

Jeff Solomon
9/20/11
Literacy Narrative
English 102

Take Two

The blank screen stares at me, and I stare back, locked in a battle of patience. My inevitable defeat hangs over my head, yet I sit resolutely, waiting for the words to form.

An hour passes, still only my heading gazes at me. The time slips away, each tortured second resounding in my head, the melancholy buzz devouring my thoughts.

Enough is enough. I begin to type, slow precise letters begin to form a sentence, and I am once again lost for words, mind clouded by frustration and anger. Grudgingly my fingers move, empty words spewing forth on the page. Appearing and disappearing as I realize their lack of meaning.

Thirty minutes later all that remains is a modified version of my original sentence. It dares me to attempt another sentence, one worth reading, one with substance. So I type.

I sit back, taking a deep breath, looking over the near finished page. It's wrong. It's all wrong. My supposed narrative has ceased to be a story, the majority nothing more than a summation of my thoughts. Frowning, I highlight half the page, deleting the work I've accomplished. Staring blankly at the floor, I struggle through the possibilities of where my paper should head. For lack of direction, I type again.

My focus lies on the creation of a story, and I avoid including any thoughts that will carry my piece down other tangents. Tale quickly coming to a bland end, I devise a new strategy, a change of setting and time, a future account related to what I've already written, yet altogether unimportant. I barrel on, refusing to look at what I already have done, because I know it's not worth reading.

Having hurdled innumerable chasms of vacuity, I hit a wall. Two pages filled with empty words, lacking any sense of direction or significance, and hours wasted.

I walk over to my bed, resting my head upon the pillow, blank eyes lazily gazing at the ceiling. My body rests, but my mind remains a raging flood of thought. Having had a rather restless break, I return to my work.

Ever so slowly I make more progress, typing, deleting, retyping, re-deleting, re-retyping, and finally resigning myself to my inevitable fate. This paper will never be good, but I'm not about to restart over four hours in , and so close to the end. I trudge on, steering my wayward paper in some random direction, hoping it's comes across as thoughtful.

Abruptly I incorporate the idea of purposefulness into the story, lacking transition, foreshadowing, and fluency. A single last paragraph forms, designed simply to conclude the piece, a vain hope to pull together all the useless preamble into a single undeniable goal. It fails. The paragraph itself is alright, but it comes rather unexpectedly, doing an awful job of connecting the rest of the story.

I type the last word, saving the paper to my flash drive, and close my word processor. At long last it is finished.

Eagerly I take my flash drive to a computer connected to a printer. I open the file, fixing a few obvious grammatical errors, and quickly print the piece. I hurriedly close my paper for fear of seeing how awful it truly is. I grab my paper without looking, stapling it, and putting it in my folder, consciously averting my eyes from the oppressive black lettering.

Sighing, I sit back, feeling rather unaccomplished. Pulling out my calculus book to study, I deem my narrative one of the worst I've ever written, promptly, and unsuccessfully, attempting to forget about it.



Walking into the room, I throw my bag on my bed, immediately heading to my computer. The paper hangs heavy on my mind; its due in forty minutes. It's not much time to improve it, certainly not rewrite. Instead, I check my email out of habit, jaw lowering and eyes popping as I scan my inbox. My class is canceled.

Heaving a sigh of relief, I run down the hall, sharing the good news with my friends. My grade is saved! Beaming like a fool, I return to my room in a haze of disbelief, feeling slightly light headed. My new found joy is cut short with a new realization - I have to rewrite.

All those hours slaving away at that horrendous piece seem wasted. Long hours of misery and mental exertion have suddenly gone up in smoke. Or have they?

My mind works furiously, quickly concocting a new topic, nay, a new meaning for my narrative. I give life to that brain-dead drivel, previously thought of as useless. It gives me focus, encouraging me to turn this otherwise pointless experience into something worthwhile. So I write, turning insignificance into something of value, into something meaningful, into something containing, if nothing else, purpose.