening to drown me, that picture remains vivid in my mind. I imagine things have changed. The lookout spot has probably been strangled with brush, and the trees may have grown taller to block the view. A few of those massive white pines have probably fallen to rest

after their faithful watch. Maybe that tent piece still flutters in the wind. Maybe it's gone. But the memory hasn't changed. I close my eyes and see myself, feel myself standing on that snowy ridge. A stranger may have thought the place heartless and harsh, but I knew it better. And in some way it knew me and had become part of me. And I, it. No red tag marks my passage. No sign tells my story. As much in the present as the past I whisper to the ridge, "I will return someday." I feel a light tug on my heart. "And I can never forget you. Will you remember me?"

A muffled roar reaches my ears, and gradually grows. Then suddenly the wind is both close and far off, carrying a timeless promise on its wings.

“Blowing in the Wind,” by Ethan Law

Instructor’s Note

Ethan Law’s essay “Blowing in the Wind,” describes the process by which wind turbines harness wind to create renewable energy. According to William Zinsser, renowned writer and teacher of writing, a person who can describe how something works can write anything. In this informative paper, Ethan clearly articulates the process by which wind turbines harness the wind to create energy. Even though Ethan is writing about a scientific topic, he clearly communicates his ideas to non-scientists with clear organization, analogies, and the human connection he makes with his readers. Analyze how the use of clear organization, analogies, and a human connection allows Ethan to communicate effectively with the essay’s readers.

Writer’s Biography

Ethan Law is a freshman Computer Engineering major from Virginia. He always enjoyed writing as a simple diversion, but was challenged to broaden his genres and refine his style while studying at Cedarville. He enjoys rooting for the Duke Blue Devils, participating in athletics, and spending his free time outdoors.

Blowing in the Wind

On a typical day in Cedarville, the casual observer will notice the hourly plight of students like me as we plod to class, desperately fighting the wind. Perhaps that observer will join me in my amused attention to young women who swat and claw at their hair to keep it out of their faces. Or perhaps the observer and I could witness a defenseless walker get blown off balance and into another person. I feel sympathy for those who attempt biking and longboarding, and especially for those unfortunate few who, on a rainy day, lose their umbrellas to the mayhem.

I, like many students, wonder if there exists a profitable use to this unusual windiness. Long ago, the medieval Persians contemplated the same thing and invented the windmill (Musgrove 15-6). Today, wind turbines meet one of society's greatest needs, electricity, by harnessing the free resource of wind. In a wind turbine, rotary motion from the blades travels through a driveshaft into a gearbox and then into a generator, which powers the controls and produces electricity.

The power generating process begins with rotating turbine blades. Power companies build wind farms in areas with strong, consistent wind to rotate the turbines. Dr. Pramod Jain uses his experience as president of Innovative Wind Energy to explain turbine generators in his book, *Wind Energy Engineering*. Engineers like Jain have designed the blades to produce maximum efficiency with minimum production costs. Engineers have developed many different types of blades, but the most common is a twisted, airfoil design. Because the blades have a twisted shape, they face forward and look wide in the center, but face laterally and look narrow near the ends. This creates greater efficiency because of the aerodynamics taking place as the tips of the blades move faster than the middle. Most blades also have an airfoil design, like the wing of an airplane. Just like an airplane receives lift from the air passing over its wings, a windmill rotates when air passing over its blades provides the blades with a lifting force. Many blades also have tips that can turn to prevent the blades from rotating, slowing them down much like landing flaps stop an airplane (43-5). Airfoil-style rotor blades only begin the process, however, and they must somehow connect to the electricity-generating components.

The rotor blades connect to a central hub, which turns a driveshaft inside the nacelle. The nacelle is the encasement on top of the wind tower that houses all the electricity-generating parts (Jain 173). According to engineering professionals Dr. Robert Gasch and Jochen Twele in their book *Wind and Solar Power Systems*, the hub acts as a central point for the blades to connect. Hubs typically exhibit simplicity, but some varieties feature

flapping or teetering, which allow the blades to bend in the wind. This keeps the blades from breaking or rocking when the wind intensifies. The hub connects to the driveshaft, which rests on a series of low-friction bearings and supports (59-63). These bearings operate much like those in the wheels of a Cedarville student's longboard. In a longboard, bearings allow the wheels to turn freely, just like they do for a driveshaft. The driveshaft transfers the rotating motion of the blades into the gearbox, which sits in the nacelle.

Gearboxes transform the slow, powerful rotation of the blades into a much quicker rotation needed for the generator. A gearbox transfers the speed of the rotors into an appropriate speed for the generator. For example, a gear ratio of 1:7 means that for every time the rotor blades complete a revolution, the generator on the other side of the gearbox turns seven times. The gearbox does this by a series of gears linked together and fine-tuned for maximum efficiency. The types of gears vary from round spur gears to triangular bevel gears. The most common type, a planetary gear, has several spur gears inside of one stationary ring. Some applications even use belts or chains to change the low-speed rotation of the driveshaft into a quicker rotation for the generator. A lubrication system must keep the box oiled to prevent the gears from overheating and destroying the system. Because of the complexity of a gearbox, unreliability and inefficiency often stem from a poorly-designed or under-maintained gear system in a wind turbine. For this reason, some turbines use other methods to bypass using a gearbox, but typically only in small wind projects (Gasch and Twele 77-9). After increasing the speed of the rotation, the gearbox passes the rotary motion to the generator through a coupling mechanism.

The generator produces the electricity in a wind turbine. A generator consists of two parts, a rotor and a stator. The rotor is a magnet that rotates inside the surrounding stator. Because of a physical property called Faraday's Law of Induction, a magnet can induce a current in a wire. If the magnetic field cuts across a coil of wire,

like it would in a rotating generator, then the wire obtains Alternating Current (Jain 198-203). The rate at which the generator produces this current depends on the speed of the rotation. Unfortunately, the wind doesn't always blow the same speed, especially in places like Cedarville. Generators compensate for this by allowing different numbers of wire coils to turn on depending on the speed of the wind. Once the generator starts pumping the electric current, it travels away from the generator to either the wind turbine's control mechanisms or to the power grid.

The small portion of the current that stays in the turbine regulates and controls many aspects of the electricity-producing process. Dr. Mukund Patel, who has engineered for several of the largest firms in the world and gained recognition from NASA for his work, writes about some of these control systems in *Wind and Solar Power Systems*. He explains that the main control systems include a stall controller, a yaw drive, a computer, and numerous sensors. The sensors measure wind speed, temperature, current flow, and other critical values and send them to the computer. The computer decides what systems need to be activated and when. It also sends collected data to a control center so operators can make manual adjustments if necessary. The yaw drive turns the direction that the windmill is facing by driving a gear along a small track that goes around the inside of turbine's tower. The stall controller, according to Patel, starts up the turbine when the wind reaches eight to fifteen miles per hour and shuts it off around fifty to seventy to prevent overheating or damage (61). These stall controllers sit in the hub and slow down the turbine by tweaking the direction the rotors point. This creates an aerodynamic disturbance that "stalls" the turbine. Many wind turbines also implement disc brakes on the driveshaft or hub to help stall a turbine that is turning too fast. All of these controls help ensure that the windmill generates electricity properly.

The final step requires transporting generated electricity to where it belongs. Since wind farms often lie far out in the countryside, high-voltage power lines take the electricity to the urban centers that demand it. Power

electronics ensure that the current alternates at the proper frequency. They can also siphon any current needed either to run the wind farm or to charge turbine batteries (Jain 242). AC electricity coming from the generator passes through a series of transformers that raise its voltage so it can survive the long trip to the city.

Thus the nemesis of Cedarville students produces a necessary commodity. In fact, some engineers surveyed Cedarville for a potential wind farm, but found the wind to be too inconsistent (Schumacher). Other Midwestern areas, however, are investing in wind power. The whole world is keeping its eyes open to the possibilities of renewable energy, as described by Peter Musgrove in his book, *Wind Power*. Musgrove led the movement for the implementation of wind farms in Great Britain. He suggests wind power as a viable renewable energy source for a world facing an impending energy crisis. Constant advances in technology are making renewable energy sources comparable with coal and oil in price and practicality (209-225). So I face my daily fate with joy, knowing that the wind in my face is powering someone's home today, and maybe mine one day, too.

Analysis Papers

“A Vision of Racism Diminished,” by Kyle Reilly

Instructor’s Note

In the following essay, Kyle responds to a visual prompt, a Norman Rockwell painting of the first day of school for a child caught in the turbulence of civil rights school integration in the United States. The paper first describes Rockwell’s ability to portray people in such a way that we respond with understanding to them – the little girl walking in pride and perhaps fear, the deputies shown only partially and impersonally. Kyle then deals with the details and contrasts of color, and how these communicate a great deal about the child’s stressful situation. Finally, he notes particular accents in the image which conceptualize for us the personal impact of integration. With Kyle’s clear and diverse wording in a well-organized essay, the painting comes alive for us and illustrates for us how an image can be a composition that speaks as loudly as words.

Writer’s Biography

Kyle Reilly is a sophomore Physics major from Detroit, Michigan. He is a very slow writer, but then again you can’t rush an artist, or, apparently, a physicist. When not slaving over calculus problems, Kyle enjoys acting in the Cedarville plays and hanging out in the dorm.

A Vision of Racism Diminished

Growing up in Detroit, one realizes that racism still plagues the human race. As diminished as it may be in recent years, (or perhaps just hidden) it still thrives in some pockets of society. In the long history of social strife that has led to the current state of affairs, few pieces have been as memorable as “The Problem We All Live With,” an oil painting on canvas by Norman Rockwell. In this piece, Rockwell utilizes distinct people, contrasting color, and a plain, accented background to make a commentary on the issues surrounding the integration of public schools.

People in images have the ability to evoke emotions in viewers more powerfully than most other visual elements. Rockwell clearly knew this, and knew better than most artists of the last century how to portray the emotions of his subjects and how to capture the emotions of his audiences. This particular painting has a rather simple appearance, with little action and only a few fairly distinguishable persons. The picture centers on a small, pretty, African-American girl. She holds two books, two pencils, and a ruler in her left hand, walking in the plane of the canvas. Four gentlemen walk in step around her, two behind and two in front, all wearing gold badges and armbands signifying their position of "Deputy US Marshall." From this context alone, one can determine that this piece depicts an instance of the integration of public schools during the 1950s and '60s. Rockwell makes use of the postures and actions of these people to help create the emotion of the scene. The girl holds her head high and leads her gait with her chest, showing a true, yet humble, confidence. Surrounded by her guards, she pays no mind to the rest of the world, heading for her destination with gusto. However, she walks out of step with the guards, appreciative of and reliant on their protection and authority, but showing that she remains her own person.

Rockwell portrays the deputies rather differently. Most strikingly, Rockwell leaves off the heads of the deputies in the picture. This portrays the guards as impersonal, detached from the situation, almost part of the scenery, in order to exemplify the actions of the US Marshall and US government as a whole, rather than those of the guards specifically. To further emphasize this point, Rockwell shows the guards walking in step, all with the same arm position, showing their unified representation of the State. The five walk confidently toward the left hand side of the scene, aware of the tension exhibited in the background, but unshaken in their determination to accomplish their goal.

Along with his varying treatment of different people in the painting, Rockwell uses contrasting colors in different areas to create different moods and themes,

mostly in relation to these people. One finds the clearest example of this contrast in the center of the piece, in the clothes of the little girl. The small black child immediately catches the eye of the audience, wearing a white dress, white shoes, white socks, and white ribbons in her black braided hair. This further sets the girl apart as the main character of the painting, adding to the effect of her uniqueness among the four men. Rockwell also uses this stark contrast of color to bring out the message of his painting and of the event which it commemorates. The color white almost always symbolizes themes such as purity, innocence, and peace. He thus portrays the girl as pure in her intentions, innocent of the hate shown in the background of the picture, and at peace despite the opposition to her mission.

Although the other color contrasts in the picture appear much less stark, they convey significant messages. One can see an example of this in the hands of the men escorting the little girl. Since Rockwell does not show their heads, the observer can only see the skin of the men on their hands. He uses these small objects to subtly demonstrate a proof of the argument underlying the Civil Rights Movement. He paints the hands with detailed shading, thus capturing the many skin tones found in various places about the hands and between different hands. For instance, the man on the right in the foreground has a much darker right hand than left hand. This cannot be a lighting effect, as the man on the left in the foreground, who holds his hands in an almost identical position, has nearly the same color and tone in both. Rockwell uses these small differences to show that no two “whites” have identical skin tones, nor do the two hands of a person necessarily. This demonstrates that a rational person cannot truly think in terms of “black” and “white,” or “colored” and “white,” for every individual simply has a unique variation on the universal human color. This then serves to prove the fact that “all men are created equal,” and that a person’s character and value has no correlation with his or her skin color.

The background of a picture, like the foreground, has the ability to form the message and feel of a picture, while creating much of the context of the scene. Rockwell makes some interesting choices in the creation of this background, giving little of the context in the body of the background and instead using only accents to reveal the setting. He portrays the five characters walking to the left, directly perpendicular to the view of the observer. They walk along an undistinguished concrete sidewalk, at the base of an undistinguished concrete wall. The bland background allows the audience to pay more attention to the other details of the picture. Furthermore, the plainness of the background emphasizes the normalcy of the emotions expressed in the accents, in the context of the picture.

Graffiti makes up two of the three accents in the photo, giving the clearest context in the picture through painted words on the wall. Top and center there appears the word “NIGGER” in large, faded black letters. While not specific to a certain town or date, this simple word works with the other elements to paint a clear picture of a 1950s or ‘60s city plagued by racism. This word has rightly become a deeper cultural taboo than any other in the last half century, and thus this simple graffiti evokes emotions of sadness, rage, regret, and many others in response to the blind racism depicted here. The other instance of graffiti hides in the top left corner, almost hidden by the man in the left of the foreground, but its effect has no less power than that of the centerpiece. In much smaller letters, “K.K.K.” appears, almost as if scratched into the concrete by some young, passionate gang member. Again, few other letter combinations parallel these in driving the emotions of an audience. Rockwell finishes these small but powerful emotional punches with a sign of the immanent but invisible crowds. In the top right corner, just covering the last letter of “NIGGER,” the wall shows the splattered guts of a poorly aimed tomato. Its mangled body on the ground beneath evidences the angry and demonstrative, though unseen, crowds nearby, directly connecting this act of disrespect and animosity to the scene presented in the foreground. Rockwell brings these elements together with a

bland and unobtrusive body for the background, allowing the accents to grab the attention and emotions of the audience.

The distinct people, contrasting color, and plain, accented background in the Rockwell painting “The Problem We All Live With” reverently commemorates the struggle of integrating public schools in the mid-1900s, which serves as a reminder of the ugly past and an exhortation to a more beautiful future. Humanity may never fully eradicate the problem of racism, but the example of school integration gives some hope of its diminishing in the years to come.

Rockwell, Norman. *The Problem We All Live With*. 1963. Norman Rockwell Museum Collection, Niles, IL. *Discovering Arguments*. Fourth ed. New York: Prentice Hall, 2012. 315. Print.

“Humanizing the Future,” by Jessica Evanoff

Instructor’s Note

In this essay, Jessica Evanoff examines the rhetorical strategies Mark Slouka uses in his article “Dehumanized”. Jessica effectively achieves her purpose by writing a thesis that states her position on the overall effectiveness of Slouka’s rhetoric, as opposed to his position on his topic. What do you think works well in this essay? What could be improved upon and how?

Writer’s Biography

Jessica Evanoff is a freshman Undeclared major from Cincinnati, Ohio. She has always enjoyed writing academically as well as for pleasure. Her other favorite activities include reading, singing, and hanging out with friends and family.

Humanizing the future

Mark Slouka’s article “Dehumanized” argues that the humanities should not be trivialized in education. Slouka claims that the humanities play a vital role in shaping the human mind and are an indispensable part of the education system. He opposes the popular opinion which holds that math and science should be the school’s only focus. He condemns society’s practice of turning “American education into an adjunct of business, an instrument of production” (1). Today’s leaders favor math and science over the humanities because the products of the humanities cannot be objectively measured or observed. When addressing modifications to the education system, America’s standing in the global economy is of the greatest concern. Upon graduation, a person’s potential to obtain a job and contribute to the economy is of utmost importance. The humanities are rendered useless. Instead of producing a rise in the nation’s GDP, the humanities produce well-rounded citizens with democratic values (7). The fine arts

do not produce employees. In contrast, they produce critical thinkers who challenge the accepted and try to improve the human condition.

Slouka holds that the two sides fighting for control over education cannot be merged. Although some art supporters try to connect the humanities with economic growth, its acceptance is impossible because math and science always dominate. No matter how eager the humanities are to fit in, they will never belong and will always be ignored or infantilized (11). Champions for the humanities, Slouka suggests, should not accept society's devaluation. Instead of trying to appeal to economic potential, the humanities should advocate its own benefits, mainly its political values. The arts transform people into responsible, moral, influential citizens who can contribute more to the world than a dollar amount. Because economists cannot specifically identify and articulate the art's benefits, the vocational and civic will always be imbalanced in America's educational system (8). Another result of this imbalance will be the exclusion of values from the schools. Math and science, which are in most cases politically neutral, control the schools because they do not upset anyone. They only render product, which is almost always associated with "unambiguous good" (9). Slouka asserts that human character, not wealth and material products, are of true value.

Slouka effectively persuades his readers to support the teaching of humanities in schools by glorifying their effects on society and by emphasizing the potential consequences their exclusion might have on society. Slouka claims that the humanities are an essential part of education. The variety of data he supplies to support his claim also creates ethos. He persuades readers of his trustworthiness and credibility by choosing a vast array of sources. His sources include poets, *New York Times* editorialists, billionaires, Greek philosophers, scientists, English teachers, and more. Not only are his sources diverse in type, they also express different perspectives. For example, Slouka cites four *New York Times* editorialists who all view education in economic terms.

They all testify that the American education system is “failing to produce the fluent writers required by the new economy” (3). Slouka attests to the validity of their information by saying “no doubt it is” (3), but then goes on to scold them for pandering to only one viewpoint. In doing this, Slouka proves his responsibility. He shows readers that he has thoroughly examined both sides of the issue. His inclusion of his credentials as a Ph.D. in literature, a magazine editor, and an author also add to the authority of his arguments.

Slouka tries his best to paint the humanities in a positive light. He associates the humanities with ideas that hold positive connotations such as hope, morality, and democracy. The idea that the humanities “form citizens, men and women capable of furthering what’s best about humanity and forestalling what’s worst” (3) is purposefully emotionally appealing. This utilization of pathos aids in making readers supportive of the humanities. Throughout the article, the humanities are associated with the reasoned search for the truth of what it means to be fully human. Slouka knows that people today face a world of uncertainty when it comes to understanding the human condition. He tries to draw attention to the humanities by claiming that they take part in “expanding the reach of understanding” (7). He tries to convince readers that the humanities will give them insight or enlightenment into the meaning of their lives. The repetition of the various forms of the word ‘human’, such as ‘humanities’, ‘humanistic’ and ‘humanize’, is intended to make the reader feel an emotional connection to Slouka’s claim. Readers are humans. Slouka wants them to grasp the importance of the humanities in relation to humans.

Slouka’s warrant is especially effective. He practically forces readers to accept his logic by using phrases such as “one might assume” (3) and “one might reasonably expect” (10). His reference to an ambiguous third person creates logos in his argument. These phrases imply that any rational person would agree with his warrant and that the humanities are necessary to expand society’s perspectives. The warrant is backed by the notion that

society needs citizens who are able to resist to manipulation and to think critically. If the humanities fail, Slouka proposes that America will become “a nation of employees, not citizens” (2). This method of validating a claim by referencing an unknown person is a logical fallacy. Slouka begs the question when he compels readers to accept his argument as true without any evidence.

Slouka declares that excluding or disregarding the humanities in schools will have harmful consequences on society by employing pathos to invoke fear in readers. He warns that “by downsizing what is most dangerous (and most essential) about our education, namely the deep civic function of the arts and the humanities, the world will be made safe for commerce, but not safe” (2). Using fear to alienate readers from the economic perspective is a recurring tactic of Slouka’s. He creates a frightening image when he claims that if economists have their way, individual workers will be reduced to “the curricular equivalent of potted plants” (3). By suggesting that they plan on dehumanizing workers, Slouka distances readers from economic advocates. Slouka also includes very strong words to emphasize his viewpoint and weaken his opposition. Words such as “stunning” (3), “depressing” (4), “breathtaking” (4), and “foolishness” (5) all convey a negative tone towards the arguments of his opposition. This negative, emotional language will have a lasting impact on readers, making it difficult for them to agree with any other opinion but Slouka’s.

Firm, unyielding language permeates Slouka’s writing. He is very passionate in his attempt to persuade readers to his point of view. Often, he downright denies the validity of the arguments of those advocating against the humanities. His qualifier is that there are many things that math and science do well, but his rebuttal is that they do not inspire a democratic spirit of questioning. Although some scientists may disagree and argue that the sciences do produce critical thinkers, Slouka states that “it is not so. Science, by and large, keeps to its reservation, which explains why scientists tend to get in trouble only when they step outside the lab” (9). His bold criticism surprises

readers and forces them to question their preconceived notions about math and science.

Slouka refuses to allow advocates of math and science any room to claim that they have any connections to democracy. He states that “a democracy requires its citizens to actually risk something, to test the limits of the acceptable” (9). Math and science rarely do this, for example, “Nobody was ever sent to prison for espousing the wrong value for the Hubble constant” (8). It is the humanities that require one to look beyond the visible into the unknown. When one explores the mysterious and searches for truth through the humanities, political wisdom will emerge. Slouka also says that “political freedom, whatever the market evangelists may tell us, is not an automatic by-product of a growing economy” (7). Despite advocates of math and science who disagree, Slouka insists that democratic institutions “just don’t” spring up in the tire tracks of commerce (7). Slouka refuses to accede any victories, albeit small, to his opposition.

Slouka stresses the importance of the humanities with extreme urgency. His obvious passion easily translates to readers. The various persuasive techniques he uses are another testament to his determination to prove that the humanities should be a central part of the American education system. Readers cannot ignore the strong arguments he makes advocating the education of the humanities in schools instead of math and science. His inclusion of the Toulmin model, ethos, pathos and logos, repetition, and tone contribute to his effectiveness. Although his arguments contain logical fallacies, they actually coerce readers into accepting his logic. Slouka attempts to create a more enlightened world by persuading his readers to care about the humanities.

“A Relatable Case for the Arts,” by Julia Evanoff

Instructor’s Note

This essay is Julia Evanoff’s analysis of Mark Slouka’s article “Dehumanized.” Julia does a great job speaking to a general audience that may or may not be familiar with Slouka’s article by first providing context for the article, as far as when and where it appeared, and then supplying enough summary, paraphrase, and direct quote to support her assertions in proper MLA format. Can you identify Julia’s organizational pattern? How else might she have chosen to organize her essay?

Writer’s Biography

Julia Evanoff is a freshman biology major from Cincinnati. She has always enjoyed writing and reading fiction.

A Relatable Case for the Arts

Something is seriously wrong with the status quo of our educational system. This is the cry of Mark Slouka in his article entitled “Dehumanized: When Math and Science Rule the School” that appeared in the September 2009 issue of *Harper’s Magazine*. In this article, Slouka outlines his major qualms with the current state of affairs regarding the neglect of the humanities in education. According to Slouka, the increasing shift in investment and focus toward math and science results in the detrimental loss of society’s ability to reason and think critically. He argues against this growing movement favoring mathematics and science through a persuasive blend of logos and pathos, mixing logical evidence with humor and relatability.

Slouka begins his article with a personal story demonstrating how the field of humanities is losing face in the world of popular opinion. Art, history, music—or literature, in Slouka’s case—are no longer regarded as a worthwhile profession. We are what we are taught, and

right now the humanities are quickly vanishing from the list of vitally important subjects. Slouka asserts that “What is taught, at any given time, in any culture, is an expression of what that culture considers important”(2). The educational system has experienced a dramatic shift toward the subjects that train young people to compete in the corporate world. The result is a “corporate culture, hypnotized by quarterly results and profit margins...”(2). What proceeds out of this is the belief that only the subjects directly involved with economic development are worth teaching. The humanities have essentially been “outmaneuvered” and replaced by more productive pursuits. This is extremely disconcerting for Slouka, and he goes on to tell us why.

Slouka then goes on to describe our culture’s obsession with the economy. He argues that everything ultimately finds worth within its relationship to the market. Every entertainer, athlete, artist, and institution must measure up to the demands of the economy. It all comes down to one question: Can your presence be justified in accordance with the terms of those who seek to gain capital?(3) If not, you are out. This is the fate of the humanities within the educational system. Slouka argues that by downsizing this important area of study, “...we’re well on the way to producing a nation of employees, not citizens”(2). Preparing students for future employment is not the only important thing. Personal growth must be achieved before technical training.

Having established this, Slouka continues by pointing out the flaw in the claims and logic used by several writers and editorialists. They argue that if economic growth is the end goal of education, then a good education system should be competitive. America is letting other countries like Singapore pass us up in the race to be the best. Naturally, the only solution to this problem is math and science. If educators focus all their energy on this, success will surely follow. Slouka argues that this is not the case. He criticizes the objective path to “success” by stating that higher SAT scores bring better outcomes just as “X equal[s] the cold”(5). He also criticizes those supporters of the arts that are “contorting themselves to

fit”(6). Trying to save themselves, these people try to portray the arts as necessary for economic success. Therefore, art has no intrinsic value; creativity is simply a means to an economic end. This is not good enough for Slouka.

Slouka builds his case for the humanities by relating them to political freedom. This freedom, he argues, is “not an automatic by-product of a growing economy”(7). Therefore, an education system focused only on math and science will not promote democracy. Instruction in the humanities is needed to foster the growth of democratic values and ideas. However, this necessity is often overlooked because failure in the humanities is not as measureable as failure in math and science. The arts are viewed as “values education,” and therefore declared off-limits (8). Not wanting to be controversial, we have silenced the humanities. Slouka describes the counter-productiveness of this in saying, “Fearful of propaganda, we’ve taken away the only tools that could detect and counter it”(8). There is no such thing as humanities without values, but this is not a bad thing. The civic nature of the humanities infects people with the ability to question, form values, and take risks. This is nearly impossible in the science world separated from the general population by jargon.

Slouka continues by criticizing our country’s love affair with math and science. Not only is this subject area favored in the court of public opinion, but it is also promoted by the government. Presidents, corporations, and institutions are practically throwing money at it, establishing math and science as the only measurements of intelligence. The result is complacency and despair among proponents of the arts. Slouka counters this with several examples of individuals who haven’t given up. They are working diligently to reinstate the reputation of the arts and show that the humanities are a necessary investment in “what makes us human”(13).

I found Slouka’s argument to be persuasive because of his balance of pathos and logos. Never focusing too much on one or the other, Slouka maintains credibility by

responding to evidence in a relatable way. He creates logos by providing quotations and examples, and he creates pathos through his use of rhetorical questions, casual diction, and humor. This gives him a base for his claims and also helps him gain the attention and support of his audience. His overall conversational tone establishes his audience as his ally, causing them to feel as if they are already on his side.

Slouka develops logos through his response to the claims of other writers that have presented on the topic of education. By providing quotations and examples of opposing viewpoints, he is able to criticize the logical flaws that exist in the conflicting argument. His audience has a better picture of what he is trying to prove because they know how to disprove the opposite. An example of this occurs when Slouka cites a *New York Times* article describing how the education system is failing to produce the fluent writers necessary for a good economy. He responds to this by saying, “No doubt it is, but the sin of omission here is both telling and representative. Might there be another reason for seeking to develop fluent writers?”(3). By insinuating that the humanities have multiple purposes, he takes evidence in favor of one position and spins it to support his own argument. Another instance of this occurs when Slouka quotes from a *Times* article in which success is portrayed as a natural outcome of high SAT scores. Responding to this argument, Slouka claims, “Brooks hopes that we will overlook both the fact that his constant (success) is a variable and that the terms are way unequal, as the kids might say”(5). By referencing the flaws in the ideas of others, Slouka logically develops his own argument.

He develops an emotional connection by directly addressing his audience through rhetorical questions. When he asks, “What *do* our kids need to know today?” (4), he is trying to get his audience thinking. They want to know what he is going to say next. It makes them feel as if they are personally involved with his thought process. This in turn peaks the interest of the readers and gets them more invested in what he is trying to say. These questions serve

the double purpose of reinforcing his claims and relating to his audience, guiding them in the right direction. For example, Slouka asks, “Why is every Crisis in American Education cast as an economic threat and never a civic one? In part, because we don’t have the language for it” (7). His question peaks the interest of the reader, and his answer previews his argument that is to follow. This makes for a persuasive pattern.

Slouka cultivates this emotional connection further through idioms and casual diction. His careful combination of formal and informal language shows his desire to relate to his audience. Although he presents a valid and logical argument through facts and analysis, he does not rely solely on logos to persuade his readers. He uses figures of speech to reinforce his ideas in a way that will resonate with everyday people. For example, Slouka asks his audience to “*Cue the curtain*” after claiming that the education system is accountable to business (6). This idiomatic phrase follows up on his assertion and drives his point home. Readers can understand what Slouka is saying because they are familiar with how he is saying it. His inclusion of other expressions such as “*Everything else can go fish*” and “*Muzzle the trumpets, still the drums*” further emphasizes his desire to express his position to a wide audience. Most ordinary people may not respond to the idea of math and science *overwhelming* the market share, but they will probably get the picture of them *gobbling it up* (9). Slouka wants his argument to be heard by people of all backgrounds and intelligence levels, and to do that he must speak in language that makes a complex issue more understandable. His article is not just an appeal to his fellow academics, but a plea to the common man.

Another way Slouka establishes a connection with his audience is through humor. Again he appeals to his audience in a relatable way. Most of this humor is expressed as facetiousness and sarcasm. By saying the opposite of what he really means, he reinforces his point. For example, after talking about how education is about more than job preparation, he says, “I’m joking, of course. Education in America today is almost exclusively about the

GDP”(3). He sarcastically presents the opposite point of view in order to strengthen his own. He does this again later in the article when he says, “Ah, Singapore. [...] If only we could be more like Singapore” (4). These humorous moments also provide a break in the serious tone of his argument. As a result, readers are more likely to feel interested and emotionally connected to what he has to say.

Slouka also develops pathos throughout his entire argument by establishing a conversational tone. This article was originally published in *Harper’s Magazine*, which is a magazine about the arts. Therefore Slouka’s intended audience was people who are already interested and sympathetic to his cause. By grouping his audience together with him through the use of collective pronouns such as “we,” he creates a sort of “Us vs. Them” mentality. This creates an emotional connection between him and his audience, making them more willing to listen. During one instance of this, Slouka says, “You have to admire the skill with which we’ve been outmaneuvered; there’s something almost chess-like in the way the other side has narrowed the field, neutralized lines of attack, co-opted the terms of battle”(2). By aligning himself with his audience, he creates an environment that encourages them to consider his point of view.

Mark Slouka’s appeal for the arts effectively persuades readers through a relevant tone and a logical response to different points of view. By building a sense of solidarity through rhetorical questions, casual diction, and humor, he succeeds in gaining the interest of his audience. Slouka knows that a well-rounded education is essential for all, so he wants his argument to be understood and appreciated by all. By blending logos with pathos, he ensures that his call to action will be beneficial for all.

“Bradbury’s Message in *Fahrenheit 451*,” by Michelle Toth

Instructor’s Note

For this essay, Michelle Toth needed to write an example of textual analysis. Students had the option to analyze and evaluate any text, whether that be a song, a film, a website, or an advertisement. Michelle chose to analyze a classic dystopian novel that provides insight into our own contemporary culture. By narrowing in on two specific symbols in the novel, Michelle focuses her analysis and makes a commentary on how the author “sends an unfortunately truthful message.” As such, Michelle also sends a truthful message to her audience about the potential consequences of not thinking deeply. What do you think of Bradbury’s, and thus, Michelle’s warning about entertainment and technology? How does Michelle advocate for reading and thinking through her essay? How does she structure her essay so that she can both analyze and evaluate her text rather than just summarizing or describing it?

Writer’s Biography

Michelle Toth is a freshman Early Childhood Education major from Lafayette, Indiana. She began to appreciate writing and develop her talent under Mrs. Lana Smith and Mrs. Sheryl Bereman, her junior and senior high English teachers. When she is not studying, Michelle enjoys reading and spending time with family and friends.

*Bradbury’s Message in *Fahrenheit 451**

But, Mom, why do I have to do my stupid English homework before I watch TV? I already know how to read, how to speak, and how to write. I’m never going to use anything I learn in this class for the rest of my life. I don’t even learn anything new in that class! I hate that class, my teacher is stupid, and I don’t care about it at all! All my

teacher does is make me read boring books that don't mean anything. Complaints like these are typical in homes of a junior high or a high schooler, who is indifferent toward learning, thinking deeply, analyzing, and evaluating. Yet the apathy many teens exhibit should not come as a surprise because of the manifest ways in which parents and society as a whole constantly expose them to the latest shallow entertainment. The culture increasingly grows apathetic to thinking deeply, impulsively reaching out to be entertained with their eyes glued to the TV or computer screen. In his excellently written novel *Fahrenheit 451*, esteemed author Ray Bradbury astutely warns of the impending destruction and emptiness of a culture with an intellect numbed by technological entertainment, specifically TV, through his scholarly use of symbolism.

One of the first notable symbols is the Mechanical Hound, which the firemen used to find books and to scare people into obeying them. The Mechanical Hound represents the enemy that technology could become if the desire to learn did not temper it. Because their desire to become more efficient in all that they do was applied to learning, as well, they rested on and eventually crossed the borderline between heavily relying on technology and only relying on technology in their culture as a whole. With this, they also numbed their senses and came to a stage of apathy in their learning, which is represented by the needle that the hound sticks people with. Technology becomes their enemy as they keep trying to develop things more quickly and keep more entertained. In doing so, they create this monster that eventually will turn on them if they start investigating books, reading, and thinking deeply. Thus, the hound becomes their worst nightmare, desiring to control them, to stop them from participating in any of these activities.

Another excellently used symbol is the character Mildred Montag, who is Guy Montag's wife. Mildred represents the apathy that comes with overloading your senses with TV. She is incessantly hooked up to some form of technology, ranging from her earphones that help her sleep to her TV that encloses her into the realm of what

she might call her happy place. What Mildred does not realize, though, is that she is destroying her mind, and, if she did realize it, the idea would just bother her and push her more towards losing herself in technology once more. Bradbury uses her self-imposed enslavement to drive home the point that if people are not careful of how much they expose themselves to electronic entertainment, they have the potential to harm not only themselves but the entire nation or society. In so doing, society would be saying that they want to trade in the ability to think and reason rationally with shallow, non-stop entertainment, creating a world of fake happiness and contentment.

Bradbury does an outstanding job of defending the truth of his position through this book with his excellent use of symbolism involving both objects and characters. The validity of his message can be seen in the American culture, even the world at large. His repetitive use of symbolism further enhances the portrayal of the truth in a dramatic, futuristic setting. The setting allows the reader to focus in on one point and the symbols make that point.

In his excellently written novel *Fahrenheit 451*, esteemed author Ray Bradbury astutely warns of the impending destruction and emptiness of a culture with an intellect numbed by technological entertainment, specifically TV, through his scholarly use of symbolism. While technology is not inherently evil or sinful, man does have the ability to manipulate it in the wrong way, which is exactly Bradbury's point. He wants us to be wise, intellectual analyzers and evaluators of all that we take in through any source, including technology. He desires that we refuse to let our minds go blank, jacked up by an overdose of entertainment. Interestingly enough, society already is wrestling with this issue and should continue to do so, fighting for its amazing freedom to exercise the mind in various outlets of thinking deeply.

Research Papers

**“On Cursive Writing, Keyboarding, and Handwriting:
An Argument of Efficacy,” by Madison Grapes, Elise
Parsons, and Ruth Towne**

Instructor’s Note

Madison Grapes, Elise Parsons, and Ruth Towne’s argumentative synthesis demonstrates how effectively freshmen can collaborate on a research project. When Madie, Elise, and Ruth first ran their topic choice by me, I initially responded, “Are you sure this is a viable topic? Is it even controversial?” Because they’d already conducted some preliminary research, they were able to answer that question in detail: Presently, educators disagree for many reasons on how important it is for students to learn cursive writing. The three students’ paper represents the attentiveness to detail, thoroughness of research, and thoughtful consideration of opposing viewpoints this type of persuasive essay requires. It also meets its intended audience of scholars and sensitively negotiates the complexities educators and their students face in regards to this controversy. Although you may never have considered whether students should learn cursive writing in elementary school, what do you conclude after reading this essay? Think about what does, or doesn’t, convince you? What do you find to be the most effective part of the paper? How does the paper live up to its name and synthesize diverse scholars’ perspectives? And as you read it, could you see yourself, back in elementary school, learning (or not learning, as the case may be) cursive writing? If so, how did these writers incorporate appeals to pathos amid such a scholarly discussion that is logoi-heavy?

Writers’ Biographies

Enjoying her first year at Cedarville, Madison Grapes (or Madie) is a sophomore by credit and plans on achieving a dual major in English and Graphic Design. If she ever finds some free time, she enjoys reading the classics, writing flash fiction, playing her violin, and singing with the Cedarville University Women’s Choir.

Apart from her artsy side, she proudly cheers on the sports teams from her hometown of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Elise Parsons, a Graphic Design and English dual major, has taken her love of poignant words and images all over the United States following her father's Air Force career. She continues to entertain (and pester) her supportive family with scraps of original poetry and serial fiction while living at home in Cedarville, Ohio. While she is most often on the edges of events with a camera or notebook, you may also find her jogging or playing tennis, performing in the viola section of the Cedarville University Orchestra, or making progress on her growing list of books to read.

A native of Southern Maine, Ruth Towne is a freshman Technical and Professional Communications major with a Creative Writing minor. Because she enjoys her tea-time, Russian novels, T.S. Eliot, dabbling in creative fiction, and the occasional crossword, people often tell her that “she was born ‘old.’” However, when she is not engaged in scholarly pursuits, she enjoys participating in many different sports—especially track and field—antagonizing her three brothers, and going out to eat breakfast with her Nanny.

On Cursive Writing, Keyboarding, and Handwriting: An Argument of Efficacy

From his position as a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, author, and mentor to the young Steve Jobs, Stewart Brand commented, “Once a new technology rolls over you, if you're not part of the steamroller, you're part of the road” (“Stewart Brand Quotes”). The educational community often displays the steamroller mentality in their drive to equip children with the newest and most relevant knowledge. In some cases, however, pressure to conform to the new and relevant has also lead American school districts to flatten essential areas of knowledge like cursive handwriting. Vi Supon sums up the condition of cursive in American education, noting the divergent amounts of emphasis placed on cursive by different school districts and

individual schools, and that continuous instruction in cursive normally ends before fourth grade (357). He concludes that cursive writing has fallen victim to emphasis on government-tested subjects and new technology, among other factors within American educational thought (359). Some teachers have used keyboarding to assist children who struggle with handwriting because of complex disabilities or simple coordination struggles, but they cannot cite sufficient benefit to supplant cursive handwriting with keyboarding for all students. Therefore, schools should pursue complete handwriting instruction for its educational benefits and continued social relevance because keyboarding does not provide the same benefits and often introduces its own disadvantages; moreover, even for children with disabilities, handwriting provides life skills that keyboarding cannot develop.

While very few would argue to omit handwriting instruction entirely, many school systems have decided to replace cursive writing with keyboarding. However, teaching children cursive develops unique brain functions and trains reading skills while developing legibility and efficiency in writing, which remains a socially relevant skill. The motor training involved in learning cursive writing also aids in the recognition of cursive letters. Longcamp et al. explain that after enough repetition of handwriting motions the brain stores each letter as a “motor program” to which it then refers in order to identify letters observed or constructed in the mind (808). By contrast, keyboarding teaches the brain to associate a letter with a directional movement relative to the fingers, which can never be very precise because it depends a great deal on the orientation of the fingers in space (803). Such a motor program does not pertain at all to the visual appearance of the letters; thus, it does not benefit character recognition as does repeated formation of the letters by hand. Because, as Graham points out, cursive letter forms vary widely from their print counterparts (46-70% in the common D’Nealian curriculum), cursive recognition requires learning a different alphabet of motor programs (qtd. in Shimel, Candler, and Neville-Smith 174-175). Since cursive letter forms differ from print, learning cursive writing develops

the unique character recognition necessary for cursive reading better than learning only print.

Those who argue for the transition to keyboard instruction often point out the superior legibility of keyboarding as compared to cursive. As Rogers and Case-Smith claim, children with messy script should use typing since it would normally improve the readability of their work (38). Admittedly, handwritten cursive struggles to match the lucid uniformity of Helvetica or Times New Roman, and such uniformity does contribute to communication, especially when read quickly. However, even those who advocate teaching only printing and keyboarding agree that some form of swift legible handwriting is still a necessity. Graham, Weintraub, and Berninger's study on the speed and legibility of different styles of handwriting compared several students' methods of meeting this necessity and found a correlation between increased speed and legibility and the use of an individualized combination of print and cursive handwriting. They explain:

Changes or deviations associated with faster handwriting include... using a mixture of manuscript and cursive letters. Although it is not clear if these changes were responsible for the increased handwriting speed, or a consequence of it, strict adherence to a particular style or form of handwriting cannot be recommended and would likely frustrate both the teacher and the child (295).

They also note that the clearest style of handwriting was a blend of cursive and print, favoring cursive letters (294). Therefore, students should learn both print and cursive writing in order to write as quickly and clearly as possible. Since legibility and speed will be priorities as long as handwriting remains necessary, it follows that the teaching of cursive writing should remain a priority.

Each of these factors suggests that cursive is not yet a relic of a bygone era. Cursive handwriting does not simply replace what has already been learned in print writing; instead, it provides unique benefits by supplying the necessary information to read cursive writing and refining the handwriting process into a useful tool in

literacy. Nevertheless, many continue to argue, as Broun does, that handwriting lost its relevance when keyboarding became widely accessible. Although speaking specifically about children with disabilities, Broun makes the sweeping statement that functional literacy can be achieved not merely without cursive but without handwriting through the use of the keyboard because she defines literacy as the capacity to exchange thoughts through a visual medium (17). However, Broun's view seems somewhat optimistic about the practical functionality of such an approach and may overestimate the dominance of keyboards in everyday life. As long as daily tasks such as "[w]riting notes, recipes, prescriptions, messages, checks, and filling out application" require handwriting, teachers would be shortsighted not to equip children to read it and use it as effectively as possible (Crouch and Jakubecy).

Advocates for keyboarding suggest that children's interest in computers motivates them to learn to type and therefore proves to be the superior writing style. Klein et al. claim that when keyboarding, young students' satisfaction rose during narrative writing as did their eagerness to take part in writing exercises (20). Additionally, students seemed to find using the computer easier than dealing with writing motions (van Leeuwen and Gabriel 423). Other scholars argue that computers not only simplify and create enjoyable writing tasks but also motivate children with and without disabilities. While acknowledging that word processing requires less movement control and planning than composing by hand, Rosenbaum reasons that children are more interested in composing at the keyboard (qtd. in Chwirka, Gurney, and Burtner 41).

However, perhaps such scholars assume that a children's interests should determine their elementary education. Furthermore, elementary students seem to find composition exciting in either medium. One study showed that students displayed an excitement to write either by keyboarding or by handwriting (van Leeuwen and Gabriel 423). Keyboarding cannot provide benefits equal to those of print or cursive; thus, it should not replace handwriting in elementary education. Moreover, since students show

motivation to learn keyboarding, perhaps integrating it as a reward would increase student's motivation to learn handwriting.

Scholars also claim that typing increases perceived transmission speed. Keyboarding does tend to be significantly faster than handwriting for adults (Rogers and Case-Smith 35); however, at the elementary level, students produce sentences at a faster rate writing by hand than when composing by keyboard. In Berninger et al.'s study, "[w]hen outcome was number of seconds required per word, consistently, second, fourth, and sixth graders produced words in essays at a faster word production rate by pen than by keyboard" (129). Hence, although many researchers believe that children would become faster writers by typing, various studies have shown the opposite to occur.

Furthermore, the opponents of handwriting argue that keyboarding's advantages include better and longer writing samples. Klein et al. determine from the Bangert-Drowns study "that the use of word processing had only a small albeit positive effect on the quality (e.g., clarity, grammar, spelling, punctuation) and quantity of written communication" (8). Bangert-Drowns' results indicate that keyboarding advantages correlate with word processor programs that have assistive elements. Assistive technologies such as spelling and grammar checks increase writing quality by correcting a child's errors but ultimately avoid teaching the child the essence of his mistake. Klein et al. concur from their study that works completed with word processors displayed cleaner script after typing instruction than works completed by pen or pencil. However, even composing by keyboard, students still failed to overcome incorrect separation of "word/letter" and "spelling errors" (20).

Although keyboarding proves beneficial in such instances, research indicates that keyboarding is neither practical nor efficient at the elementary age. Crouch and Jakubecy assert that a major step in training a child to communicate by composing is having her transfer ideas to words by hand. Without having the training, a young

student would be incapable of converting that training to computer keyboarding. Berninger et al. further claim that because keyboarding involves both sides of the brain, the mechanism called the “corpus callosum” must accord the two halves and may not completely develop until after the elementary age (qtd. in Berninger et al. 136). Additionally, Warwold et al.’s study with forty-five fourth graders shows that after computer typing lessons and individual keyboarding exercises ceased, the keyboarding skills the children learned eventually diminished (qtd. in Freeman et al. 130). Because children’s brains are not fully developed and they are too young to maintain the skills for long, keyboarding would not be a beneficial replacement of either handwriting form.

Moreover, children have no need for keyboarding skills before the fourth grade. Byfield and LaBarre, and Sormunen do not offer an ideal age to begin typing instruction, advising that it is best learned when students must apply it to other tasks (qtd. in Freeman, MacKinnon, and Miller 130). According to Minkel, “[t]he rationale for this recommendation is that the proposed advantages of keyboarding competency and enhanced motivation is related to having a reason to use keyboarding with opportunities for ongoing practice closely following instruction” (qtd. in Freeman, MacKinnon, and Miller 131). Citing Case-Smith and Weintraub, Klein et al. state that children cannot type effectively until fourth grade because they do not have the specific coordination skills keyboarding necessitates (7). Thus, since keyboarding proves unnecessary and difficult to comprehend at a young age, it should not be taught until after the elementary years.

Lastly, while keyboarding may immediately improve the students’ ability to express thoughts, it leaves their actual handwriting weak. Research indicates that keyboarding and handwriting develop different types of skills. Preminger, Weiss, and Weintraub state that “[k]eyboarding requires the memorization of a large number of associations between spatial locations and verbal codes” while “[h]andwriting. . . requires the matching of a motor program for the formation of a specific allograph

[character] and then executing this program” (199). Because the mental activity required for keyboarding differs from the requirements of handwriting, simultaneous instruction may result in competition for the student’s time and resources, perhaps making the pursuits mutually exclusive. Sulzenbruck et al. explain that “the use of computers not only affects the specific skill of handwriting, but also similarly affects fine motor skills and thus more general features of the human behavioral repertoire” (250). Experts also claim that handwriting proficiency has generally declined in proportion to keyboarding popularity. Sulzenbruck et al.’s study results, in which younger and more technologically savvy participants failed to trace a straight line as quickly or as accurately as older participants, indicate that those exposed to technology have poorer motor skills than those who had not grown up in the technological era (247). Thus, while both can be useful methods of communication, educators should not assume that learning to type will equip students with the same skills that handwriting teaches.

For disabled students, determining the best form of writing proves critical in order for those students to be successful. Some writing instructors note that handwriting and keyboarding require separate skill sets, although they resemble each other in some aspects, such as visual motor skills. Thus, experts suggest that keyboarding therapy-- which includes using a word processor in place of pen or pencil (Crouch and Jakubecy)-- can improve visual motor skills and subsequently handwriting skills (Chwirka, Gurney, and Burtner 41). They also demonstrate that keyboarding can aid those with “central nervous system damage” and may assist individuals with learning disabilities involving “visual-motor deficits” (Chwirka, Gurney, and Burtner 46-47). Therefore, based on their study they suggest that students with mild learning disabilities not warranting special education would benefit greatly from technological assistance (49). While keyboarding may be appropriate for children with strong disabilities, however, handwriting has benefits for most students with and without disabilities. According to Missiuna, Rivard, and Pollock, although keyboarding

improves writing in some cases, it cannot be applied in every circumstance. Primarily, they focus their research on children with Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD). They describe DCD as a condition that affects a young person's aptitude to function in daily life since the disorder consists of bodily clumsiness from uncoordinated or slow movement. While DCD contains many similarities to ADHD and they are often linked disorders, DCD has sometimes been treated effectively by keyboarding therapy while ADHD has not (Missiuna, Rivard, and Pollock). Missiuna, Rivard, and Pollock argue that "[k]eys don't change location so children are able to learn the motor program required to push them down. Handwriting requires a child to continuously monitor writing with his eyes and never becomes completely automatic in the child with DCD." Since handwriting does not come naturally to DCD students, Missiuna, Rivard, and Pollock suggest keyboarding as an alternative transcription method.

Because handwriting and keyboarding skills have not been conclusively correlated, therapists have no way of knowing which children will benefit from keyboarding therapy (Preminger, Weiss, and Weintraub 194). Although handwriting may not develop into a natural skill in children with DCD, various advocates for handwriting assert that keyboarding is actually the more difficult writing process for non-disabled students. Those who support handwriting, like Berninger et al., describe how keyboarding requires more of an effort because "two hands" are needed to type efficiently, affecting the two parts of the brain; by contrast, composing by hand utilizes "only one hand" and only one part of the cerebrum (136). Therefore, not only would most non-disabled students find handwriting easier, but many students with DCD would also benefit from handwriting because it requires simpler brain functions.

The most common alternative to keyboarding for children with DCD, known as remedial handwriting therapy, uses "systematic techniques that improve functioning" and "seek[s] to correct handwriting either through direct instruction of handwriting or a fine motor program." Thus, it acknowledges handwriting's importance

as a life skill for disabled children and actually improves writing through fine-motor instruction. Concerning remedial therapy, Crouch and Jakubecy claim that “drill and practice,” defined as “[r]epetitive practice, along with correct position and pencil grip,” improve handwriting. As shown in studies done with a dysgraphic student, handwriting therapy enhances readability and most likely improves writing ease (Crouch and Jakubecy). These coordinated movements may also be transferred to other tasks. Such coordination is especially important for children with DCD, for whom clumsiness often becomes an embarrassment despite their aptitudes in other areas. In their study of children with DCD, Missiuna, Rivard, and Pollock claim that their subjects displayed motor skill impairment and performed poorly in academic and social circles, though they seemed to be reasonably intelligent. Since they had poor hand-eye coordination, they also could not perform self-care tasks, wrote poorly, and often struggled with pencil gripping. As explained by Missiuna, Rivard, and Pollock, “[DCD children’s] coordination difficulties may appear subtle but they can have serious academic, social and emotional consequences.” Because fine motor skills have such a broad impact on a child’s life, training in handwriting may benefit the child beyond her ability to transcribe words.

Keyboarding cannot claim the same benefits as handwriting because keyboarding trains a different motor program which does not focus on the fine motor skills of the hand. Therefore, not only can handwriting therapy improve writing ability in more circumstances than keyboarding can, but handwriting therapy may also rebuild the self-esteem children lose through their academic struggles. While keyboarding circumvents children’s issues by engaging separate skills, remedial handwriting therapy is preferable because it conquers the core issue, perhaps improving motor and handwriting skills and also developing character.

Although keyboarding, the “steamroller” of communication, warrants application in some instances, it should not crush cursive writing in the elementary

education curriculum. By training the cognitive processes necessary to reading and improving legibility and efficiency in writing, cursive remains both necessary and socially relevant. Though some may argue that keyboarding skills may benefit elementary students, handwriting appears to be a more advantageous and effective method of transcription for elementary children with and without disabilities. In paving a path for education, American school systems should follow the proven road of handwriting for writing success.

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“An Illicit Phenomenon,” by Amanda Stables

Instructor’s Note

Students often struggle to separate the rhetorical act of informing from the rhetorical act of arguing. In this essay, Amanda Stables clearly understands her purpose and is able to inform her readers about the controversial topic of marijuana usage while refraining from stating her own position. Amanda’s essay is controlled by a well-placed and directive mission statement, which is mirrored by the organizational strategy for the body of her essay. What do you think about the quality of Amanda’s sources? How do you arrive at that assessment?

Writer’s Biography

Amanda Stables is a freshman Social Work major from Duluth, Georgia. She loves to dance, write, and talk to people about anything and everything.

An Illicit Phenomenon

As my friend explained how his perceptions of the world had begun to morph and change alarmingly, I wondered what exactly the substance he had purposefully inhaled was doing to his brain and body. I knew some of the basic effects, and at the time many people my age deemed them risks worth taking for an experience. But as I went on to college and declared a major in social work, I heard more and more of this “phenomenon” sweeping our nation. Teenagers and the steady rise of marijuana use is a hot topic in the field of social work today, as we try to answer some basic questions: Why do teenagers start abusing illegal substances like marijuana? What are the physical and mental effects of it? How do we cut through the myths swirling around the controversy? Why has underage use increased just as fast, if not faster, than the amount of preventive initiatives? This essay explores these questions about usage and effects of marijuana with regard

to teenagers, including possible consequences and current prevention techniques.

Marijuana is referred to by a plethora of terms, slang, and nicknames. Cannabis, weed, THC, Mary Jane, grass, ganja, bud, dope – the list goes on and on, with new lingo added almost daily. For the purposes of this essay, any part of the cannabis plant containing the psychoactive constituent abbreviated THC (which alters one's state of consciousness in any way) is referred to as marijuana. It is the most common illegal substance abused by teenagers in the United States today (Schweinsburg, Schweinsburg, Nagel, Eyler, & Tapert, 2011). Multitudinous studies have been done on the possible effects of the drug, and possible links to conditions ranging from liver disease to neuropsychological deficiencies have been researched (Ali, Amialchuk, & Dwyer, 2011). This essay also refers to marijuana use that is not legalized (often called 'medical marijuana'), unless explicitly indicated otherwise.

Studies indicate that marijuana abuse is beginning at younger and younger ages. When looking at specific generations and their rate of marijuana use, researchers found that generations, or, birth cohorts (people born around the same time), exhibiting stronger disapproval of the use of marijuana were significantly less likely to experiment with it, regardless of independent attitudes toward and perceptions of marijuana use (Keyes, Schulenberg, O'Malley, Johnston, Bachman, Li, & Hasin, 2011).

Illegal marijuana use rarely occurs in a vacuum. It is a strong predictor for many other issues, including alcohol abuse, behavioral issues, and other illicit drug use. A study from the University of Maryland demonstrated that there is a direct link between early marijuana use and behavioral issues in teens. (Falls, Wish, Garnier, Caldiera, O'Grady, Vincent, & Arria, 2011). Substance abuse either predicted or was a simultaneous factor with issues specifically listed in the DSM-IV (The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) as conduct problems, such as aggression, theft, and running away from home. Early conduct problems often precede marijuana

use (Falls, Wish, Garnier, Caldiera, O'Grady, Vincent, & Arria, 2011).

The possible effects of marijuana use have been debated, speculated, and researched for years. As use is beginning at younger and younger ages, more concerns have surfaced about the effects on developing minds and bodies. The effects on cognitive functioning are an especially concerning area of research in teens and young people. In an article published by Brown University, summarizing a study done by the Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society, scientists have found a direct link between teenage marijuana use and decreased cognitive functioning (Wiley, 2012). According to the article, the deficits are more pronounced in males than in females, and the areas affected include cognitive inhibitions, sustained attention, and sequencing ability.

As before mentioned, marijuana is a strong indicator of other drug abuse, most often alcohol. Because it is rare for a teenager to be a user of marijuana alone and not alcohol, it is important that we understand what effects the two substances mixed can have. Marijuana does indeed have an interactive effect when paired with an intoxicant such as alcohol. In testing, subjects' brains were monitored during both alcohol and marijuana use, and they were asked to perform verbal tests. There was no difference in the performance of marijuana users, alcohol users, and users of both simultaneously. This proves that marijuana has many of the same detrimental effects on mental ability and coherency that alcohol does (Schweinsburg, Schweinsburg, Nagel, Eyster, & Tapert, 2011). One interesting difference was found, however: the actual brain activity patterns of the subjects varied depending on what intoxicants or combination was being used. This means that marijuana and alcohol affect different parts of the brain and its functioning, and used together they yield even worse results to simple verbal tests.

Because of the stage of developing that a teenager's brain is still in at the time of adolescence, substance abuse has more profound and, in some cases, longer lasting effects (Solowij, Jones, Rozman, Davis, Ciarocchi, Heaven,

& Yücel, 2011). In a study of 16-20 year old substance users, marijuana users performed the worst on a memory and learning test, tested against alcohol users, and non-substance-users. How badly they performed was dependent on the duration, quantity, frequency, and age of onset of marijuana use. The younger the age and the more frequent/heavy the use, the worse participants performed (Solowij, Jones, Rozman, Davis, Ciarocchi, Heaven, & Yücel, 2011).

Although there are clear negative effects, some states have legal allocations for what is commonly referred to as medical marijuana. The temporary physical effects of marijuana have been shown to help treat symptoms and ailments such as: nausea and vomiting associated with chemotherapy, anxiety, and most commonly, pain and muscle symptoms. According to an article from the journal *Pharmacotherapy*, “Studies of medical cannabis show significant improvement in various types of pain and muscle spasticity. Reported adverse effects are typically not serious, with the most common being dizziness. Safety concerns regarding cannabis include the increased risk of developing schizophrenia with adolescent use, impairments in memory and cognition, accidental pediatric ingestions, and lack of safety packaging for medical cannabis formulations (Borgelt, Franson, Nussbaum, & Wang, 2013).”

Techniques and methods to try and prevent the onset of marijuana abuse by teenagers are many, and professionals disagree as to what is the most effective approach. Drug prevention and education teams such as PRIDE Youth Programs, YADAPP, DARE, and thousands of others are prevalent in our communities and even schools systems. Yet teenage use is still on the rise.

Research into youth assets has helped shine light on the way young people are influenced in their lifestyle choices. Social workers define assets as environmental variables that can have either a positive or negative impact on youth behaviors. Examples of common youth assets are family, friends, peers, and teachers. In an article about youth assets and marijuana use run by the *Journal of*

Alcohol & Drug Education, the authors stressed that they have a widely varied effect on adolescent use and knowledge of drugs (Dunn, Kitts, Lewis, Goodrow, & Scherzer, 2011). The results concluded that prevention programs based on an asset development model are not very effective and should be reconsidered.

The strong and far-reaching effects of peer pressure do not need to be proved in this essay. Suffice it to say, the social networking emphasis in schools plays a critical role on the lifestyle choices of its members. Environments in which classmates, friends, and even role models use marijuana raise the likelihood that a given young person will also experiment with the drug. If 10% of one's fellow social members use marijuana, and ignoring possible additional factors, the probability that the individual will also use it increases by 5% (Ali, Amialchuk, & Dwyer, 2011). Education and awareness programs that promote total abstinence, such as the ones previously mentioned, have shown the most potential in having lasting effects on children and teenagers.

Too often, marijuana is viewed as confusing, elusive contraband with unclear implications. The aura of mystery that shrouds it is oftentimes what prompts adolescents to experiment with it in the first place. A common myth is that marijuana is not an addicting substance. Others say it is the classic "gateway" drug leading to experimenting with "hard" drugs. They are seeking answers. Scientists are too, and more and more actual results are being published about marijuana use and its effects. With this information, initiatives to combat the rise of teenage marijuana abuse are becoming better equipped to glean positive results. Even with this, however, there is still no fail-proof system that has been found to be the best concerning prevention measures.

My friend continued using marijuana throughout adolescence. Although not scientific or tested in a control group, evidence such as increasingly poorer school performance, subtle personality changes, and a tendency to experiment with other illegal substances were brought to the surface. To quote my friend, "I'm not addicted to it.

It's not really addicting. But it's mentally addicting.” This is an example of a teenager who regularly partakes in marijuana use – daily, even. In cases such as this one, the adolescent was well educated about the potential side effects of marijuana, and still chose to use the substance. But answers to the many questions about teen marijuana use are being discovered, and some of the confusion is being dispelled. Researchers aren't stopping here – studies are still being done and social workers are still determined to find new ways to curb this phenomenon.

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Ali, M., Amialchuk, A., & Dwyer, D. S. (2011). The social contagion effect of marijuana use among adolescents. *PLoS One*, 6(1), 1-6.
doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0016183

This article discusses the effects that social networking has on marijuana use among teenagers. It is written by Mir Ali, Aliaksandr Amialchuck, and Debra Dwyer for the open-access journal *PLoS One*. The authors are affiliated not only with research institutes such as the University of Toledo, but also the Food and Drug Administration. The research attempts to evaluate the role of peer social networks in explaining marijuana use in adolescents. A sample of nationally represented adolescents was used in the study, according to the authors. The independent variables such as close friends and classmates were all taken into account. After explaining the data used and found, the article concludes that the effects of peer influence are significant indicators of marijuana use, even when making allowances for biases that could occur in the study or participants. More specifically, the study found that in a 10% increase in the proportion of close friends and classmates who use marijuana, the probability that an individual will choose to use marijuana is increased by 5%.

The research presented in this article is beneficial to my paper because of its facts on how much peer pressure affects young people and their lifestyle choices. Social

networks play a critical role in influencing the members involved, and they can be positive influencers or negative ones. The article explains the findings of the research and proves that marijuana use is linked to social perceptions and attitudes expressed by young people's peers.

Borgelt, L. M., Franson, K. L., Nussbaum, A. M., & Wang, G. S. (2013). The pharmacologic and clinical effects of medical cannabis. *Pharmacotherapy*, 33(2), 195-209. doi: 10.1002/phar.1187

This article was published in the journal *Pharmacotherapy* in February of 2013. It focused on the effects of medical marijuana in states that have legalized it, such as California and Wisconsin. The authors provide information about why it is prescribed, what is used to treat, and side effects. This article is helpful to my paper because it provides a different perspective on the uses of marijuana, not just negative ones. The data presented shed light on the legalized form of marijuana and the pros and cons of prescribing a drug with psychoactive properties to teenagers and adults.

Dunn, M. S., Kitts, C., Lewis, S., Goodrow, B., & Scherzer, G. D. (2011). Effects of youth assets on adolescent alcohol, tobacco, marijuana use, and sexual behavior. *Journal of Alcohol & Drug Education*, 55(3), 23-40. Retrieved from www.ebscohost.com.

This article is written by five professionals (Michael Dunn, Cathy Kitts, Sandy Lewis, Bruce Goodrow, and Gary Scherzer) from around the United States, all of whom hold advanced degrees. The article was published in the *Journal of Alcohol & Drug Education* in December of 2011 and deals with the fact that adolescent use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and sexual behavior is a risk to well-being, health, and even life ambitions. The research consisted of surveying a random selection of high school students aged 14 to 18 years old. Participants were from two different public school districts in rural Tennessee. The survey assessed behaviors and knowledge concerning drugs and sexual behavior. According to the researchers, results showed that many of the students had engaged in both drug use and sexual behaviors in the past 30 days.

The authors stressed that assets (aspects of life that are variables and can have either a negative or positive impact on youth behaviors, such as peers, families, teachers, etc.) have a varied effect on adolescent use and knowledge of drugs and sex. The results concluded that prevention programs based on an asset development model are not very effective and should be reconsidered. This article helped my paper by explaining some of the external factors that can encourage or discourage the abuse of marijuana by teens.

Falls, B. J., Wish, E. D., Garnier, L. M., Caldiera, K. M., O'Grady, K. E., Vincent, K. B., & Arria, A. M. (2011). The association between early conduct problems and early marijuana use in college students. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Substance Abuse*, 20(3), 221-236. doi: 10.1080/1067828X.2011.581900

The authors of this article researched the correlation between adolescent use of marijuana and early conduct problems and wrote this article about it for the *Journal of Child & Adolescent Substance Abuse*. They are all associated with the University of Maryland. The research was part of a larger study and focused on a sample of 1,076 college students that comprised three groups: marijuana users who began use prior to age 15, those who began use after age 15, and nonusers. Results found that early marijuana use was associated with presence of conduct problems as listed in the DSM-IV, such as aggression, theft, disobeying of rules, and running away from home. Late use of marijuana, however did not affect conduct the same way.

This article is useful for my paper in that it shows that there is a link between young teen use of marijuana and teen conduct. This could be a potential indicator of those who are more at risk and likely to engage in illegal use of marijuana. Conversely, the presence of many early conduct problems could indicate the strong possibility of marijuana use as well. Studies support the fact that teen use of marijuana does not come without consequences, other than just legal and health ones.

John Wiley & Sons, Inc. (2012). Keep your eye on... .
Brown University Child & Adolescent Behavior Letter, 28(7), 2.

This article, published in the *Brown University Child & Adolescent Behavior Letter* in July, 2012, talks about the type of research that is currently being done on the impact teen marijuana use has on cognitive functioning. It is a summary of a study done by the Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society. Researchers found that marijuana use is in fact linked to poorer cognitive functioning in older teens. They also found that it is more pronounced in males than in females. The things affected significantly were: sustained attention, cognitive inhibitions, psychomotor speed, and sequencing ability.

This article is very helpful to my paper because it provides facts on the effects that marijuana has on teenager's cognitive abilities and performance. A loss of skill in these areas is significant to the ability to lead one's life with the most potential possible. Obviously damage to cognitive functions is a real and undesirable side effect to the use of marijuana. The research proves some more of the dangers of adolescent marijuana use and the threat it poses to future generations.

Keyes, K. M., Schulenberg, J. E., O'Malley, P. M., Johnston, L. D., Bachman, J. G., Li, G., & Hasin, D. (2011). The social norms of birth cohorts and adolescent marijuana use in the united states. *Addiction*, 106(10), 1790-1800. doi: 10.1111/j.1360-0443.2011.03485.x

A combined effort of Katherine Keyes, John Schulenberg, Patrick O'Malley, Lloyd Johnston, Jerald Bachman, Guohua Li, and Deborah Hasin, this article was published in the journal *Addiction* in October of 2011. The researching authors are all from research institutes at Columbia University and the University of Michigan. It focuses on the fact that most research on social norms concerning marijuana use has been more focused on individual attitudes rather than the influence of larger-level society. The research sought to determine the relationship between the opinions of certain birth cohorts and their use

of marijuana, specifically young adults and teenagers. Birth cohort is defined as a group of people who were born around or during the same time relatively, and tend to have been raised in the current mindset and attitudes of that time. The participants were students from grades 8, 10, and 12. The results showed that birth cohorts exhibiting stronger disapproval of the use of marijuana were significantly less likely to experiment with it, regardless of independent attitudes toward, and perceptions of, marijuana use.

The information presented in this article supported my paper by providing more information about the power of social surroundings to influence the use of marijuana among teens. It also showed the impact that social norms existent at the time of have on raising children to avoid or accept marijuana. The general views of the people at a given time are reflected in the way the next generation behaves, all other independent variables aside.

Schweinsburg, A. D., Schweinsburg, B. C., Nagel, B. J., Eyler, L. T., & Tapert, S. F. (2011). Neural correlates of verbal learning in adolescent alcohol and marijuana users. *Addiction, 106*(3), 564-573. doi: 10.1111/j.1360-0443.2010.03197.x

The journal *Addiction* published this article by authors from Yale University, Oregon Health and Science University, and the University of California in March of 2011. The article explores exactly how the brain responds during verbal learning among teen users of marijuana. The participants in the research were from local public schools and divided into the following groups: controls (limited alcohol and marijuana use), binge drinkers, marijuana users, and binge drinking marijuana users. The results showed that there was no difference among the groups in performing verbal tests – proving that marijuana can have similar effects as alcohol and vice versa. They did, however, show a difference in actual brain activity patterns during testing. This study makes the valid point that alcohol and marijuana are the two most common substances used by teenagers. There is a strong possibility that use of one indicates the use of the other as well. Therefore, it is important that research such as this is being

done on the effects of not only one or the other, but what both of them used together can have.

This article was helpful in writing my paper because of the fact that marijuana does not only have unique effects on the health and wellness of teens, but also interactive ones when paired with the other most common intoxicant, alcohol. While this paper focuses on the use of marijuana, it would be leaving out part of the picture if we were to ignore the potential mixed effects that marijuana can have with alcohol, especially since the two seem to go historically hand in hand.

Solowij, N., Jones, K., Rozman, M., Davis, S., Ciarocchi, J., Heaven, P. ... Yücel, M. (2011). Verbal learning and memory in adolescent cannabis users, alcohol users and non-users. *Psychopharmacology*, 216(1), 131-144. doi: 10.1007/s00213-011-2203-x

This article, written by authors from the University of Wollongong, was published in the academic journal *Psychopharmacology*. This study investigated the effects that long-term marijuana use has on memory. It is believed that adolescent users are more vulnerable to memory impairment and adverse neurocognitive effects than adults. A sample of 181 16-20 year olds was grouped into marijuana users, alcohol users, and nonusers. Out of the groups, marijuana users scored the worst on a memory and learning test. How badly they performed was dependent on the duration, quantity, frequency, and age of onset of marijuana use. The earlier the age of onset was correlated with worse memory performance on the Rey Auditory Verbal Learning Test. There was significant proof that adolescent marijuana use negatively affects the developing brain. This article supports my paper by showing the dangers of teen marijuana abuse, specifically the affect it has on the brain and its functioning.

**“Medieval Thought and the Gothic Cathedral,” by
Anna Schoenwald**

Instructor’s Note

Anna’s assignment was to choose a topic and write an informational research paper using six peer reviewed sources. The goal of the paper was to demonstrate not only integration of outside material but also a controlled prose style whereby she moved the reader forward with her concrete nouns and active verbs. What do you learn about Gothic Cathedrals? How does Anna synthesize her quoted material into her own prose? Choose several paragraphs and identify the active verbs, the concrete nouns, the distinctive word choices.

Writer’s Biography

Anna Schoenwald is a freshman Language Arts Education major from Chardon, Ohio. Although she is an English major, she never really thought of herself as a writer. She enjoys doing almost everything, including traveling the US, skiing the slopes of Colorado, playing her violin at church, and hanging out with family and friends.

Medieval Thought and the Gothic Cathedral

“[T]he [Gothic] cathedral is best understood as a 'model' of the medieval universe” (von Simson 16). As this quote implies, a Gothic Cathedral's design reflects the Medieval belief system. Although some Medieval beliefs warrant the title, “The Dark Ages,” many imply the opposite. For example, the Medievals superstitiously thought outside influences, such as air or demons, directly caused every natural occurrence. In other words, if a Medieval peasant experienced an illness, his family would assume a demon had overtaken him. However, Medieval people also believed in a light, holy God. In contrast to the former Greek gods, the Medieval God remained stable and infallible. Ultimately, the Medievals attempted to combine

their assortment of beliefs into one coherent model. Gothic Cathedrals became the embodiment of that synthesized model.

The Gothic cathedrals reflected the Medieval Model. The designers strived to create in these buildings a sense of awe and reverence for God. Because Medieval culture centered on Gothic Cathedrals, they greatly influenced the people (Reich, Lawrence 218). Thus, the designers strived to give these buildings meaning that would be relevant to the largely illiterate people. For instance, the cathedrals' tall walls, vaulted ceilings, and vertical lines drew the people's eyes up toward God (Reich, Lawrence 215). The people would encounter this large, foreboding structure, much different than their shacks and peasant lifestyle, and be thoroughly moved. God, through the cathedral, seemed distant, but powerful – he seemed worthy of intense worship. The cathedral drew the peoples' eyes up and out.

The Medieval model sought to encompass all Medieval beliefs. As Dr. David Mills, professor of Philosophy at Cedarville University explains, “The Medieval model blended Greek, Christian, and Pagan ideas into synthetic unity.” Eventually, through gradual developments Medieval thinkers organized all these ideas into a geocentric view of the cosmos. In this view, two drastically different spheres emerged, separated by the moon. Earth lay on one end, in the center of the universe. Contrary to common thought, this idea downplayed earth's importance. By its central position, the earth lay in the farthest place possible from the heavens. God occupied the outer reaches of the spheres. He, in all his glory, resided far from earthly creatures. He “danced” with the angels in his outer, heavenly sphere. The humans, excluded from this enjoyment, remained on the “outside, looking in.” In addition, God interacted with creation solely through intermediaries. In this way, he had no personal interaction with creation. Thus, according to the Medieval Model, God remained distant to the excluded humans.

As represented in the Medieval model, the cathedrals showed the clear separation between the celestial

sphere and the earthly sphere. The medieval person, upon entering the cathedral, would immediately feel insignificant. The cathedral's pointed arches directed the viewer's gaze upward (Sweeney 29). The pointed arches allowed the ceilings to reach new heights, implementing a larger gap between the worshiper and the heavenly sphere. In addition, the point, as opposed to a rounded arch, forced the people to wonder beyond the cathedral. In other words, the points implied a higher being's existence, but God's intangible region remained unreachable to the lowly people. More specifically, the Chartres Cathedral brought its visitors to this sense of awe. According to John Walford in his book *Great Themes in Art*, "The height of Chartre's nave relative to its width increases the sense of height, while the engaged columns, dividing the bays, and pointed arches accentuate the vertical accent" (167). In these ways, the Gothic cathedrals emphasized God's distance from the world.

In addition to representing God's distance from the world, the Medieval model showed God's quality of light. To the Medievals, light symbolized holiness and purity. According to Lawrence Cunningham and John Reich in their *Culture & Values*, the model represented "an ascending hierarchy of existence that ranges from inert mineral matter to the purity of light, which is God." Thus, the farther from the earth (or closest to God), the purer the light. In these ways, the Medieval model symbolized their beliefs.

In addition, the Gothic Cathedral captured as much light as possible to represent God's holiness and purity. Advances in technology, including the pointed arches and flying buttresses, enabled the cathedrals' architects to incorporate massive stained glass windows on every wall. The Abbey Church of St. Denis, for instance, features these windows. "The radiance of colored light passing through these windows symbolized the splendor of God, as 'the True Light,' passing into the church" (Walford, 163). The whole ambience of the Cathedral, brought the Medieval person to an understanding of God. As Robert Calkins notes in his article, "The Cathedral as Text," the windows

of St. Denis had the power to “transport [the viewer] from a material world to an immaterial world” (NP). As he worshiped in the Cathedral, the Medieval would tangibly experience God's purity.

In this synthesized model, everything worked together in literal harmony. According to Jon Sweeney in his article, “Arranged by Measure,” “For the medieval person, a symbol was an objective piece of reality” (28). When all the spheres rotated as they should, they formed a melody (Mills). This melody showed the world had achieved synthesis.

Finally, just as the Medieval model harmonized many different concepts, the Gothic Cathedrals coordinated various elements into a cohesive structure. For instance, the cathedrals incorporated extensive geometric relationships. These relationships “relate[d] to the mathematics of musical harmonies, which were thought to reflect the divine harmonies of the universe” (Calkins). In this way, the architectural synthesis corresponded with the Medieval religious synthesis. Additionally, some of the structural designs served a dual purpose. The pointed arches, for example, not only pointed the people's gazes toward heaven, but they also allowed for larger walls and taller ceilings (Walford 166). The more spacious walls, in turn, allowed for larger stained glass windows that ultimately had a greater effect on the Medieval worshiper. All these elements connected to form a cohesive embodiment of the Medieval model's various elements.

Compared to Greek architecture, the Gothic style seems barbarous or rude. On the contrary, the Gothic style follows carefully planned synthesis, in accordance with the Medieval model of the Cosmos. This entire coherence brought the medieval people to a sense of unparalleled reverence toward God. “The effect of the stained glass windows added to the ambience, working together with the insubstantial interior structure and soaring vertical space to give the Gothic cathedral its ultimate expression as a sacred space” (Calkins). Undoubtedly, the Middle Ages do not deserve to be called the Dark Ages.

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“*Katyń* and Post-World War II Polish National Identity,” by John Behnke

Instructor’s Note

John writes a research paper in which he identifies and evaluates how the Polish tendency toward individualism influences characters in their resistance to Soviet oppression in Polish director Andrzej Wajda’s film, *Katyń*. Note how John effectively links his sources to examples from the film. Note also how John identifies and addresses arguments that conflict with his own. How might a writer’s cultural presuppositions unfairly influence his or her conclusions when dealing with a foreign culture? How might one’s own cultural biases be identified and diminished? Why does Hollywood create so few films about Soviet atrocities?

Writer’s Biography

John Behnke is a sophomore Biology major from South Carolina who intends to attend medical school upon earning his undergraduate degree. He has always enjoyed writing both creative poetry and prose. His hobbies include rock climbing and swimming, along with reading and drawing.

Katyń and Post-World War II Polish National Identity

The past is dynamic in the social mind: it alters and transforms to “preserve a society’s identity” according to the group’s current character (Koczanowicz). Any reconstruction of the past demonstrates this tendency. Director Wajda’s reconstruction of the *Katyń* massacre does not differentiate. In the spring of 1941, the Soviets shot 22,000 Polish officers, intellectuals, and artists through the back of the head and buried them in mass graves beneath the boughs *Katyń*. The war crime remained secret until the end of World War II, at which time the Soviets occupied Poland and founded the Polish People’s Republic, a socialistic and

totalitarian governing system controlled by Stalin. When Poland emerged from the era, they sat divided, lost in the transition between the old and the new. Their identity was particularly affected by the conflicting cultural orientations that change forced upon them: they lay lost somewhere between the old, Soviet collectivist system and the new individualist identity to which the Solidarity Movement gave birth. Wajda's film *Katyń* asserts an individualist Polish orientation by accurately exhibiting characters that display strong, traditional Polish independence in their reactions to the totalitarian Soviet regime.

Many factors go into Poland's current cultural orientation. The nation holds a unique cultural position firstly due to its geographic position. Feldman states,

The difference in thinking between people in Asian and Western cultures is a reflection of a broader difference in the way the world is perceived. Asian societies generally have a collectivistic orientation, a worldview that promotes the notion of interdependence. [...] In contrast, people in Western cultures are more likely to hold an individualist orientation that emphasizes personal identity and the uniqueness of the individual. (Feldman, 528)

As a western society on the cusp of the East, the Poles comprise of a distinctive mix of eastern and western values: they have "long viewed themselves as a Western nation transmitting Western ideas and values to their Eastern neighbors" (Forbes et al. 4). This contributes to Poland's identity as both an individualist and collectivist society. They gain their individualism from their Western roots, and their collectivism from their proximity to the Orient (Forbes et al. 4).

In addition to Poland's geographic positioning, the nation's recent ascension from forty years of collectivist Soviet domain constitutes another factor in its cultural orientation (Forbes et al. 4). The post-World War II Poland was different in many respects from its predecessor. Behrends states, "Post-war Poland was significantly smaller,

geographically further west, and ethnically more homogeneous” (Behrends). He later says, “For the first time in her history, Poland had the structure of a nation-state. [...] Still, the new Poland was less independent than its predecessor” (Behrends). This lack of independence constitutes the most drastic difference between the post-war and pre-war Poland. The People’s Republic of Poland forced collectivism on a largely individualist nation for nearly forty-four years. So, when the system finally fell, it left the nation in a cultural identity crisis: on the one side lay the foreign collectivist orientation and the ease of non-action, and on the other lay the traditional individualist orientation and the drive for true identity and differentiation.

The discomfort of change and ease of non-action hinder in any attempt at revolution. It takes time and effort to spark a transformation, and even when it is sparked, there is no guarantee that it will catch flame. The People’s Republic fell slowly to the Solidarity Movement, and even when it did collapse, its ideology did not fully disappear with the government; it took effort to break away from collectivism. The nation had spent over forty years living in a totalitarian culture; this means that there were children who knew nothing else, and adults who had spent the majority of their lives under its hold. This makes it difficult to enact change.

The desire for true identity and the drive of a nation to differentiate from its oppressors is a similarly strong combatant. Objects naturally arc: after swinging too far to one end of a spectrum, the innate tendency is for an object to swing to the opposite end. So, after being kept under the collectivist, totalitarian system for over forty years, it is Poland’s natural desire to swing in the opposite direction and embrace the contrast. This holds especially true because of the abuse that the Poles faced during the World War II and post-World War II eras. The Poles lost a large portion of their population and diversity during the Great War (Behrends), and those who were left bore the wounds of Hemingway’s Lost Generation. Hence, the Poles hold a widespread desire to escape the stigma of the People’s

Republic. Furthermore, they desired their own identity, their own orientation—not that of the conquering nation.

Katyń takes up the cause of traditional individualism: it attempts to assert Poland's original, individualist orientation by displaying strong, independent characters. For example, Anna demonstrates strong resistance to the Soviet rule. The film is primarily concerned with Anna and her husband Andrzej. Early in the film, Andrzej is taken to a Soviet work camp; some time later, he becomes a casualty of *Katyń*. However, his wife Anna does not know about this until the end of the war, forcing her to live with the fear that her husband is dead. Yet, she handles the fear, and takes it in stride, holding onto hope in spite of all the circumstances. Even when Anna's own mother tries to tell her that her husband is dead, she remains true to her personal conviction that he lives. Anna also demonstrates strength when she refuses to marry a Soviet officer to save herself and her daughter. With her life on the line, she remains faithful and brave, preferring to die rather than act against her principle. This is the picture of Polish resistance Wajda provides the viewers of *Katyń*. During the Soviet occupation and the era of the People's Republic, not every Pole actively resisted totalitarianism. But, according to Wajda, passive submission does not mean total support: Anna does not fly in the face of the Soviets, but that does not mean that she ascribes to their ideals. In reality, as she continues to live her life as if it were normal, she demonstrates a form of opposition. This is especially evident as she retains her sense of self despite the Soviet's collectivist campaign: she starts a photography business, raises her daughter, and lives as she did before the Republic. In essence, Anna harbors traditional Polish individualism through the Soviet winter so that it might live to see the spring.

Anna's husband Andrzej shows similar strength. At the beginning of *Katyń*, Andrzej is given the chance to escape from the Soviet's hands; but he refuses the opportunity. Instead, he tells his wife that his duty is to serve his country and his men (*Katyń*). So he willingly boards the train to the Soviet work camp. Like his wife, Andrzej demonstrates a type of passive rebellion by retaining his

individualism: it was not the Soviets who made him board the train, but his own conscious decision to fulfill his duty. Wajda uses Andrzej primarily to question the extent of Soviet power during their occupation of Poland after the Great War. The purpose of totalitarianism is to control not only actions of the people, but the thoughts as well—hence, the abundance of propaganda in totalitarian states. However, by making an autonomous decision, Andrzej did not allow the Soviets to do this. Wajda also uses Andrzej to paint a picture of the Polish people as a strong, faithful nation that honors service and self-sacrifice.

Agnieszka acts as another example of Polish resistance to the Soviet cause. The Soviets killed her brother in the Katyń massacre. To honor him after the war, Agnieszka orders a headstone to place in the local church. But, she flies in the face of the Soviets when she lists his death date as spring of 1941—a date that would place the blame of Katyń on the Soviets' shoulders. When Agnieszka tries to erect the memorial in the local church, the priest tells her she could not put it up because of the date, and urges her to abandon the attempt; she refuses and departs for a cemetery. Along the way, Agnieszka's sister confronts her, imploring her to forget about the memorial and save herself, to "side with the living instead of the dead" (*Katyń*). Again, Agnieszka declines. She places the memorial in the graveyard, and is taken into custody by the Soviet police. She is then given an opportunity to recant, and endorse the Soviet date. She declines and is led away. Agnieszka constitutes the perfect example of Polish individualism, strength, and bravery. When she is confronted by the priest, she declines to listen; when confronted by her own sister, she does the same; and when her life is possibly on the line in a Soviet interrogation, she refuses to relent. She will not conform or bow her principles to the will of others. She chooses not so much the "dead over the living," (*Katyń*) as her sister accused her of doing, but her personal values over her life: she is the ultimate individualist.

Lieutenant Jerzy strongly contrasts the other characters: while Anna, Andrzej, and Agnieszka resist the Soviets on the basis of sheer principle, Jerzy supports the

Soviets despite his knowledge of the facts, demonstrating what Wajda sees as the weakness that comes with socialism, totalitarianism, and the unquestionable obedience to authorities. After surviving World War II in a Soviet work camp, Jerzy chooses to support the Soviet's claim to innocence by joining the Polish People's Army, which buttressed the Russian cause. He also affirms their claim that the Katyń massacre occurred in 1942, even though he witnessed the event in 1941. However, Jerzy cannot live with his lie. After the General's widow confronts Jerzy, he goes to a bar and becomes intoxicated. He begins to ramble, and is escorted from the bar: when he reaches the street, he pulls out a pistol and shoots himself in the head. Jerzy watched the Soviets lead his friends away: he knew the truth about the massacre and was in the best possible position to resist the Soviets. But he does not do it. Instead, he joins their ranks and urges others to do the same. Then, whenever he is made accountable for his actions, he kills himself. Interestingly, though, Jerzy's suicide suggests that he changed in orientation at the end of his life. Lester states, "Because external pressures, such as totalitarianism in the government, give citizens a clear external source to blame for their unhappiness, this situation should make them assaultive rather than depressed and homicidal rather than suicidal" (Lester). However, Jerzy does not lash out at others: anger at the Soviet's crime does not cause his suicide, otherwise he would have tended to be more homicidal than suicidal. Instead individual guilt causes him to take his life. At the end, he realizes the truth that his actions and decisions are his own and independent from the rest of society. His change in orientation leads to his suicide, as he is too weak to accept responsibility for his personal actions.

Wajda's picture of Polish resistance is obvious, but it only matters if it affects its audiences; many argue that it does. At the hands of a master, film has virtually limitless power, as it holds the ability to impose a visual version of an actual event on an audience—and Director Wajda is a master. In his film, the audiences see the slaughter at Katyń and the damage it caused, and they feel empathy for the victims and their families. Then, when the audiences witness the strength the Poles show throughout the ordeal, they are

inspired, which is his Wajda's goal. He wants his nation to reassert its individuality, so he uses his gift and shows characters that lead by example.

Still, others question whether or not Wajda's judgments are correct—if he is not painting a picture of Polish courage and individuality that is too rosy. After all, several characters in *Katyń* possess abnormal daring in the face of danger: Anna would rather risk her life and the life of her child than marry a Soviet officer; Andrzej walks confidently to his death when he had the option of life; Agnieszka goes to prison rather than say the Germans were responsible for Katyń. In the entire film, only one character gives in to the Soviets, and he ends up dying by the action of his own weak hands. This, obviously, is not a perfect cross section of the Polish people during the post-World War II era, but the movie can get away with it because of its realism. The entire film is brimming with bleak, yet accurate, realism. The movie opens with a scene that gives the audience an accurate feeling of panic as the Poles flee both east and west. They carry half-packed trunks and odds and ends from their now-abandoned homes, and call out the names of loved ones into the chaos. The end of the movie is even more brutally realistic. Wajda shows a dozen officers being led to an open pit, and shot through the back of the head by a Soviet pistol. Yet the film does not broach on sentimentality. The characters carry out their actions stoically and with a sense of definite purpose that makes the film entirely believable.

Wajda's film asserts an individualist Polish orientation by accurately exhibiting characters that display strong, traditional Polish independence in their reactions to the totalitarian Soviet regime. Poland lies on the borders of both collectivist and individualist cultures, and only recently ascended from an oppressive foreign-founded government. This renders the nation divided, as the new tries to unseat the old and unbalance ensues. *Katyń* attempts to remedy this unbalance by depicting Polish characters that lead by example with strength and individualism. Wajda is largely successful in his attempt thanks to his skill, the skill of his actors, and the innate power of film; still, some question whether or not *Katyń* is nothing more than anti-Soviet

propaganda, and whether or not its depictions of characters are not overly romantic. However, the movie is entirely realistic: it does not broach on sentimentality, and therefore retains its integrity. In conclusion, *Katyń* helps assert Poland's traditional orientation by displaying individualism and strength in an inspiring way.

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“Free Your Feet,” by Alison Logan

Instructor’s Note

“Free Your Feet” is an argumentative research paper par excellence. In this essay, Alison Logan takes the unorthodox position that those who run should run barefoot. Whenever a student writes an argumentative research paper, that student must ensure that her position is arguable, and, in this case, Alison accomplishes this. Moreover, she’s done her homework. The sources she employs are scholarly, and she even draws on her own expert experience as a runner. Best of all, readers will find themselves delighted to discover that the information is anything but dry; rather, the writer brings an insistent voice to the text that energizes anyone fortunate enough to read her plea.

Writer’s Biography

Ali Logan is a freshman psychology major from Indianapolis, Indiana. She loves to run and spend time outdoors. When she isn’t playing sports, you will probably find her singing or listening to music.

Free Your Feet

In eight seasons of cross country, I have only made it through three without a stress-related injury. Five of my injuries sidelined me for at least a month, and I failed to make it through a year of high school without hobbling through the halls in a boot. Patellar tendonitis, stress fractures, bursitis, sesamoiditis—all big words for a simple concept: too much pounding. Unfortunately, I am not the only one finding myself in constant pain. It seems that the runners’ common tease of other sports, “My sport is your sport’s punishment,” now comes back to haunt those of us who compete without balls or bats. But running is not meant to punish us, especially when we do it voluntarily. The bitter irony mocks us; we who work hard to stay in shape by using the most natural form of exercise constantly sustain injuries that send us back home to the couch to ice, recover, and moan about our misfortunes. A feeling that perhaps few but runners can understand is the desire of nothing more than to get back to the activity that hurt us in

the first place. Running is practically in our blood—humans have been running since creation. Then why do we struggle so much with the sport now? Why does it seem that most of our bodies are not made for the impact? The answers to these questions hide in plain sight, in the sport’s one “essential” piece of equipment: the modern running shoe. Structured shoes inhibit the human body’s natural gait, so to run as efficiently and healthily as possible, the way our bodies are designed to move, the feet should be bare.

Origins of the Modern Running Shoe

The running world has not always been surrounded by companies like Saucony, Asics, and Brooks; in fact, many would be surprised at the lack of technology in older running shoes. Before the 1970’s, runners trained and competed in high tops, sandals, bare feet, and everything in between; the first shoe to fit today’s idea of running footwear came out in 1972 (McDougall 179). Most runners believe that the barefoot movement started in the last decade, but many ran un-shod prior to the introduction of the modern running shoe, and some even studied the mechanics behind natural versus shod gait. In 1961, podiatrist Dr. Simon J. Wikler wrote a book titled *Take off Your Shoes and Walk* to reveal the utter stupidity of wearing shoes as often as the average person does. Although runners generally accepted their lack of high-technology footwear, two men believed they could make good runners better with a specially-designed running shoe. In the 1960’s, Bill Bowerman, a coach at the University of Oregon, and Phil Knight, a runner at the same school, put their heads together to engineer a shoe specifically designed for runners. Not only did they want the shoe to feel good, but they also designed the footwear in such a way that it forced runners to change gait: instead of landing on the ball of the foot directly beneath the hips, Bowerman and Knight believed that it would be faster to step ahead of the center of gravity and land on the heel (McDougall 179). With their brilliant new running shoe, the *Cortez*, the Oregon buddies started a revolution—and they called it Nike.

The problems with the company arose before its founders actually established it. Bowerman, the more involved of the two, did not run much himself—he did not even start jogging until age fifty (McDougall 179). Between limited firsthand experience and little research, Bowerman’s ideas about gait change and athletic shoes can scarcely be considered credible. Fortunately for the company and unfortunately for American runners, Nike quickly became the trend-setter and easily rose to the top of the global market; as of 2009 the business takes in a whopping seventeen billion dollars a year. And for what? An idea wholly based on guess-and-check where two men essentially developed a market and demand for a product, then developed the product itself (McDougall 180). With flashy footwear and excessive measures for comfort, companies like Nike make barefoot runners seem insane. Our own ignorance makes us vulnerable, so for years we believed the mantras of running companies everywhere telling us that we need more cushion, we need a stiff outsole for stability, we need to replace our shoes at least twice a year.

Why, even after the last several years of natural-running promotion, do so many still scoff at unshod athletes? Dr. Wikler, a podiatrist in the mid-twentieth century, explains it best in his book’s introduction:

People will believe most readily what they want to believe. If certain facts lead to conclusions which are unacceptable to the average individual, he is quite capable of ignoring those facts, or rationalizing them in such a way that they no longer pose a threat to his peace of mind. Nowhere can this human shortcoming be better illustrated than in the attitude most of us take toward the kind of shoes we wear (1).

Instead of reading the research available, almost all of which points to barefoot running as the healthiest form, people tend to heed advertisements from the shoe companies themselves. Asics, Brooks, Nike, Mizuno, Saucony, and New Balance know their advantage and woo customers with pictures of gel-pack inserts, vibrant colors,

and a strong but lightweight outsole structure for the ultimate foot protection. Runners with sore feet and legs see the ads and immediately drive to their nearest running store, eager to purchase and run painlessly. They put an average of one hundred dollars into a pair of shoes that will only temporarily fix the problem, if at all. Can we blame the consumer? Not entirely—why would a company like Nike encourage athletes to run barefoot when that would destroy their market? The research against shod running does not sit out in the open, so we must dig for it.

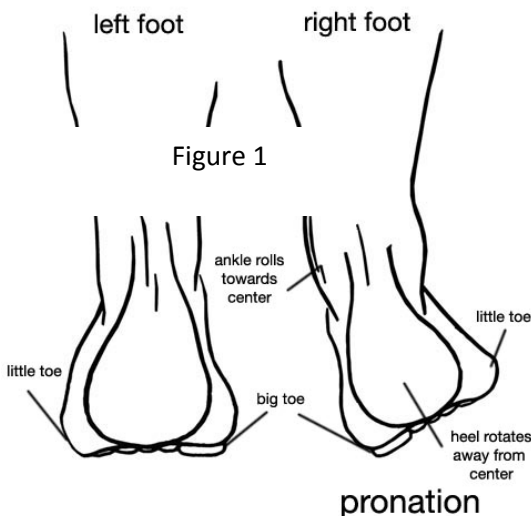
Common Misconceptions about Footwear

I have worked at a specialty running store for the last year and a half, and the most common request I receive when fitting someone for shoes is a call for cushioning. One customer asked me to sell him something that would feel like “clouds under [his] feet.” The feeling of a brand new athletic shoe with layers of soft, memory-foam cushion sounds like excellent relief for weary feet. The second most requested feature is stable structure to keep the foot secure, and the runners who claim a need for it are half correct. Our body naturally needs stability to run safely, but not in the form of more cushion under our feet. When the foot lands on a surface, it will continue to push downward on that surface until it can balance well enough to toe off again (McDougall 182-183). Therefore, when the foot strikes and can only find the soft, thick sole of a highly cushioned shoe, it digs deeper to find a solid surface. As a result, structured shoes compel the feet to come down with a greater force, which puts more stress on bones and joints. After years of listening to shoe companies give us the “facts,” our natural response to barefoot running is to think it will put more impact on our feet than they are designed to take. Contrarily, according to a study performed by Steve Robbins, Gerard Gouw, and Adel Hanna, our feet have high-sensory receptors that tell the feet how to react to impact and surface changes (Robbins et al. 130). The same study also discusses the layers and various types of skin on the soles of the human foot, which serve as shock-absorbers and naturally prevent overloading. Human feet have a high pain threshold because of thick layers of skin, which allows

them, over time, to develop toughness that shoes do not allow us to maintain. The same function that stability shoes can only attempt to replicate is programmed directly into our bodies (Robbins, et al 130), yet we still feel the need to wear extra weight and run in shoes for protection.

Another typical misconception about footwear is that pronation during foot strike is dangerous and increases injury potential. There are three different forms of toe-off during walking and running gait: neutral, pronation, and supination. Pronation is the rolling-in of the foot and collapse of the arch (Northcoast Foot Care). Figure 1 demonstrates an exaggerated form of overpronation, which requires correction.

This is a diagram of overpronation. The image is exaggerated to fully demonstrate the effect—most runners do not actually pronate to this degree. Pronation in a much slighter form is natural. (Source: NorthCoast Footcare)



The opposite gait pattern, supination, is far less common and indicates that the foot rolls out toward the pinky toe in the latter part of the gait cycle. We should aim for a neutral gait, which requires some pronation; the body needs the foot to roll in slightly for ideal shock-absorption. In attempt to correct running and walking gait, athletic companies typically divide their shoes into two main categories: stability and neutral. Neutral shoes cater to people who naturally walk or run with appropriate amount of pronation, while stability shoes intend to correct overpronation. The construction of the shoe includes denser foam on the instep of the shoe near the arch, and sometimes extending to the heel, which prevents the foot from rolling inward upon landing. Many doctors and running specialists often also prescribe orthotics, which are inserts the wearer places in his shoes to act against pronation. In his article “Why Shoes Make ‘Normal’ Gait Impossible,” Doctor William A. Rossi concedes that stability shoes do indeed change foot strike to some extent, but he distinguishes between the words “normal” and “natural.” Rossi claims, “While such therapies provide some relief from gait-induced distress symptoms, they are largely ineffectual in re-establishing natural gait. Why? Because natural gait is biomechanically impossible for any shoe-wearing person” (1). If the goal is to correct gait patterns, shoes fail because instead of mending the problem, they temporarily guide the foot in the right direction, but once the shoe comes off, the foot instantly reverts to its normal tendencies. Shoes and orthotics can be useful in conjunction with therapy or as a temporary fix prior to surgery, but should not be considered a long-term solution.

Injury-Prevention and Efficiency

Both scientific correlation studies and personal testimonies in recent years show proof for barefoot success in muscle strengthening and injury prevention. Gait is our most complex motor function; it uses half of the 200 bones and 650 muscles in our body, so it is incredibly important that every muscle and bone involved be as strong as possible (Rossi 1). Shoes inhibit a level of muscle use,

especially in the foot because the firm, structure platform renders the foot relatively immobile. Shoes also impair the sensory receptors of the foot, which need to be aware of the ground in order to provide adequate stability. In his article “Barefoot Running”, Michael Warburton cites several studies conducted by Steve Robbins and Adel Hanna whose results show that several of the most commonly reported running injuries; including ankle sprains, plantar fasciitis, shin splints, and ilio-tibial band syndrome; are reported far less frequently by barefoot runners than shod runners (2). A West German physical education instructor, who has trained hundreds of barefoot athletes in various sports related to running, cannot recall a single impact-related injury in any of his unshod athletes (Robbins and Hanna 149). Two main factors cause these results: muscle strength through extra usage and impact reduction through natural running form.

The most natural running form is also most efficient because of where the foot lands in relation to the body. Instead of striding out in front of the center of gravity as Bowerman and Knight suggested, the foot should land directly underneath the hips. This placement allows for the best possible stability, which aids other parts of running form as well. First of all, striking under the hips keeps the stride short and tight, so arm swing is also more likely to stay in line and close to the body. Shorter strides also indicate greater stride efficiency: the ideal cadence is 180, which indicates three steps per second (*Good Form Running*). This stride often seems difficult at first, especially for runners with long legs, but the cadence does not actually affect speed directly; instead, it uses less energy because of the consistency and balance it promotes. Finally, when the foot lands ahead of the center of gravity, the leg locks for an instant, which creates a stopping motion. Although the runner does not literally stop, over time the motion uses excess energy and puts severe impact on the joints by jamming them. The extra impact accounts for many common stress-related injuries (Sanders 14).

Several runners can account for the benefits of unshod running based on personal experience. Plantar

fasciitis is one of the most common injuries among runners, and the issue is chronic in that there is no perfect solution. The injury is caused by the shortening and tightening of the plantar fascia, which extends from the middle of the arch to the heel. Plantar fasciitis sidelines even the most pain-tolerant athletes because the muscle tightens so much that the natural stretching that running induces in the foot becomes nearly impossible. My father, who has been running in “normal” running shoes for over fifteen years, fell prey to plantar fasciitis two years ago. He tried the typical remedies, including massaging the foot with a tennis ball, stretching the calves and Achilles tendon each day, and wearing orthotics in his shoes. Near the time his frustration began to mount, I had recently finished reading Christopher McDougall’s *Born to Run*, so I suggested that he try running barefoot. For a week, he did his regular runs wearing shoes, but ran short cool-downs in the grass after each run. He reported that the barefoot portions were all pain-free, and each day the shod portions became less and less painful.

When barefoot seemed to work for my father, I decided to try it as well. The summer before my senior year of high school, I began to run short parts of my runs barefoot and worked up to two miles. When the cross country season started, I talked to my coach about the success I had had so far and he agreed to experiment with the entire team. We ran up to a mile and a half barefoot on the infield of the track each day. That was the first season of high school during which I did not sustain a stress fracture. The team also experienced a great decline in injury: my three years prior, we had at least five girls out with impact-related injuries each season, but my senior year, only two girls sustained long-term injuries. Several other runners, many with far more experience and miles than my dad or I, can testify to the same results. An obvious question arises—with so many studies and testimonies favoring barefoot running, what keeps people from making the switch?

Clearing the Doubts

Perhaps the biggest fear in those learning about barefoot running is the question, “I’ve been in shoes all my life. Isn’t it too late to switch? I have heard that a lot of people get hurt when they start running barefoot.” The concern is justified—many runners, both beginners and veterans, have sustained various levels of injuries after making the switch from regular running shoes to unshod running. However, most documented issues directly result either from a lack of transitional period or a hasty one. Because our feet have been trained to be shod since infancy, we cannot expect our legs to happily accept a sudden 180 degree turn from what they have learned. In my experience, I have come across two main approaches to transition that aim at making the switch more bearable for the legs. In the first, the runner wears his normal running shoes for daily mileage, but adds small amounts of barefoot running each week. He may start with a half mile walking twice a week, then increase frequency, then distance, and eventually he will move to running. The other option is to gradually “downsize” shoes. In this case, the each pair of shoes the runner purchases are lighter, firmer, and closer to the ground until he reaches a point where he can run in nothing. Finally, I combine the two options: because I am almost constantly in season, my transition must be fairly gradual. I run barefoot occasionally and I can currently do up to two miles at a time, but I run my main mileage in a pair of racing flats. I have not had a stress or impact-related injury since I began my transition, I have been able to increase my weekly mileage significantly, and due to my improved running form my muscles tire less quickly than they used to.

There are a couple of side-effects to expect when transitioning from shod to barefoot running. The first is a degree of calf soreness and tightness. Shoes have a significant drop from the heel to the toe, and the higher heel shortens the calf and Achilles muscles so they do not have to do as much work. Without the lift the shoe’s heel provides, the calf and Achilles are forced to bear more weight (Rossi 2). While these muscles are naturally designed to do the extra work, they must be strengthened gradually. It is safe to run through a low level of calf

tightness, but do not run barefoot again until the soreness heals completely. Our bodies provide us with a system that allows us to know what is and is not safe to do, so by paying attention to pain levels we can make changes more safely and effectively. A second risk is more obvious—the possibility of dangerous objects on the path. When there is a chance of stepping on glass, a nail, or a more natural sharp object such as an acorn, a runner can limit the risks by wearing near-barefoot footwear such as Vibram Fivefingers. These “shoes” have a slot for each toe, are very flexible to allow for adequate muscle use, and have a sole of protective rubber that protects from harsh terrain while maintaining comfortable sensory perception of the ground.

Common misconceptions created and promoted by the running shoe industry push people to assume that structured, cushioned running shoes improve running. In reality, the shoes that appear comfortable actually inhibit proper running form and natural injury-prevention. Unfortunately, the “barefoot craze” has only recently begun to gain respect and interest, and meanwhile we have trained for years in our \$100-plus running shoes. As a result, injury rates continue to skyrocket and we gradually lose our ability to compete with international athletes who have been training barefoot since childhood. With step-by-step changes, however, we can reverse the injury trend, save money, and train more efficiently by moving to barefoot running.

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“A Literature Review of Genre,” by Calvin J. Anderson

Instructor’s Note

In this paper, Calvin uses *Rhetorical Genre Theory* to give an extended definition of the term “genre.” He then uses that theory as the basis of his analysis of an important genre to him major: scientific research articles in geology. The paper is organized into two sections: a literature review where he sets up his theoretical framework based on previous research on genre, and his own research on the scientific research article. The main purpose of this paper was for students to be able to use the concepts of rhetorical genre theory to help them figure out the types of writing—and the conventions of that writing—done by professionals in their major. Calvin was able to use some very difficult theoretical texts very effectively and then was able to apply that theory to his example genre in sophisticated ways that showed a deep understanding of all the texts.

Writer’s Biography

Calvin Anderson is a freshman Geology major from central Ohio. He is characterized by a zeal for the Bible, a love for his family, and an enthusiasm for geology.

A Literature Review of Genre

Genre theory seeks to understand the relationship between groups of people and how they communicate. Since language and communicative norms are in a continual state of change, genre theory is constantly in need of new research. This literature review will attempt to add to the ongoing discussion of genre by improving its definition, and by providing a modern example through genre analysis of geological research articles.

While some authors describe genre as being primarily characterized by a set of formal traits (Measell), many genre theorists see the need to develop a more complex and accurate definition. It has been demonstrated

that some discourses with identical forms can actually be *distinct* genres. It has thus been argued that genre cannot be defined by formal characteristics (Fish). Others emphasize the need to recognize genres by the goals they accomplish, and by the discourse communities that define them (Wardle; Swales). So then, genre is best described as being a sort of interpretive framework, which is defined by a discourse community, in order to accomplish a particular rhetorical purpose.

The most foundational aspect of this discussion concerns what a genre *is*. Simply put, genres *are* interpretive frameworks. The phrase “interpretive framework” has been primarily treated by Stanley Fish in his text How to Recognize a Poem When You See One. In this article, Fish describes an experiment in which he instructed his poetry class to interpret a poem written on the blackboard. *In fact*, the “poem” was nothing more than an assignment list he had written for the previous class. Fish found that both classes drew very different meanings from the *same text* according to their pre-established method of interpretation (Fish). In other words, they saw in the “poem” exactly what they were predisposed to look for. This evidences an underlying structure of presuppositions which influences the very understanding of information taken in. These “interpretive frameworks” are the essential building blocks for communication within a community (Kent). In one sense, genres are not objective because each discourse community looks for different information, and yet in another sense, they are not entirely subjective because they are defined by the *community*, rather than by an individual. Therefore, “acts of recognition, rather than being triggered by formal characteristics, are their source,” (Fish).

The practical aspect of this discussion concerns what a genre *does*. Since genres constitute the standards by which information is recognized, they are then the convention which allows people to communicate effectively with each other. Letters are a common example. While all letters share similar features (i.e. greeting, body, salutation etc.), the defining factor is not the form but rather

the purpose of the letter. This is evident in the fact that there are many kinds, or subgenres, of letters. A business letter or an email for instance are suitable for different situations than a postcard might be. This means that genre must be identified by the contextual purpose which it was meant to fulfill. Elizabeth Wardle has conducted a case study to investigate this concept. She found that not only does one's use of genre in a given context determine one's communicative effectiveness within one's discourse community, but it also ultimately affects one's *identity* within the community (Wardle). This makes sense in light of Fish's model, since social acceptance/effectiveness would be indelibly linked to conformity with the appropriate interpretive framework as it is defined by the community (Fish). Therefore, the definition of genre must also hinge on its fulfillment of the rhetorical purpose it was created to satisfy.

The common thread of this discussion concerns where genre *comes from*. This subject already has been alluded to. Since genres are interpretive frameworks which fulfill a particular rhetorical purpose, they must be conventions of a discourse community which wants to accomplish that rhetorical purpose. It would be absurd to say that genres invent themselves. If Fish is correct, then genres must be invented by a preexisting communication-minded entity. Namely, genre is tethered to the concept of discourse communities and must be discussed in such terms. According to John Swales, "A discourse community utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims," (Swales). It is quite astounding to note that the definitions of genre and discourse communities rely on the mutual reality of the other. Therefore, both concepts *must* be absolute standards for understanding communication. Many authors have acknowledged this notion, though not always explicitly (Hyland; Devitt; Wardle). Although this idea may seem counterintuitive, it is consistent with Biblical truth. According to the Bible, God created Adam with a fully functioning language, (see Genesis 2:15-17, 23; 3), and all people had the same language until the confusion at Babel (Genesis 11). Since, people are "created in the image of

God,” communication is a trait which must rely on the nature of God Himself. It makes sense then, that something which describes how communication takes place ultimately finds its roots in something which cannot be explained except by assuming that God has put all the codependent aspects of communication in place *simultaneously*.

Having considered how genre should be defined, the conversation is set to discuss a specific example of how interpretive frameworks, rhetorical purposes, and discourse communities are woven together. In order to see how these realities are applied in academic circles, it will be helpful to examine a particular genre, and to note how it demonstrates these characteristics.

Geological research articles are a good example of a how genre can be understood in the terms outlined above. The earth science community seeks to increase understanding of the earth, and to solve practical problems related to the earth and the environment. The genre of geological research articles has been created to further the communicative aims of the earth science community, and does so by providing a medium to present scientific findings, to suggest hypotheses, and to critique constructively other geological models. Although this genre is highly structured, the form alone cannot set it apart from other technical genres which have similar, even identical, format. The rigid structure is not the defining characteristic of the genre, but rather a consequence of attempting to accomplish the community’s goals, which require a rigid and standardized way to present ideas. A genre analysis was conducted in order to better understand how this genre operates according to a dynamic definition. Henceforth are the findings of this study.

Earth scientists are primarily interested in scientific data and the logical conclusions which they can subsequently draw. Despite minor variations among publications, all geologic research articles have the same essential, logical components, and virtually never rely on emotionally geared arguments. “Abstracts,” which succinctly summarize the text, are a unique feature of scholarly writing. Earth scientists can efficiently

communicate and digest a significant amount of information by using concise abstracts. All parts of geological research articles, including the abstract, revolve around two major sections: one for presenting data, and the other for explaining it.

In researching this genre, the data portions were frequently found to account for more than half the total text. This is consistent with earth scientists' emphasis on basing their ideas in solid evidence. Therefore, presenting data accurately and effectively is an essential component of the genre. In fact, many geologists hold that presenting data is the most important part of geological writing. "It's most important to do a good job describing the data you have," says Dr. John Whitmore, geology professor and veteran in geologic writing. "If you do a good job of describing the data you have, it will be easier to make conclusions from that data," (Whitmore, 2012). This is one way in which this genre fulfills the rhetorical purpose of its associated community.

In geological research articles, it was also found that some sort of discussion and conclusions consistently followed the data section. In one paper studied, the data presented might not have been obviously significant. However, the second half of the paper went on to develop a new, comprehensive hypothesis to answer several intriguing geological dilemmas (Wise). This demonstrates an important point. The discussion sections of geological research articles are where the author contributes to the collective conversation by explaining how the data gathered is significant. This is where the ongoing conversations of geoscience live and thrive. Therefore, geological research articles accomplish the goals of the community.

The most effective examples of this genre share a highly precise use of vocabulary and technical terminology. Swales' observation of discourse communities having a "specific lexis," certainly holds true in this case (Swales), as genres will always reflect the habits of their associated communities. For example, the abstract of one text begins with the line, "The timescale for the generation of granitic

magmas and their subsequent intrusion, crystallization, and cooling as plutons is no longer incompatible with the biblical time frames of the global, year-long Flood cataclysm and of 6,000–7,000 years for earth history,” (Snelling). This kind of jargon is not a defining requirement for the genre, but rather it reflects Snelling’s attempt to precisely communicate with other earth scientists by using vocabulary they already understand. Solid geologic writing contains little to no ambiguity, even at the expense of brevity. This facilitates precise and effective communication within the earth science community’s interpretive framework. This correlates directly with Wardle’s research. An earth scientist who does not use the accepted conventional lexicon of the genre will not be easily understood nor will he be highly regarded by the community.

It should be clear that geological research articles are crafted in such a way as to facilitate the necessary exchange of information among the earth science community in a way that is easy for them to interpret. The sample text by John Whitmore is a good example of this exchange. “The Green River Formation: a large post-Flood lake system,” (Whitmore, 2006) was actually one of several papers published in a forum debate between Whitmore and another scientist. The forum served as an opportunity to explore both hypotheses, and allowed the reader to make up his own mind about which hypothesis is better supported by the data. This is one way the community of earth science benefits from geologic research writing. As a result of the Green River Formation forum, many earth scientists now have a more complete view of earth history, a better understanding of how geologic features form, and have an improved approach to collecting and interpreting data.

Had someone from a very different discourse community read Whitmore’s paper, perhaps a community of fiction writers for instance, they would not understand what Whitmore was trying to say. In fact, they would probably interpret the article as something like an allegory with all sorts of hidden meanings. Likewise, had the same information been presented in a fiction novel, earth

scientists would never have understood that Whitmore was talking about a particular suite of rocks. Therefore, the genre must depend on the interpretive framework established by the community, rather than its exact characteristics.

This study of geological research articles verifies the conclusions of Swales, Wardle, Fish, and other genre theorists. The earth science community has defined a particular framework of interpretation in order to further their rhetorical purposes. Therefore, the findings of this genre analysis confirm the complex and dynamic model of genre theory, rather than a formal and static one.

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“The Effect of Music on Creative Writing,” by Kelley Pugh

Instructor’s Note

In this paper, Kelley asks several research questions about the effects of music on creative writing, and then uses empirical research methods to answer those questions. The purpose of this assignment was for students to design a research study about writing and then conduct the research to answer their questions. The paper is organized like a social science research article, with a literature review, methods section, results, and discussion. The data that Kelley collected is fascinating and really shows the power of her research design and method. Her data yielded interesting results and conclusions that have implications for people interested in creative writing. She was also able to give some evidence for the, previously under-investigated, “Mozart effect,” and thus was able to add her voice to a real academic conversation in the field of writing studies.

Writer’s Biography

Kelley Pugh, also known as KC, is a freshman Social Work major from Virginia. KC has always enjoyed creative writing, but this is the first time she has ever attempted a scholarly article such as this. KC enjoys the company of others and has a deep appreciation for the arts.

The Effect of Music on Creative Writing

Lit Review

The effect of music in general has been of interest to scholars for a very long time; given the fact that music is heavily imbued into all cultures and seems to be able to elicit strong emotional responses from listeners (Alamali, Barnett). An example of why music is so interesting to researchers is the theory of the Mozart Effect. According to the Mozart Effect, music is thought to be powerful enough

to not only influence emotions, but actions as well (Thompson). However, research with the Mozart Effect is not yet substantial enough to come to a conclusion on how it affects creative writing. In order answer to this question, I will examine just how universal the effects of music are by observing written creative responses to certain musical compositions. By identifying a universal emotion found through these written works, I should be able to determine the validity of the Mozart Effect. Furthermore, this study will identify whether or not music can be used to purposely convey a specific emotion that can be transferred into writing.

One of the reasons why music has been studied so broadly is because it has been used for a multitude of different reasons and has always been a part of our culture. For example, John Negri states in “15 Purposes of Music” that in ancient times music was used to prepare armies for war, accompany dance rituals, and orally communicate stories and ballads from generation to generation. As a result of the long history of music, it has been traditionally incorporated into our culture and permeates all of our lives in very deep and significant ways.

Although music is still used in wars and dances, it is commonly believed that the primary purpose of music has shifted to influence the emotions of the individual. Supporting this claim, famous writer and theologian C.S. Lewis has defined the true art of music as letting sound stimulate personal thoughts and ideas within us, rather than merely listening to a tune and reacting to it. Indeed, in this modern era music is purposefully composed to embody certain emotions and is used for the listener’s reflection.

Researchers such as Usama Alamali and Gregory Barnett know that music has evolved in such a way that it can elicit specific emotional responses from listeners and have done studies to prove this phenomenon. Likewise, these researchers have found strong evidence that some music is more likely to provoke a particular emotion more than other types of music. For example, Barnett conducted a study in which participants listened to different modes of music and then responded with how they felt. Amazingly,

many of the emotions experienced by the listeners were exactly the same. In a similar study, “The Effect of Music on Cognitive Emotional Responses,” done by Alamali et al., evidence shows that classical music tends to have a relaxing effect on people of all demographics. By studying people’s moods before and after a particular piece of music is listened to, Alamali et al. were able to identify the reoccurring trends in mood. From observing these trends in mood, Alamali et al. deduced that “listening to classical and self-selected relaxing music after exposure to a stressor, resulted in a significant reduction in anxiety, anger, and sympathetic nervous system arousal in comparison with participants who sat in silence or listening to heavy metal music” (Alamali, pg. 2). Similar to these findings, in her article “Music: A Link Between Cognition and Emotion” Carol Kruhman agrees and argues that it is common to experience the precise emotion that others experience when listening to the same piece of music.

The idea that emotional responses to music are similar from person to person suggests that these responses are innately acquired. This theory is supported by the fact that even the untrained ear can experience emotion when listening to a song. For example, in a study on the effects of Beethoven, Leon Botstein credits Beethoven’s success to his “music conveying a meaning to wide range of listeners” (Botstein, pg. 6). In other words, people of all musical backgrounds felt the same emotion when listening to Beethoven’s music. In addition to this finding, Botstein has also identified that the emotion linked with certain modes and keys has remained consistent throughout centuries. These findings indicate that there is an almost scientific, biological connection between music and human emotions. Consequently, a wide range of listeners can listen to one piece and all feel the same sentiment evoked by it because of this connection, regardless of their musical or cultural backgrounds.

In addition to the emotional responses we have to music, the Mozart Effect suggests that we actually act upon the emotions we experience. In William Ford Thompson’s study, “Arousal, Mood, and the Mozart Effect,” he had participants perform a spatial task after listening to certain

music. A group listened to music that was expected to have a positive response, and that group's efficiency in cutting and folding paper was significantly higher compared to a group that did not listen to music at all. Conversely, a group that listened to a composition that was expected to have a negative response performed the same task much less efficiently. In conclusion to this study, the theory of the Mozart Effect certainly seems to be true which caused Thompson to argue that there is "compelling evidence that the Mozart effect is an artifact of arousal and mood" (Thompson, pg. 249). Even from our own personal experiences, many can testify that certain music can make us act a certain way. For example, this could include performing well at sporting events because of a thoughtfully organized warm-up CD, becoming compelled to dance because a happy song came on the radio, or even recalling facts more effectively because the professor was playing a classical symphony at the beginning of class.

Although it is evident that we have bodily responses to music, to what extent will we be affected? Is music really so influential that it not only changes our mood, but also our actions? My hypothesis is that music is powerful enough to actually alter our thinking process and our perception to the point where it can significantly modify our actions. In this article I will attempt to address the question of to what extent the Mozart Effect impacts our creative writing abilities.

Some research has been done on this topic, with the conclusion that the universal emotions experienced through music do transfer to creative writing. For example, in Rebecca Brown's "Sound Tracking Ourselves: Teaching Creative Writing With a Musical Approach," she had participants write a creative response to the music they listened to. Brown found that students not only had similar emotional responses, but similar writings, suggesting that the Mozart Effect could be universal as well. In short, this means that music not only has a predictable impact on emotion, but on actions as well. As this is a relatively new study, however, there still needs to be some clarification and holes filled. By asking participants to creatively describe the music they have been asked to listen to, I will

investigate to what extent music has influence over actions. In other words, I will be attempting to answer the question if the strongest emotions override what we write about, or if music is powerful enough to completely alter the thinking process. The study of how music affects our emotions, and by extent our creative writing abilities, could open many doors to new ways of teaching and artistry.

Methodology

In my research I have explored the effects of emotion on creative writing in students. By using music as a form of stimuli, I observed how music affects emotional responses and how those emotional responses affected creativity. By observing the participants, I have attempted to answer the following research questions: 1) How much of an impact does music have on our emotions? 2) To what extent can those emotions be transferred into our writing? Or in other words, how valid is the Mozart Effect?

To answer these questions, I used a survey, a case study, and textual analysis from the case study to evaluate the written works of the survey participants. The preliminary survey gave me a rough idea of how music would influence writing and provided some quantitative research. However, qualitative research was the most substantial data I received, so I put more of an emphasis on the case study and textual analysis. I used more specific questions and fewer people than I would have if I had been collecting quantitative research.

The first step of my research was the survey I sent out to friends and family over social networking sites. I sent the survey to as many people as possible and tried to make sure I covered a demographic variety. To make people more likely to answer the questionnaire, I kept the questions simple and easy to answer. Since the purpose of my research was to answer the question of whether or not music affects writing, I asked questions about whether or not people thought music was important, if it affected emotions, if it could influence writing, etc. The first question asked the participants to rate the importance of music in their life on a scale from 1 to 10. The survey also asked the participant's opinion on whether or not music had

the power to affect actions or performances, which is the basic theory of The Mozart Effect. Another question asked whether or not music could make a lasting impression on mood and writing. From the responses to these questions, I was able to gather statistical information on people's opinions of how music transferred into creative writing. Even though the participants did not know it, I was really asking about their opinion on the validity of the Mozart Effect. The questions gave me a quantitative aspect to my research, which helped balance out the predominately qualitative research I collected. This quantitative information can be generalized more readily than my case study and textual analysis could be.

In addition to the survey I designed, I also organized a case study in which I analyzed people's responses to music. I selected to use a case study so I could have more qualitative research, in hopes of being better able to answer the question of whether or not music affects writing. Furthermore, the survey conducted earlier was flawed in that it only brought to light what participants thought, not necessarily what they did or what was true. I hoped that this research would provide a more truthful and wholesome answer.

In the case study with three trials, my participants were seven friends with a variety in demographics. Three had experience in music and four did not. Ideally, I would have had seven participants answer all three trials, but it turned out that seven people answered the first trial, only five people answered the second trial, and only three people answered the third trial. Three different times, I had my participants listen to three different pieces of music. Each trial asked the same exact questions with the only difference being the piece of music I had them listen to. In the case study, I started out by asking the participants what mood they were in and if they could describe that mood in a creative way by using imagery and sensory appeal. I asked this so I could compare with their mood after they had listened to the music and see if it influenced them at all. I also asked if anything significant had happened very recently that deeply affected their mood. After the

participants recorded their mood, I then proceeded to have them listen to a piece of music with no distractions. In the first trial, I had the participants listen to a piano rendition of “Norwegian Wood”, a Beatles’ Song. In the second trial, I had the participants listen to an instrumental version of “Be Thou My Vision.” In the third trial, I had the participants listen to Danny Gatton’s electric guitar version of The Simpson’s theme song. In all three trials, the music selection was about four minutes to seven minutes long and did not have any lyrics. I tried to select pieces that were not well known, so there would be no indirect associations with emotions from previous experiences. After the participants listened to the music, I asked them to write a creative response to the music. I asked them to envision what type of scene in a movie would be playing if this had been the soundtrack. I expected answers to be descriptive enough to get a clear picture of what was going on. I encouraged the use of imagery and other creative literary devices. This part of the case study was what comprised my textual analysis, which will be covered in the following paragraphs. Next, I asked the participants whether they had heard the piece before and whether or not they liked the piece based on personal preference. These factors could be important in the emotional response to the music. Then I asked the participants to use a few descriptive words to describe the piece. In addition, I gave them a resource for them to use if they were having a hard time finding descriptive words. Lastly, I again asked them to describe their mood as descriptively as possible and whether or not they thought the particular piece of music changed their mood. By comparing their answer of the last question to their answer of the first question, I developed an understanding of how music affected emotions and to what extent.

Finally, the third part of my research consisted of me analyzing the creative responses gathered from the case study. The purpose of the textual analysis was to see to what extent music could affect our writing. Though this part of the research is largely based on the perspective of the interpreter, it could very well be the most informative and enlightening part in the entire study. When coupled with the knowledge of the current mood of the writer, it

could help answer the question about the validity of the Mozart Effect. The textual analysis helped me to answer to what extent music affected our writing, and if emotion from music in particular was transferable to other creative forms. Textual analysis of the responses brings more qualitative information than a simple survey and in that aspect has many positive qualities. I was able to gain a deeper understanding as to how writers specifically responded to music. Because of the qualitative research, it was much easier to make connections between music, emotion, and writing. However, because it was a relatively small sample of people, my data may not prove to be very generalizable to a larger population. I tried to minimize this problem by selecting a variety of people.

When analyzing the responses, I searched for underlying themes of the scenes portrayed and what common emotions might be associated with those scenes. By looking for similarities in descriptive imagery, symbolism, and word choice, I was able to identify which type of emotions the music conveyed. I also took into account the previous mood of the writer and how that may have manifested itself in the written response. However, this could also prove to be a bias in my research because I expected to see a certain result. My expectations may have clouded the actual results of the data, although I tried to avoid any particularities I may have had.

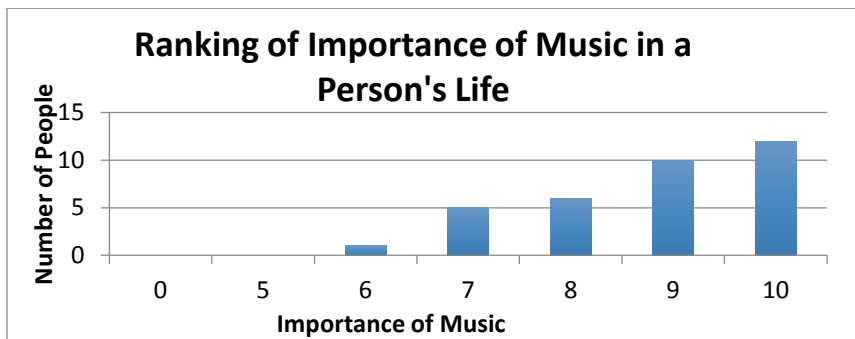
I used a survey, a case study, and textual analysis to compile a set of data. By varying my methods, I hoped to be more consistent in the data I collected.

Research Data

I designed a survey that I sent out through Facebook to friends, relatives, and peers. I sent out the survey to over one hundred Facebook friends, and received thirty-three responses. The responses I received encompassed a wide variety of people aging from ages sixteen to mid-fifties. There was also a variety in the musical background of the participants. This survey was designed to get a general idea of what people thought about music and the effects of music. In an attempt to make the survey as hassle-free as possible for the participants, I limited the survey to nine

simple questions that did not require immensely deep responses.

Since the purpose of my research was to answer the question of whether or not music affects writing, I asked questions about whether or not people thought music was important, if it affected emotions, if it could influence writing, etc. The first question asked the participants to rate the importance of music in their life on a scale from 1 to 10. From their responses, I found that the rankings ranged from 6-10, with the most frequently given rating being a 10 followed by the second highest rating being a 9. These responses indicate that most people acknowledge music as being a crucial factor in their life.



The factor of whether or not a person was musically talented his or herself did not affect the responses substantially; several people who I know are not involved in playing music ranked the importance of music as a 10; several people who I know play instruments and understand music only ranked the importance of music in their lives as a 7.

Other questions I asked pertained to whether or not participants thought music affected emotions. Unanimously, all participants answered that yes, music does affect emotions and the way we feel. Many participants used stronger terms such as “definitely”, “absolutely”, and “of course” to answer the question. One participant interestingly said, “It is impossible for [music] not to affect our emotions.” The only slight discrepancy I found in the responses was something that one participant

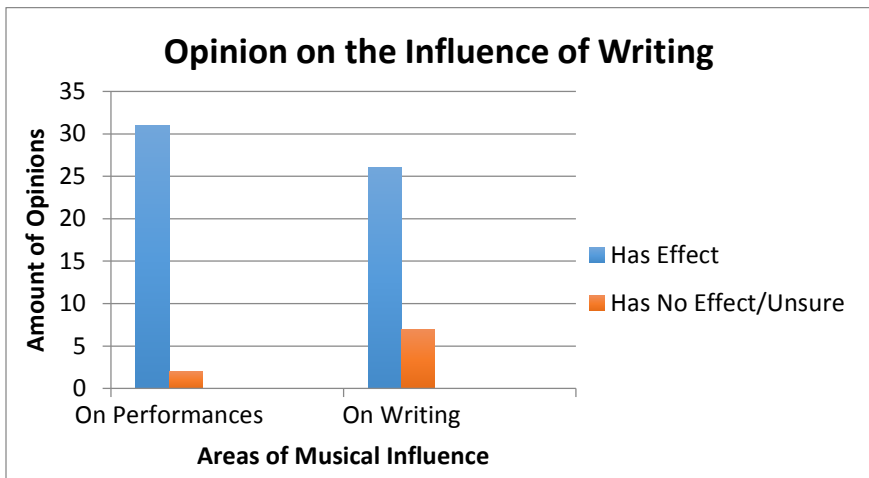
said. He said that “music is mostly an amplifier for emotions; it brings out things we already feel.” While this doesn’t deny that music affects emotions, it might suggest that music may not be as powerful as we make it out to be.

I also asked whether or not music could have a lasting impression on mood. 28 out of 35 participants believed that music did make a lasting impression. Some went as far to say that music not only affected their mood, but their lives. However, the remaining 7 out of 35 participants were not as sure that music would make a lasting impression on moods. While some simply answered “no”, some explained that music was only a temporary entity and did not have power once it was no longer audible. One participant acknowledged the potential of music and yet limited its authority by saying “No. I think the affect is temporary. That temporary impression is pretty powerful, however.”

The survey also asked the participant’s opinion on whether or not music had the power to affect actions or performances, which is the basic theory of The Mozart Effect. This answer was slightly more inconsistent than some of the other questions, although the vast majority of participants still believed the answer to be yes. In addition to the positive response, a few gave examples of how music could affect our actions or performances. All of these examples either dealt with performance in an academic setting or in another competitive sporting environment. In response to this question, there was one “no” and one “possibly”. However, it appears as if participants were less sure of this question because only two participants gave definitive answers (“most definitely” and “of course it does”).

When asked whether or not music could affect writing, the answers became even more inconsistent. Hypothetically, the answer to this question would have been the same as the previous one since writing is an action and a measure of performance. However, according to their responses, they did not think this was necessarily the case. Seven participants either did not think music could affect

writing or were unsure. The results imply that some people think music can affect some areas, but not others.



Interestingly, some people identified music as something that helped their writing, while some targeted it as a distraction while writing. However, it is important to note that the responses that were most substantial to my research did acknowledge music as something that was powerful and had the ability to affect writing, regardless of whether or not it was preferred in the writing process.

In addition to the survey I designed, I also organized a case study in which I analyzed people's responses to music. I started with seven participants, but as the study went on fewer people responded. This resulted in seven participating in the first trial, five in the second trial, and three in the third trial. While I do not believe this significantly affected the results because of the consistency of answers, ideally the number of participants would have remained the same.

The first objective of this study was to provide a clearer answer if music affected our emotions. In the first part of the study, I asked the participants to describe their mood as descriptively as possible. The participants did as I wished in all three trials, and described their moods very specifically using two to four sentences. Some used imagery to describe their mood such as "I just want to close my eyes and wake up at the beach", "I feel like everything is exactly how it's supposed to be, and like I'm lying

underneath a canopy of trees and just daydreaming”, and “I just feel like it's this mountain that I can't quite seem to get over, and things just keep piling on top.” Some participants used extensive literary devices to describe their mood. One answered, “the mood I'm feeling is as I'm in a field of green grass, but I'm looking up towards the sky, but there is this huge HUGE block of matter in my way from seeing the sky. But the block is moving, kind of in the same way as a cloud blocks the sun and slowly moves away... but this block is blocking my whole view, and I'm reaching the end of it, about to have my view completely unconcealed.” All participants followed this trend in all three of the trials.

After I had the participants listen to the music (which is part of the textual analysis and will be discussed below), I had the participants describe their mood as specifically as possible once again. Their moods tended to be the same as they had previously been, however usually with a new twist. This implies that while music usually does not completely alter our mood, it does have an influence on it. For example, the participant who described the block in the sky said afterwards that the block was “more of just a cloud now.” This type of trend existed in almost all of the moods; only once did a participant report a complete change of mood. Depending on the type of music that was played (happy, sad, etc.), the participant tended to drift towards that emotion in their mood after listening to the music. For example, one participant before listening to the music described his mood as “worn down and tired.” After listening to music that was described as refreshing and light, he then described his mood as “willing to make a difference in someone’s life” and he was “encouraged that he could make a difference.” In another trial, another participant also experienced a mood swing and went from “irritated” to “motivated, yet somber” after listening to a piece that was described as deep and powerful.

In addition to how the type of music affected mood, the personal preference the participant had of the music also affected their second mood. The general trend was that if a participant had a personal liking for the music, then the difference between the first mood and the second mood

tended to be greater. If a participant did not like the music, there was rarely any mood change at all. In the last trial, none of the participants claimed to enjoy the music and there was very little mood change, with the most measurable swing being from a participant who said he felt “a little more energized.”

Although the case study gave me great insight, perhaps the most important part of my research was the textual analysis of the participant’s responses. After having the participants listen to the music, I asked them to describe what type of movie scene the piece would fit into. Since imagery is often associated with emotion, I hoped this type of writing would help identify the question of whether or not music affects writing.

The first piece I had seven participants listen to was “Norwegian Wood”, a piano rendition of a classic Beatles song. Two participants recognized the piece but said it did not affect their response to it. Words used to describe this piece were extremely consistent, such as “relaxing”, “refreshing”, “mellow”, and “light”. Regardless of the mood the participants were previously feeling, they all described the piece of music along the lines of these emotions. Some even used the same exact imagery descriptions, such as “glimmering ocean” and “tranquil woods”. In the responses there was a consistent theme of discovery, nostalgia, and reflection on life. There were no lyrics to this piece of music. This suggests that music has universal connotations without the use of words. Somehow, each participant was able to produce a movie scene that was extraordinarily consistent with the other responses. Two of the responses are as follows:

“I’m imagining people in love on the top of a mountain on a sun-dappled blanket, looking out over the landscape and planning the rest of their lives. Then I can see them years later with their children on the same mountain, watching them run and play not really needing to say anything. I can see the same two people growing old and dreaming about their spot on the mountain but not able

to go there anymore except in their minds. They are still deeply in love, though, and every time they look into the other's eyes they can see a montage of their lives together.”

“I pictured a young couple walking along a wooded trail, with an overview of a mountain lake. The couple started off as kids, but then grew up together. Every few moments the season in the woods would change. When they started out they were kids running down the trail and it was early spring and leaves were coming out. Lots of birch trees. Next scene they are still walking but the season has changed to summer. They are a couple now. Smiling laughing, but just walking now, not running like they were kids.

Scene shifts to fall. Now they have kids and the kids are running up and down the trail. Everyone happy. Leaves are starting to fall. A crisp fall day. Jackets on.

Final scene. Winter, leaves are gone. Snow on the ground. Cold, breath hanging in the air. Just the couple. Kids are gone. They are still happy.

Their lives have changed but the trees have stayed the same.”

In the second trial, I had five participants listen to an instrumental rendition of “Be Thou My Vision”. No participants recognized the piece, but all claimed to have enjoyed it. The words used to identify this piece were again fairly consistent, such as “hopeful”, “powerful”, and “deep”. However, when asked to produce a movie scene, the participants fell into two separate categories. Two of the participants envisioned a scene of a couple falling in love.

In both scenes, the couple was beginning to learn more about one another. Very interestingly, the season autumn was identified in both movie scenes. The other three participants described the movie scene as the aftermath of an epic battle. This battle was one described as an old-time battle with majestic overtones. Two of the responses about the battle are as follows:

“This song would be in the final moments of the film after a big battle has been fought and won by the protagonist(s). All the work and hardships they went through paid off, but the sound is so melancholy because the main character sadly died in the final battle. I imagine many people mourning and being grateful, as they could not have done it without him/her. It’s a sad yet inspiring moment as one age begins after another ends.”

“The war has just finished, and the dusty smoke is being swiped away by the wind, and the grey scene is visible for the first time ever since the war started. People are coming out from their hiding places and seeing the sun in the first time in a long time, they couldn't see it during this oppression, and were forced to hide to keep their lives. And suddenly over a hill a Knight mounted on a horse, trots up to the top of the hill, being illuminated by the sun, glowing in his glory. He stops, and looks down at all of the people, he has won the victory. He raises his weapon and everyone yells in a cry of relief.”

The fact that two different scenes were described could suggest that that falling in love and winning a battle could have similar emotions.

In the third trial, I had three participants listen to an

electric guitar rendition of The Simpson's theme song. One participant recognized the piece, and all claimed to have disliked it. Again, the descriptive words were extremely consistent, such as "aggressive", "energized", and "bold." Even though the three participants described different scenes, they all had the same message of young people going out and having fun. The themes "living the life" and "just having a good time" were described in all three movie scenes. Two of the responses were as follows:

"I picture a girls' night out with a group of about 5 women in their late 20s. They're out on the town and having the time of their lives. They're letting go of all their inhibitions and just trying to have a good time together. It starts to get a little out of hand, but they all keep each other safe and laugh about it the next day."

"For a soundtrack I pictured a pair of good ole' boys fixing up a car for a big race. Working in a barn they start with a tired old car, but by the end of the song they have a race winner. It is one of those speeded up montage scenes where they work hard tearing the car apart, testing things, getting it started, paint it, take it on the road, and during the really fast guitar pieces they are flying down a dirt road."

The consistency of these responses shows an interesting trend. Whether or not we actually are in the same mood that the music portrays, we can still effectively use music to evoke similar writings.

Discussion Section

From my survey, my case study, and my textual analysis, I was able to deduce two main findings. The first was that 1) music does evoke emotion, and that this phenomenon may be universal. It is difficult to say whether

or not this phenomenon is actually universal, because of the lack of diverse cultural background in my participants. However, all people in my experiment invariably experienced an emotion when listening to music, and many experienced the same emotion. The second finding is that 2) music can directly affect our creative writing. Even non-lyrical music that someone has no previous connections to can produce powerful imagery. Furthermore, this imagery even appears to be the same from person to person. These two findings are similar in the sense that music predisposes us to behave in a certain way. Specifically, there seems to be a universal emotional response to music as well as a universal physical response to music. Hence, this suggests that the Mozart Effect is a very valid and legitimate theory, even when applied to writing. This study has helped to answer the question of to what extent music affects our writing. There is still research to be done, but based on the findings of this study we can assume that the Mozart Effect is certainly reasonable.

The first major finding was that music certainly seems to evoke a particular emotion. From the surveys taken, people did think that music was powerful enough to bring about certain feelings. This hypothesis seems to have been confirmed in the case study. By asking participants their mood before and after they listened to a particular piece, there was often a noticeable change between the two answers. More often than not, the moods changed in a similar way. After listening to the music, the moods of the participants became more similar to one another. My findings confirm the case studies of both Alamali et al. and Barnett. Both researchers came to the conclusion that music brought about similar emotions from person to person.

It is evident that music does have an impact on our emotions, however it is important to note that complete mood changes did not occur. It makes sense that “happy” songs make a person happy, and “sad” songs make a person sad. Nonetheless, it does not seem that a depressed person could be made joyous by a “happy” song. For example, this phenomenon was represented when one of the participants was talking about feeling frustrated, and there was a huge

block in the sky, but after listening to the piece of music he felt like the block was still there, but moving. This example shows that while music affected his mood, it was not powerful enough to completely turn it around. So in short, while music is powerful, it does not appear to be powerful enough to make a depressed person joyous, or vice versa. As one of the participants in my survey put it, “music is mostly an amplifier for emotions; it brings out things we already feel.” Though music definitely has a predictable impact on the human psyche, it usually does not evoke a completely different emotion.

The second major finding was that music greatly influenced creative writing. An outside stimulus such as music could have a deep impact on the creative works one produces. From the responses that I received, I could tell that there was a deep emotion, or at least deep thoughts, involved in the writing process. I was able to deduce that there was a significant amount of brain activity because of the depth of the responses. The fact that the imagery was so strong and consistent seems to verify The Mozart Effect, and confirms both Thompson’s and Brown’s study on the effects of music on actions. The imagery in these responses ranged from good to outstanding, with descriptive images such as “sun-dappled blanket” and “a woman hanging her laundry to dry in the middle of fall”. Interestingly most of the imagery was extremely similar from person to person, as demonstrated in the previous section. The previous emotions of the writer seemed to be irrelevant when he or she was writing the creative response. For example, in the second creative response to “Be Thou My Vision” about the Knight claiming victory, the writer stated he was “irritated”, that “nothing was going exactly right”, and he was “ready for the day to be over”. Yet this participant produced a response that did not hint at those emotions at all; the response (that can be seen in the previous section) was a heroic, glorious, brave, and uplifting piece of literary work.

Given the consistency in imagery, there seems to be an innate, or at least deeply imbedded response humans have to particular music. This could have huge implications

on writing and the arts. By carefully studying the effects of music on emotion, soundtrack artists could purposefully arrange a much more meaningful and accurate movie score. In projects involving creative writing, such as in jobs like scriptwriting or novel writing, music could help produce certain scenes that appeals more comprehensively to the senses. The reason for writing is so that someone else can read it, so if it affects a reader on a deeper level, the writing will be more successful. In this way, music can enhance the quality and content of writing. The responses given were certainly rich in detail, and I believe that it would have been difficult to produce something so imaginative without music.

These findings could also be useful in the application to creative writing classes. A student could have a whole new door of possibilities open to them, as music could help them learn to write this genre better than they would be able to otherwise. If a student were trying to produce a creative writing piece, based on the results from this study, he or she would more likely be successful in conveying emotion through their writing if he or she listened to music.

The use of music in writing could be employed in all levels and stages of writing. Beginning writers as well as professional writers could benefit from the use of music. Since music is a source of inspiration, music would probably be most valuable in the “brainstorming” stage of writing. However, even in the final editing stages of writing music could be useful. By adding minute details to imagery and touches of human emotion, writing becomes much more real and beautiful. The use of music can be employed almost anywhere and at anytime in the creative writing field.

Although my research has helped find some implications of the Mozart Effect, further research could be continued. For example, people who claimed to dislike music, or at least not have any particular interest in it, could be tested the same way. All participants in this study claimed that music was a very important part in his or her life. In addition, this study could be expanded to other types

of writing, not just creative writing. It would be interesting to see how powerful music was when it was used outside of an artistic setting, such as in written research or in essay writing.

It would also be interesting to see if people of different cultures around the world had the same response to the music. From the data I collected, it seems that emotional responses to music are universal; however, these results are hardly generalizable on a global scale. This leads into the question of nature versus nurture. It seems that we are predisposed to have a certain reaction to music, but is this the result of something innate within us, or just the way we were born and raised? A cross-cultural study on the effect of music on writing should be conducted to answer this question.

This study helped to answer the question of to what extent music affected our writing. It seems that music can help us enter into a completely different mindset, which is a very valuable and powerful thing indeed, especially in the area of creative writing.

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“Okay, Class, Take Out Your Phones,” by Julia Evanoff

Instructor’s Note

Julia Evanoff’s argumentative essay works well because of her creative spin on what could be a very technical topic. Instead of simply weighing the pros and cons of cell phones, Julia argues that they should be used as tools in the classroom because of their educational applications. Although this is a rather recent topic, Julia avoids the pitfall of overusing popular sources, showing scholarly information is available on virtually all topics if a writer knows how to locate it. What do you think about Julia’s use of support for her thesis? Is there any place in this essay where you wanted to know more?

Writer’s Biography

Julia Evanoff is a freshman Biology major from Cincinnati. She has always enjoyed writing and reading fiction.

Okay, Class, Take Out Your Phones

Cell phones are used by almost every student in America. Walk into any high school classroom, and you are sure to see girls with their hands buried in their purses and boys with one arm suspiciously missing from the teacher’s view. These not-so-sneaky ways of hiding cell phones demand a method for regulating the use of mobile phones in schools. Mobile devices are becoming an integral part of our culture, and schools are having to adapt their policies to these changes. As a result, most schools have adopted policies banning cell phones from classrooms, or even the school altogether. Nevertheless, most students continue to use their cell phones in school. These exclusionary policies are obviously not working. Instead of close-mindedly banning cell phones, schools need to reevaluate their policies in light of reality. These devices are not simply

disruptive tools for distraction. Schools need to recognize that cell phones can be useful in academics and in helping students learn personal responsibility. As a recent high school graduate, I know first-hand how cell phones can be used and misused in school. It all depends on how schools approach policy regarding if and how they are used. I believe that cell phones should be allowed in schools at the teacher's discretion because of their academic uses such as open channel questioning, polling, and Internet access, and their potential to teach responsibility.

It's common sense that total bans on cell phones in school just aren't practical. Students are going to use their phones at school whether or not there are rules against it. Part of the reason for this may be that kids are rebellious in nature. They like breaking the rules. Using their phones when they aren't supposed to is just one way to rebel. Another reason for this is that cell phones have become such an integral part of their daily lives that they simply can't live without them. According to Kevin Thomas and Christy McGee of Bellarmine University, 84% of teens between the ages of 15 and 18 had cell phones as of 2009 (2012). This percentage has undoubtedly grown in the last few years. Children and teenagers today are enamored with technology. They spend countless hours Internet browsing, tweeting, and sending an average of 2,272 texts per month using their phones (Thomas & McGee, 2012). School administrators need to recognize that cell phone usage is an inevitable reality. The fact of the matter is that students are using their phones during class regardless whether or not it is allowed. In a survey of college students, researchers William Baker, Edward Lusk, and Karyn Neuhauser concluded that almost 25 percent of students reported using their cell phone in almost every class to send text messages. Additionally, almost 29 percent of students reported using their phones to check their messages during almost every class (2012, p. 282). Cell phone usage in class is a trend that is not going to go away or subside.

Total bans on cell phones in school are also impossible to enforce. Teachers simply cannot monitor what students are doing all the time. Students will always

find a way around the rules. A complete prohibition of cell phones will also create grey areas. For instance, students may follow the policy during class but not at lunch or in the hallway between classes. This will cause confusion and a lack of enforcement of the policy. Some teachers may choose to prosecute offenders during these times, while others may believe it is futile. This can cause students to be confused or resentful if they are punished but others are not. Students will lose respect for rules that they deem to be unfair. Thus, a complete ban on cell phones is not an effective strategy.

A decade ago, cell phones were just starting to come onto the scene on a grand scale. Teachers immediately realized the potential negative implications of these devices, so they panicked. Elizabeth Marcoux writes, “At that time, not only were cell phones a new phenomenon to many teachers, but also to many administrations. The logical response was to ban them from school” (2011, p. 69). Because they only saw the negatives, they feared what they did not fully understand. They had yet to learn how popular these devices would become. They also failed to see their potential academic uses. Citing a study done by Domitrek and Raby, Baker et al. claim that students view electronic devices as essential, teachers view them as unimportant in the classroom, and administrators are indifferent. They assert that “Ironically, though, it is the administrators who create most of the policies forbidding electronic devices in the classroom, without ever consulting students or teachers” (2012, p. 277). Unless school policymakers become more proactive in changing their perceptions about the usefulness of cell phones, they will never realize their academic potential. Doctoral student M. Beth Humble-Thaden states that “Policy regarding cell phone use by students in school will not change unless studies indicate that administrators and faculty also view them as valuable learning tools” (2011, p. 14). Administrators need to start embracing cell phones in the classroom instead of fearing them. We know that total bans are ineffective, but we also need to realize that banning cell phones in the classroom prevents them from being used for beneficial educational purposes.

Cell phones can be used in large classroom settings to allow students to ask questions or make comments without being disruptive by texting them to the teacher. This concept, called the open channel, allows for more student participation in classes where students may feel uncomfortable to ask a question or risk disturbing the large class. Using this system, teachers can see the comments on their laptop and decide whether to comment on them without interrupting the flow of the lecture. Any questions not addressed in class can also be answered afterwards via a traditional discussion forum. In a study done concerning this technology, researchers Eusebio Scornavacca, Sid Huff, and Stephen Marshall concluded that “The instructor involved in the trial had a very positive experience using the system and perceived a notable increase in quality and quantity of student feedback during class” (2009, p.144). Students feel more comfortable sharing their comments without fear of embarrassment, doing away with the concept of passive listening. With this method, cell phones can make students in large or intimidating classroom environments feel more confident to speak up and engage in class discourse.

Other potential academic uses for cell phones in classrooms include m-quizzes and polling exercises. These methods involve the teacher presenting a multiple-choice question that requires students to text in their responses. The results are then tabulated and either used in place of a pencil-and-paper quiz grade or displayed on a screen to show a graph or chart of the aggregated responses. Teachers using this method for quizzing purposes are thus spared the time and effort of grading. Students are also able to view their scores immediately instead of having to wait for their results. In a study exploring this technique, “The instructor noticed that m-quizzes provided several benefits, including instantaneous feedback on concept tests or using m-quiz results to stimulate class discussion” (Scornavacca et al., 2009, p. 144). When this method is used for polling purposes, students can express their opinions on certain issues and see how they measure up to the rest of the class. Polling exercises call for students to anonymously text in their positions on a topic without fear of judgment or

rejection by their peers. When students are able to visually see their class's collective opinion on a given issue, they become more interested and willing to participate in class discussion. I experienced this first-hand in my high school English class when we used to do polling exercises exploring our opinions about certain topics and issues raised in the literature we were reading. I remember these exercises sparking many valuable conversations and debates because we were able to explore our differing opinions on certain issues. Being able to instantaneously see the results of the polls after we texted in our answers was both fun and academically beneficial. Practices such as m-quizzes and polls have proven to make classroom discussion a more enjoyable, engaging experience.

There are many more valuable academic uses for cell phones, but perhaps the most important is the ability for smartphones to provide instant, easy access to the Internet. The Internet has become an invaluable tool in education, providing the everyday person with unlimited information on-demand. Having access to this in the classroom can be valuable in certain situations. For instance, during my senior year in high school, one of my teachers used to stimulate class discussion by telling us to look something up on our phones if we didn't know the answer to a question. This got us engaged with the topic because we were responsible to investigate material that we actually wanted to learn about. In allowing students to use their smartphones for these purposes, schools can save money on computer lab costs. According to Thomas and McGee, "The ban on cell phones ultimately hurts students by denying them access to inexpensive computing" (2012, p.22). Allowing cell phones to be used in an academic setting has countless advantages, but ultimately it sets the precedent that phones can and should be used in education. They are not objects to be rejected; they should be embraced as a reality with an important academic potential. Scornavacca et al. said it best when they claimed, "Our experience has shown that positive results can be achieved by encouraging students to bring their mobile phones out in the open and to use them to contribute to the class, and to their own learning—that is, by joining them instead of

trying to beat them” (2009, p. 146). Cell phones are already a part of daily life, so why not make them a part of our daily education?

As stated earlier, school-wide policies often do not reflect the same values or opinions as the teachers or students in the school. As a result, students may view administrative policies as unreasonable or unfair. Because students tend to make a greater effort to obey rules they agree with, those who disagree with a policy will most likely act out against it. This principle rings true particularly for rules regarding cell phone usage in schools. Out of all school policies, none affects the everyday personal lives of students more than the cell phone policy. Anita Charles of Bates College refers to this by claiming that “Although schools set rules that define appropriate behaviors with social digital networks, it appears that students and teachers frequently negotiate the boundaries and intersections of these tools and discourses through relationships founded on trust and respect” (2012, p.6). All students want to be respected and treated fairly. When given the opportunity to work together with teachers to create reasonable boundaries for cell phone usage, students will respond in kind. For example, students involved in Charles’ study reported that a driving force behind their self-control was the desire to respect and please the teachers whom they trusted. The principle of mutual respect between teachers and students is a big part of what makes a successful school policy.

Allowing students to have a part in determining cell phone policy also teaches students about personal responsibility. In schools where teachers determine the policy, students learn which teachers are lenient and which are strict. This act of evaluating people and situations prepares students for the “real world” in which they will need to know how to behave differently around different people. Students need to be able to gauge what is acceptable behavior in different situations. This philosophy of student involvement in policy also teaches self-control and self-discipline. In schools that allow students to monitor their own cell phone usage, students learn how to discipline

themselves to resist the desire to use their phones. They learn what behavior works best for them, even if they have to make mistakes along the way. Students will learn from experience that too much time spent distracted on their cell phone will cause them to miss things in class, leading to poor academic performance. Charles also asserts that “Another reason to set self-imposed boundaries seems to be the degree of attention required at a given time, and the value of listening, sometimes as a subset of good manners” (2012, p.8). It stands to reason that when given a choice of whether to use their phone in class, students will eventually learn when they need to pay close attention to the lesson and when it is okay to send a quick text. Students that fail to learn this lesson will inevitably suffer the consequences. If students constantly rely on rules to dictate their behavior, they will never learn how to do it on their own. When cell phone usage stops being forbidden, it will become less appealing and easier to control.

Some may argue that letting students regulate their own behavior is too idealistic. This notion is not without merit. While it is important to let students learn how to manage their own behavior, there are always limits. Schools should foster independent thought and responsibility, but unfortunately there will always be those who take advantage of the system. Teachers need to be understanding and lenient in order to foster personal choice and self-control. However, they must act within reason. They are ultimately in charge of what goes on within their classroom. For example, a teacher may notice that her students are having trouble controlling their behavior, so she helps them along by reprimanding those who use their mobile devices inappropriately. It is essential that teachers are not oblivious, but are aware of what is going on in their classroom. Appropriate classroom management is important to make sure that students are not taking advantage of teachers’ leniency. Cooperation with students promotes respect, but teachers must not sacrifice their authority in the process. Students will resent an authoritarian teacher, but they will also resent a teacher who doesn’t know how to control their classroom. This is exemplified in Charles’ study when a student says that her

teacher “just doesn’t care.” Charles notes that “Carrie judged her teacher harshly, disapproving of her lack of management and directive” (2012, p. 11). The best approach to teaching is one that combines cooperation with control.

Some common arguments made by those who oppose the use of cell phones are their potential for cheating and legal problems. However, both of these arguments are invalid. Cheating is a huge problem in schools, but it has always been a problem. Students are simply using their smartphones to look up answers instead of paper cheat sheets. This highlights the need for better classroom management, not the banning of all cell phones in school. Thomas and McGee echo this sentiment by saying, “Removing the opportunity to use cell phones will hardly fix the issue. A better resolution would be for students to check in their phones at the beginning of a testing period and retrieve them when they leave the room” (2012, p.21). Cell phones can be tools for cheating, but they are not the causes of it. Students who really want to cheat will find a way to do it with or without a cell phone. Another reason people give to support their opposition is the ramifications of phone misuse on school property. If parents find out that their child was cyberbullied or sent sexually explicit texts at school, they could blame the school and cause all kinds of problems. The answer to this issue also lies in the fact that banning phones will not solve the problem. Schools should not hastily react to these problems by banning cell phones altogether. Instead, they should follow the principle that “the abuse of a thing is no argument against its use” (Thomas & McGee, 2012, p. 28). If school policymakers work together with students, teachers and parents, they can create a reasonable policy that works for everyone and promotes the wise and appropriate use of these devices.

The old saying “If you can’t beat them, join them” certainly applies to the issue of cell phone use in schools. We are coming to the point at which schools are going to have to accept the fact that cell phones are a part of our culture. They are here to stay. No school rules are going to

keep kids from using them. What schools can do is control their effects. If they choose to implement a lenient and reasonable policy, cell phones can become tools for self-discipline instead of distraction. They can be used for academic learning instead of menial social interaction. They can foster cooperation instead of creating division. However, to do these things they must first be allowed.

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“The Role of a Physician in End-of-Life Stages of Their Patients,” by David Anson

Instructor’s Note

It can be risky to select a hot button topic such as capital punishment, gun control, or abortion because one cannot generally join such a wide and vast written conversation with any kind of authority in such a limited number of pages as a typical essay. Yet in this persuasive essay, David Anson is able to tackle the vast topic of euthanasia because he narrows it and focuses only on the physician’s role. What do you think about David’s choice to begin his essay with a hypothetical story? What do you think works well in his conclusion? How could his conclusion be improved upon?

Writer’s Biography

David Anson is a freshman Biology major from southern Illinois. His love for learning and writing was instilled by his parents. Outside of his studies, David enjoys sports, playing piano, and spending time with friends and family.

The Role of a Physician in End-of-Life Stages of Their Patients

Imagine sitting in a hospital room with your 79-year-old father. Your father was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease about 3 years ago, and the condition has advanced to the point that he no longer recognizes you. He has recently stopped eating, so the nursing staff inserts a feeding tube. Unfortunately, your father vigorously pulls on the tube, causing it to become dislodged. Nurses are forced to physically restrain him, and he consequently moans and thrashes against the restraints. Aware that your father’s quality of life has diminished rapidly, you know that he is suffering in his current state. With deep sadness, you realize that your father is no longer mentally capable of

making difficult end-of-life decisions, and several questions race through your mind. What should you do in this situation? Should you allow your father's condition to continue to progress further and further until he passes away, or would it be better to end the suffering he is experiencing?

Families face situations like these with their loved ones every day. For this reason, it is vital for physicians to be able to interact with families regarding end-of-life options which would allow patients to live their final days in peace. The role of a physician in these situations has become a topic of great debate in recent years, as physicians attempt to find a balance between their own moral and ethical convictions, sustaining life and relieving suffering, and fulfilling the wishes of patients and their families. Terms like "physician-assisted suicide" and "euthanasia" frequently come up in these discussions as advocates of both sides rise up to attack the views of the other. Unfortunately, the terms of these discussions have not been clearly defined, causing a great deal of confusion among those who seek to understand the debate. The terms must be clearly defined, and the chief arguments of both sides should be carefully examined and analyzed. I believe strictly "passive euthanasia" should be the only involvement physicians perform during the end-of-life stages of their patients because it is the most ethical and moral of the three types of involvement.

All areas of physician involvement in the death of patients fall into one of three categories. The first and most conservative of the three categories is passive euthanasia. In this type of involvement, which is often known as "pulling the plug," the physician allows the patient to die by withholding or removing life-sustaining interventions, such as kidney dialysis, mechanical ventilation, or chemotherapy, in accordance with the wishes of the patient. According to Timothy Murphy, Professor of Philosophy in the Biomedical Sciences at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Chicago, "Medical ethics have traditionally accepted [passive euthanasia] as moral on the

grounds that it is disease and not the physician who is doing the killing” (Murphy, 2013).

The reason this type of intervention is defined as “medically ethical” is that it allows the patient’s body to follow its natural course. Because of this, physicians are not considered morally or ethically at fault as long as patients are competent when making decisions regarding their care. Physicians are also legally protected from malpractice lawsuits according to the 1990 ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court case *Cruzan v. Director, Missouri Department of Health*. After nearly seven months of discussion, the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that competent patients have the ability to exercise their constitutional right to refuse medical treatment under the Due Process Clause (The Sullivan Group, 2013).

The American Medical Association’s Code of Medical Ethics provides physicians with various guidelines to assist in this process. In order for a physician to withhold or remove life-sustaining interventions, the patient must be a competent adult and provide valid consent or provide an advance directive of their wishes in the event that they are incompetent and unable to make decisions due to an illness. In addition, the patient may also designate a proxy through the advance directive who has the authority to make decisions on behalf of the patient if necessary. If no proxy is designated and patients are not capable of making their own decisions, the patients’ families become the surrogate decision-makers. In certain circumstances, interventions in the decision-making process or judicial review by ethics committees or courts are required. These include situations when no surrogate decision-maker is available, the family disputes the decision regarding the patient, the family’s decision is clearly not what the patient would have wanted, or the family’s decision is not in the patient’s best interest (American Medical Association, 1996).

No incident has sparked national debate on the topic of passive euthanasia quite as much as the medical and legal battle for the treatment of Terri Schiavo. At the age of 26, Schiavo collapsed for an unknown reason, causing

cardio-respiratory arrest and blocking the flow of oxygen to her brain, resulting in substantial brain damage. After consulting numerous physicians, neurologists diagnosed her with an irreversible persistent vegetative state (PVS). She was on a ventilator for several weeks but was taken off mechanical ventilation shortly thereafter. Although she was able to breathe on her own, she was given a feeding tube to provide her with fluids and adequate nutrition. Schiavo's husband Michael was given legal guardianship over her, and proceeded to take legal action to take her off of the feeding tube, claiming that she would not have wanted to live. After over a decade of legal suits by Schiavo's parents and interventions from President George W. Bush, Governor of Florida Jeb Bush, and Congress to continue life-sustaining treatment, Schiavo was removed from the feeding tube and passed away March 31, 2005 (Terri Schiavo Life & Hope Network).

The Terri Schiavo case is a prime example of the difficult decisions that must be addressed regarding passive euthanasia. To this day, many Americans are still outraged that Schiavo was removed from her feeding tube and allowed to die. According to Schiavo's family, she was able to respond to stimuli, tried to communicate, and performed other limited cognitive functions. In addition, fourteen medical professionals including six neurologists assessed her and gave statements or testimonies that she was not in a persistent vegetative state (Terri Schiavo Life & Hope Network). Based on evidence from her family, medical professionals, and the fact that Schiavo showed no signs that she was suffering, there was no reason for her to be removed from the feeding tube and allowed to die. Our response to this horrific tragedy should be to do everything in our power to ensure that a similar situation will never happen again. Physicians need to take full responsibility for the care of their patients by making sure that they are being treated effectively to reduce suffering and that all medical decisions made by the family are in the best interests of the patient.

The second category of physician involvement is active euthanasia. According to Dr. Michael Manning in

his book *Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide: Killing or Caring?*, active euthanasia is defined as, “A physician providing medications or other means to a patient with the understanding that the patient intends to use them to commit suicide.” Active euthanasia is currently only legal in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. The American Medical Association’s Code of Medical Ethics gives a unique insight into the role of a physician in regards to euthanasia:

It is understandable, though tragic, that some patients in extreme duress – such as those suffering from a terminal, painful, debilitating illness – may come to decide that death is preferable to life. However, permitting physicians to engage in euthanasia would ultimately cause more harm than good. Euthanasia is fundamentally incompatible with the physician’s role as healer, would be difficult or impossible to control, and would pose serious societal risks. (American Medical Association, 1996)

The responsibility of physicians in regards to end-of-life treatment ultimately comes down to one question, “What is the purpose of a physician?” If it is to aid in the healing process of patients as the American Medical Association suggests, then allowing a patient to die, whether requested or not, goes against that purpose.

The third type of physician involvement, which is a relatively new idea that has gained increasing popularity, is physician-assisted suicide. According to Dr. Timothy Quill (2012), Professor of Medicine, Psychiatry, and Medical Humanities at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry in an article published in *The Journal of Law, Medicine, & Ethics*, physician-assisted suicide is defined as involvement in which “the physician provides the means for a patient to potentially end their life (usually a prescription for barbiturates) that patients must take by their own hand if they choose to end their life [sic]” (Quill, 2012).

Physician-assisted suicide gained national attention during the late 1980’s with the medical practices of Dr. Jack Kevorkian, also known as “Dr. Death.” Dr. Kevorkian was a medical pathologist from Michigan and a

strong advocate for physician-assisted suicide. He believed that it was an ethical and moral practice, in that it gave patients the opportunity to end their unbearable suffering through providing them a quick and painless death. After his assistance in the 1989 suicide of 54-year-old Alzheimer's patient Janet Adkins, Dr. Kevorkian faced a series of legal allegations. Although the State of Michigan revoked his medical license, he continued to practice physician-assisted suicide for nearly 10 years, using his "suicide machine" on over 130 patients. However, in 1998, he released a videotape during an interview on CBS's *60 Minutes*. The tape depicted Dr. Kevorkian administering a lethal injection to Thomas Youk, who was suffering from the final stages of Lou Gehrig's disease. Days after the incident, Dr. Kevorkian was charged with second-degree murder and sentenced to 10-25 years in prison. After 8 years, he was released on parole, and passed away June 3, 2011, at age 83 (Hosseini, 2012).

Incidents such as those involving Terri Schiavo and Dr. Jack Kevorkian affirm the need for an analysis and discussion of both sides of the argument regarding the ethical and moral dilemma of these issues. Physician-assisted suicide and active euthanasia are often argued together against passive euthanasia, as the only difference in physician-assisted suicide is that the physician does not directly intervene, but provides the resources and allows the patient to have control over the administration. With this understanding and for the purposes of the discussion, they will be argued together against passive euthanasia.

Proponents of active euthanasia often center on several ideas: patient suffering, "death with dignity," and patient autonomy. The arguments of patient suffering and "death with dignity" are closely linked. The premise of the argument is that patients with terminal or debilitating diseases are experiencing excruciating pain and suffering. Instead of giving them a quick, painless, and dignified death through active euthanasia, we are forcing them to continue living in overwhelming agony and suffering. Patients are being kept alive by machines and die slowly, leading to an "undignified" death. The responsibility of

physicians is to relieve the suffering of their patients, and when all other medical avenues are exhausted, physicians have a duty to their patients to end the suffering they are experiencing through the least painful method possible.

The issues with this argument stem from the premise that must be assumed to be true for the argument to logically follow. The fundamental claim is that patients with terminal and otherwise debilitating diseases live in excruciating pain and agony. A 2001 study of pain experienced by terminally ill patients found that only 29% requested additional pain treatment while 71% felt that their pain treatment was well-managed or could be reduced or stopped entirely (Weiss, Emanuel, Fairclough, & Emanuel, 2001). Terminally ill patients undoubtedly experience moderate or severe pain in the final stages of their lives, but not to the degree this claim would suggest. Although improvements in pain management could be made, the study suggests that the majority of patients are happy with the pain treatment they are receiving, invalidating the claim made by proponents of active euthanasia.

Patient autonomy is also cited as a strong argument for active euthanasia. The claim of this argument is that patients have the fundamental authority and right to decide whether they receive treatment, even if it is a matter of life or death. When patients wish to end their lives due to suffering or low quality of life and physicians refuse to administer lethal doses of drugs that the patients want, the physicians are violating their autonomy. According to the American Civil Liberties Union's amicus brief presented during the Supreme Court case *Vacco v. Quill*, "The right of a competent, terminally ill person to avoid excruciating pain and embrace a timely and dignified death bears the sanction of history and is implicit in the concept of ordered liberty" (American Civil Liberties Union, 1996). While patients should have the authority to decide on their own treatment, or lack of treatment, I don't believe it can be carried over to assisted suicide by the physician. Even if patients have a right to kill themselves if they desire, the physician's job is not to obey the patient's every whim, but

to provide the most effective treatment that will be in the best interests of the patient. From a physician's perspective, killing patients would clearly not be in their best interest. Although there are flaws in the arguments for active euthanasia, proponents still present strong evidence and highlight the need for further analysis and discussion.

Arguments against active euthanasia include the violation of the Hippocratic Oath, the "slippery slope" to legalized murder, and advancements in palliative care (ProCon.org, 2012). The most common argument made against active euthanasia is that it violates a section of the Hippocratic Oath. The Hippocratic Oath is often taken by students graduating from medical school as they receive their medical degree. The portion of the oath used in support of the argument states, "I will do no harm or injustice...I will not give a lethal drug to anyone if I am asked, nor will I advise such a plan" (North, 2002). Although this may appear like strong evidence against active euthanasia, the Hippocratic Oath was believed to have been written in the 5th century B.C., and is not practically applicable to our modern age. For instance, another section of the oath forbids physicians from performing surgery, stating, "I will not use the knife, even upon those suffering from stones, but I will leave this to those who are trained in this craft." Because of this, the Hippocratic Oath is often viewed as outdated and not a strong argument against active euthanasia.

Another argument against active euthanasia is that it is a "slippery slope" which will eventually lead to legalized murder. The argument makes the assumption that active euthanasia will inevitably lead to a system where the government and health care professionals would legally euthanize individuals without their consent. In order for this to be the case, definitive proof would have to be found, showing that dire consequences were likely to occur if the first step of legalizing active euthanasia was taken. Since the argument is based on pure speculation, it is not a convincing argument against active euthanasia.

The final and strongest argument against active euthanasia is advances in palliative care. Palliative care,

also referred to as hospice, is end-of-life treatment that is aimed at preventing and relieving suffering through assessment and effective pain management. Palliative care is an excellent alternative to active euthanasia because it relieves the suffering experienced by patients with serious or terminal diseases without forcing them to end their lives. In this way, palliative care has the potential to be a win-win scenario for both sides of the discussion, as patients would not be suffering and therefore would not need to consider active euthanasia. Dr. Edmund Pellegrino describes the positive results of effective palliative care in his book, *Regulating How We Die*:

Patients treated this way [palliative care] usually do not ask for termination of their lives; when they do ask for it, they tend to change their minds later. It is an injustice to offer these patients assisted suicide or euthanasia as options when so much more can be offered in the way of sophisticated treatment. (Pellegrino, 1998)

Emphasis on palliative care is vital to patients who are at the final stages of their lives. Further advancements in palliative care and treatment will allow patients to receive more access to pain relief and relieve suffering. It will also prevent the need for active euthanasia entirely, since patients will no longer feel like it is their only option to relieve their pain.

The role of physicians and their involvement in the end-of-life stages of their patients has been increasingly controversial over the past several years. After defining the terms of the discussion and analyzing the supporting and opposing arguments, passive euthanasia is the most ethical and moral as physicians are not forced to compromise their beliefs and convictions. At the same time, the patient's pain and suffering are relieved due to effective palliative care, eliminating the need for active euthanasia. By reducing involvement to passive euthanasia, physicians can ensure that their actions are moral and ethical, while still looking out for the best interests of their patients.

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“Oil Supply: The Truth,” by Michael Kuhn

Instructor’s Note

In this research-based, argument essay, Michael Kuhn joins in the contemporary conversation about the oil supply and contradicts the common perception that the oil supply will not last much longer. In the requirements of this essay, students had to write an argument-based essay utilizing scholarly resources for support. Michael included quality evidence, grounds, and warrants to support his claim while addressing potential counterarguments. Notice that Michael establishes a context for his research so that he joins in the “conversation” rather than merely listing evidence to support his own ideas. How might his essay be different if he had chosen an organizational pattern other than refutation? How does he maintain a credible and humble ethos despite the fact that he chooses to refute a common perception?

Writer’s Biography

Michael Kuhn is a freshman Mechanical Engineering major from West Virginia. Although he does not consider it his calling, he enjoys writing and also dabbles in poetry. When homework and studying are not occupying his time, he fills it with intramural sports, Calculus tutoring, refereeing soccer, working on the Supermileage team, hanging out with friends, playing FIFA ’13, and maybe catching up on sleep.

Oil Supply: the Truth

It has helped cause wars. It has dominated national debates and international negotiations. It has dramatically changed certain countries’ incomes and wealth. It has been deposited beneath the earth’s surface for a considerable time, and it has been integral to worldwide transportation for almost a century. No one disputes these facts about crude oil. There is another “fact” that many would add to this list about oil: it is not going to last much longer.

However, despite how broadly this statement is accepted, this view is quite shy of being a fact and is surrounded by a large degree of dispute and disagreement. The true state of the world's oil supply is much less dire than many claim. Contrary to the overwhelming tide of naysayers, theory supporting oil's decline is oversimplified and inaccurate, the remaining oil supply is actually larger than most estimates, and new discoveries and extraction technologies hold immense potential.

Most of these naysayers, those who argue that oil is nearing global exhaustion, are believers in the theory known as "peak oil." The premise of peak oil is the assumption that the extraction of crude oil in a large theater, such as a country, a continent, or the world, adheres to a distribution based on the graph of an almost symmetrical logistic curve, referred to as "Hubbert's curve" (Mills 36-37). Accordingly, after oil production reaches a maximum, production should decline in a similar, almost identical manner that it originally rose (Ngô and Natowitz 31-32). Within the theory, this forecasted decline underwrites the direness of the current oil situation and also attributes importance to the oil's peak because the peak is seen as the initiation of the decline. M. King Hubbert, a geophysicist with a professional background working for Shell Oil, essentially formulated this theory by his claims made in the 1950s (Nersesian 200). In 1956, Hubbert predicted that U.S. oil production would peak in the early 1970s, and U.S. oil did peak in the early 1970s (200). Although the exact timing of Hubbert's prediction was slightly off, the fulfillment of his prediction served to confirm his theory and gave it immense credibility, and American and international petroleum culture soon accepted peak oil (Black 215).

However, a closer, more investigative view of Hubbert's peak oil theory reveals numerous shortcomings. Hubbert initially projected 1965 as his primary date for the peak of U.S. production; 1970 was actually just a fallback date (Mills 42). With his prediction of 1970, Hubbert was accurate regarding the timing of the U.S. oil production peak, but the amount of production at the peak was 1.12 billion barrels of oil higher than—18 percent above—his

prediction of 3 billion barrels (Smil 63). Despite these inconsistencies, Hubbert's prediction regarding U.S. production is still his most accurate. When applied to, for instance, the oil production of the United Kingdom, Hubbert's curve strikes a dramatic visual contrast with the actual curve of oil production (Mills 40). Hubbert's curve also fails to correlate with the oil production in Iraq, the country with the third-most proven oil reserves in the world (41). Vaclav Smil, Distinguished Professor of Environment and Environmental Geography at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, remarks, "Hubbert's failures have been even more glaring as far as the forecast of global peak oil extraction is concerned" (64). In 1969, Hubbert asserted that world oil production would either peak in 1990 at 25 billion barrels or in 2000 at 37 billion barrels (64). By 2008, though, production was just below 30 billion barrels, proving both predictions wrong on stated quantity and timing (64). Even if Hubbert was correct about the U.S. production, the apparent disparity between peak oil and reality serves as ample evidence to invalidate the theory entirely.

Despite the failures of peak oil, many scholars, scientists, and journalists still apply it to the modern oil scene and claim that the economics of the oil market, specifically the law of supply and demand, support the fact that the world's oil is "running out fast" (Connor). Peak-oilers and non-peak-oilers universally agree that demand for oil is increasing worldwide, which drives up its price. However, peak oil enthusiasts also maintain that the raised prices indicate that the worldwide supply is becoming scarcer (Black 217). Journalist Richard Heinberg goes as far as to say that peak oil occurred on a worldwide basis in 2008. He reinforces this allegation by explaining that "during the period from 2005 to 2008, as oil's price steadily rose, production remained stagnant" (113). He continues, saying that production rates slowly increased while the prices remained high, "but then both prices and production fell as demand for oil collapsed" (113). Implications of this situation, from the peak oil perspective, are that the collapse of prices will discourage oil companies

from producing more, and oil production will never recover to its previous levels, effectively having passed its peak.

However, the peak oil perspective presents a limited description of the scenario, grossly oversimplifying the oil market. Smil asserts that lower demand, due to the economic recession of the time, “and not any imminent physical shortage of oil in the ground, was the main reason . . . that global oil production was essentially flat in 2007 . . . and 2008” (72). Smil expresses that, in order for peak-oilers to make their claims, they overlook multiple facets contributing to the oil industry’s economic behavior. M. A. Adelman, professor emeritus of economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, additionally comments that if the international oil market included multiple suppliers in close competition, higher prices would indicate that supply is shrinking; however, the world oil market is dominated by the monopoly supplier OPEC, so “the higher prices in themselves mean nothing.” The “OPEC” that Adelman refers to is the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. This international organization was founded in 1960, and its original members consisted of Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, and Venezuela (Nersesian 145). Although OPEC did not begin with the intention to raise oil prices, its current goal is to limit production among its members so that oil prices and profits remain high (145). Accordingly, OPEC members, including most of the countries with the largest oil reserves in the world, produce solely within the mandated OPEC quotas, which frequently means deliberately producing less. Therefore, Adelman’s argument states that because OPEC countries do not produce as much as they could, the true world supply does not influence the global market scenario, but a manipulated, diminished supply does instead. This diminished supply does not signify the diminishment of the world’s oil but rather represents OPEC’s faulty and devious character.

In addition to an economic argument, peak-oilers point to statistics on the world’s oil supply as evidence that oil decline is imminent. However, these numbers are not necessarily concrete or correct, due to uncertainties and biases. Current oil estimations are based on “proved” or

“proven” reserves, which essentially describe the oil that has been discovered but has not yet been extracted (Adelman). Sometimes national governments conduct estimations for their own reserves, which can produce two outcomes that stray from truth. A nation desiring to seem more influential in the world, such as the United Arab Emirates or Kuwait, may overestimate their proven reserves for their own appearance (Mills 107). More ethical countries like the U.S., desiring to be truthful in their predictions, gain their figures from drilling companies while employing a regulatory body. However, these regulatory administrations tend to use an excessively strict definition for which reserves are actually proven, and they end up producing a conservative number for their estimate (50).

These variations and uncertainties in nations’ estimates translate into variations and uncertainties in worldwide oil surveys, as such surveys are typically based on the sum of the figures put out by oil-producing nations. Companies, organizations, and individuals who compute estimates for the world’s total reserves also subtract or add certain amounts from countries’ stated totals, in order to make the final number more accurate. However, these modifications can often be more theoretical and subjective than they are scientific and objective. This produces a substantial measure of variance among computed world totals. For example, the 2007 BP Statistical Review of World Energy, the study most cited across the board, states the world’s proven reserves total as 1208 billion barrels (Mills 52). A more conservative, skeptical 2006 study by geologist Colin Campbell reports the number as low as 791 billion barrels (52). Nevertheless, a 2007 study by Petroleum Intelligence Weekly, based on the most comprehensive international database, sums the world’s proven reserves at the much higher number of 1459 billion barrels (52-53). Many times, when peak-oilers claim that the numbers indicate a trend of lack in oil, they are referencing their own numbers based upon their own suspicions, and not those founded upon current, accurate data.

The real debate, though, centers on ultimate reserves, which combine the ideas of proven reserves and “probable” or “likely” reserves. Estimating the world’s probable reserves in order to define the ultimate world supply involves a fair amount of predictive capacity, and these predictions vary depending on the source. For instance, to predict the ultimate capacity on the smaller scale of a country, one would have to consider at the current production rate of that country, the size of its oil wells in use, the predicted size of discovered but unused wells, the potential of wells yet-to-be-discovered, and the possible advancement of technology to increase recovery efficiency, and then combine all of these factors to produce a single figure (Adelman). As is the case with proven reserves, probable reserves fluctuate depending on the source. Campbell, in a survey published in 2006, places the world’s ultimate reserves at 2152 billion barrels; Shell, from 2003, puts it at 3250 billion barrels; Petroleum Intelligence Weekly, from 2007, labels it at 3903 billion barrels; USGS, from 2006, defines it at 4734 billion barrels; and Odell, from 2004, states it as 6030 billion barrels (Mills 101). The significant variance between these numbers indicates the characteristic unreliability of predicting ultimate reserves. Not only is this unreliability typical, though, it is also inherent, arising from the nature of the prediction. M. A. Adelman describes the predicament as follows: “To predict ultimate reserves, we need an accurate prediction of future science and technology. To know ultimate reserves, we must first have ultimate knowledge. Nobody knows this, and nobody should pretend to know.” Due to ultimate reserves’ intrinsic conjectural quality, such figures do not hold well in a debate and are too uncertain and faulty to function as a premise of an argument, even though followers of peak oil often employ this strategy.

Despite the uncertainty of oil statistics, there remains an answer to whether there is more oil or less oil. This answer is dependent upon two variables: which proven reserves estimates are more correct and whether oil exploration can actually aid the present state of the oil industry. With regard to global proven reserves estimates,

subjective slant and bias can influence toward a more conservative estimate or toward a more liberal estimate. However, the studies with the greatest scientific, empirical emphasis consistently produce more liberal estimates, indicating that the state of the oil supply is truly not as dismal as many proclaim (Mills 52-53). With regard to the possible impact of oil exploration, two phenomena reinforce the case that discovery will continue to add ample reserves to what is considered proven—lack of exploration and recent advancements in unconventional oil. This lack of exploration occurs mostly within Middle Eastern countries. In many of these countries, especially those which are OPEC members, motivation to find and drill new sites is mostly absent. Comfortably sitting on the largest oil wells known to man, emphasis does not fall on oil discovery. One example is Iraq. Oil industry professional Robin Mills calls Iraq “by far the least developed and explored country for petroleum in the world relative to its potential” (120). There are numerous areas within the country having considerable potential to become substantive oil sources, and upgrading the drilling technology used there could improve output as well (120-121). Mills also states that Iran has “a huge backlog of undeveloped or underdeveloped discoveries,” and that the United Arab Emirates’ main oil-producing Emirate, Abu Dhabi, “performs hardly any exploration” (119, 122). If oil companies explored these areas sufficiently, new discoveries would significantly add to their already significant reserves, adding also to the global total.

Much more so than acknowledging a lack of exploration in known oil hotspots, discovery and technological advancement are vital to the hope and future of oil. Conversely, if discovery discontinues and efficiency stagnates, oil will truly become an appreciably limited resource, confirming the arguments of peak oilers. Some claim discovery will not aid the present oil crisis, and they reason that any plausible amount of successful exploration could not possibly resurrect the chances of the oil market. Dr. Fatih Birol, chief economist at the International Energy Agency in Paris, references data in an attempt to confirm the dire nature of this predicament: “The first detailed

assessment of more than 800 oil fields in the world, covering three-quarters of global reserves, has found that most of the biggest fields have already peaked and that the rate of decline in oil production is now running at nearly twice the pace as calculated just two years ago [referring to 2007]" (Connor). The fact that oil-producing countries are minimally investing in oil discovery and production also maligns the hope of current oil economy, Dr. Birol states (Connor). Roy L. Nersesian, energy industry professional and adjunct professor at Columbia University, notes three trends verifying the decline of oil discovery worldwide: "The frequency of discovering major oil fields is dropping; the size of newly discovered oil fields is falling; and consumption is getting ahead of additions to proven reserves" (206). These combined factors, according to adherents of this position, prove that scant oil remains and that scant hope remains for the industry.

However, a well-rounded assessment of the potential for oil discovery does not confirm this conclusion in the least. Jason Schwarz, finance writer and chief options strategist for Lone Peak Asset Management, points to recent discoveries of oil in Brazil, the United States, the Gulf of Mexico, Iraq, Iran, West Africa, and the North Sea to demonstrate that oil is not becoming scarcer (125-127). Also, technological advancements have made certain non-conventional oil sources available and profitable. Not only that, this technology principally applies to recent discoveries in areas in the U.S. and countries friendly to the U.S. Three specific finds stand out: the Bakken shale formation, the Shfela shale formation, and the Alberta sands.

The Bakken oil shale is located mainly in North Dakota, but this 25,000 square mile formation also sprawls into Montana, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba ("Dean Capital Buys Acreage in Bakken Shale"). This find is one of the most promising American oil discoveries in a considerable time, and it promises between 5 and 10 billion barrels of recoverable oil in North Dakota and Montana alone. Previously, such a shale deposit was not worthwhile or valuable, but because of the use of hydraulic fracturing and in-situ extraction processes to loose the oil from the

surrounding shale, oil shale is now a treasured resource (Walsh).

Another instance of a significant oil shale discovery is the Shfela formation, the size of which makes the Bakken seem miniscule. The Shfela oil shale formation is located in Israel, a country often hailed as the only Middle Eastern country with no oil. No longer does this claim bear near the truth though, for the Shfela boasts an impressive 250 billion barrels of shale oil (Udasin). A comparison to the largest oil producer in the world provides some perspective on the magnitude of this discovery. Saudi Arabia, the country which has always had the reputation of having and producing the most oil in the world, states 260 billion barrels as their proven reserves (Mills 109). Obviously, Shfela is huge, and the potential for oil discovery is immense.

In addition to the discoveries in oil shale, oil sands, specifically those of Alberta, Canada, are current evidence of the potential for oil discovery. Oil sands, though different in formation, require similar techniques as oil shale in order to be extracted and refined. Alberta's sands increased Canada's proven reserves from 5 billion to 180 billion, making it the second in the world (if Shfela and Israel are excluded), behind Saudi Arabia (Kasoff). Unconventional oil, from sources like oil sands and oil shale, demonstrates the vast supply of oil that remains to be used and the substantial impact that technology creates within the oil industry.

Oil is not on its way out. Though many say it is, and still others wish it were, it is not on the brink of extinction. New technologies and discoveries continue to add to the world's supply, constantly refuting the oversimplified, inaccurate theories predicting its decline. As time passes on, human ingenuity will continue to triumph, advancing the availability of oil, despite the doubts of human skepticism.

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Composition Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of first year composition, students will:

- apply knowledge of conventions through proper formatting, documenting, and structuring of written text, controlling such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- use technology to locate and evaluate information as well as produce one's own writing.
- complete each stage of the writing process toward producing a cohesive text.
- respond appropriately to various rhetorical situations.
- apply critical researching, reading, and writing skills in order to integrate their own ideas with those of others.
- display a biblical worldview through written or oral coursework.

Grading System

A – Recognizes excellent achievement. It is indicative of superior quality work and reveals a thorough mastery of the subject matter. The student receiving this grade should demonstrate enough interest to do some independent investigation beyond the actual course requirements.

B – Indicates work and achievement that are well above average. The student receiving this grade should be capable of doing advanced work in this field. The quality of the work should be considered better than that achieved by the average student.

C – Indicates average achievement and a satisfactory meeting of requirements.

D – Reveals inferior accomplishment and is generally unsatisfactory from the standpoint of course requirements.

F – Failing grade. It indicates very unsatisfactory work. No course credit is earned.

AU – Given when a course is audited. To receive this notation, the student must attend and participate in the course. No credit is earned.

Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It

What is Plagiarism and Why is it Important?

In college courses, we are continually engaged with other people's ideas: we read them in texts, hear them in lecture, discuss them in class, and incorporate them into our own writing. As a result, it is very important that we give credit where it is due. Plagiarism is using others' ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information.

How Can Students Avoid Plagiarism?

To avoid plagiarism, you must give credit whenever you use

- another person's idea, opinion, or theory;
- any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings—any pieces of information—that are not common knowledge;
- quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words; or
- paraphrase of another person's spoken or written words.

These guidelines are taken from the [Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct](#).

Writing Resources

Cedarville University Writing Center

Director: Professor Julie Moore
[Tyler Digital Communication Center](#)
Room 104
Cedarville University
Phone: 937-766-3245
Email: [The Writing Center](#)

Mission

The Cedarville University Writing Center exists to help writers at all levels of proficiency from all academic disciplines develop effective writing skills. This development takes place primarily through one-on-one peer consultations which are adapted to individual writers' needs. Such consultations will be competent and timely, will occur in a comfortable, non-threatening atmosphere, and will address all writing projects in any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to revision. These consultations focus primarily on the writing at hand, but the long-term goal for every session is to help each tutee become a better writer overall. The center is neither a proofreading service nor a classroom - tutors do not edit or grade. Instead, the center blends service and communication, a blend which at its core is wholly Christian.

Centennial Library

Department Contact Numbers

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- **Office FAX:** 937-766-2337
- **Public FAX:** 937-766-3776

Hours

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- **Friday:** 7:45 am - 7:00 pm
- **Saturday:** 10:00 am - 7:00 pm
- **Sunday:** 7:30 pm - 11:30 pm