Over the course of this semester in ENGL 103, I have developed a much deeper understanding of writing. At the beginning of the semester, I viewed writing mainly as a way to express my thoughts and feelings. I even described writing as “thoughts, feelings, and ideas put into words.” While I still believe that is important, I now understand that effective writing also requires so much more. A clear purpose, awareness of audience, and strong organization is important when writing. Through my work on WP1, WP2, and WP3, I have grown as a writer by learning how to better support my ideas, connect with my audience, and analyze messages more thoroughly.

One of the most important things I learned is how to maintain a clear and focused purpose in my writing. In my persuasive essay (WP1), my goal was to argue that “everything happens for a reason.” While I had a strong belief in my topic, I learned that belief alone is not enough to create an effective essay. I needed to make sure that every part of my essay supported my main claim. For example, I realized that including the idea that people believe things happen for a reason as a coping mechanism “weakened my thesis.” This showed me how easily an argument can lose focus. I also improved my organization by moving my personal story earlier in the essay. As I explained in my reflection, “personal stories draw in your audience” and help create an emotional connection. This change made my argument stronger and more engaging.

Another major area of growth for me was understanding how to connect with my audience. In my literacy narrative (WP2), I focused on telling my story about transitioning to college in a way that felt real and relatable. I described specific moments, such as “moving into my dorm and watching my family leave,” to place the reader directly in my experience. Instead of simply saying I was overwhelmed, I showed it through actions like “sleeping in, missing class,

prioritizing dance, and not engaging with professors." This helped me practice "showing instead of telling," which made my writing more meaningful. I also considered my audience carefully. I wrote for "current and future college students" and included experiences like struggling with time management and fear of asking for help so that readers could relate. This helped me understand that writing is more effective when the audience can see themselves in the story.

In my rhetorical analysis (WP3), I developed my ability to think more analytically. My purpose was to show how political ads use "emotion and imagery to influence how people think and feel about candidates." Instead of just describing the ads, I focused on analyzing how they worked. I used "specific quotes and visuals" as evidence and paid attention to tone and emotional appeal. As I reflected, I "focused more on specific details from the ad," which helped strengthen my analysis. This project pushed me to go beyond surface-level writing and explain how communication influences people's opinions. It also made me more aware of how powerful media can be.

Throughout all of my projects, I improved my ability to revise and reflect on my writing. At first, I mostly focused on getting my ideas down, but I learned that revision is what makes writing stronger. For example, in WP3, I worked on "cleaning up my grammar and making my sentences flow better." I also noticed that I used filler words like "like" and "actually," which weakened my writing, so I worked on removing them. Additionally, I strengthened my essays by adding more specific evidence, such as timestamps and detailed examples. This showed me that strong writing comes from revising and being intentional about every word.

Even though I have improved, I still have areas I want to work on. I sometimes struggle with repetition and not fully developing my ideas as deeply as I could. I also want to improve my

sentence structure and continue strengthening my use of sensory details. As I mentioned in my reflection, I want readers to be able to truly “vision” what I am describing. In the future, I plan to spend more time planning and outlining before I begin writing so my ideas are more organized.

The skills I have learned in this class will be useful in both my academic and professional future. Being able to write with a clear purpose, understand an audience, and support ideas with evidence are important in any field. I also learned how to analyze messages and understand how they influence people, which is important in everyday life. Whether I am writing essays, giving presentations, or communicating in my future career, these skills will help me be more effective.

Overall, ENGL 103 has helped me become a more thoughtful and intentional writer. By looking back at my work, I can clearly see my growth in how I organize my ideas, connect with my audience, and analyze information. This class has shown me that writing is not just about expressing ideas, but about communicating them in a way that is clear, purposeful, and impactful. I will continue to use and build on these skills in the future.