

MA1 early reflection

For this project, I understood the prompt as asking me to create a piece of writing that gives advice to people who struggle with writing. I decided to focus on three common problems that I think many students experience: not knowing how to start, worrying too much about making writing perfect, and getting distracted. I wanted to create something that was helpful but also simple and relatable. Instead of making the project sound overly formal or complicated, I wanted the reader to feel like they were getting advice from someone who understands what it feels like to struggle with writing.

I chose to write my project as a Dear Advice column because I thought this genre fit my purpose and audience well. My audience was mainly students and other writers who sometimes feel stuck when they have an assignment or other writing to complete. I thought an advice column would be easier and more interesting for this audience to read than a formal essay about writing. The format allowed me to separate different writing problems and directly respond to each one. It also made the project feel more personal because the questions sounded like situations that real students could experience.

The rhetorical situation of my project is based on the fact that writing can be difficult for many different reasons. Sometimes people have no idea what to write and spend a long time staring at a blank page. Other times, people have ideas but delete everything they write because they do not think it sounds good enough. Distractions can also make it difficult to focus and actually get work done. My purpose was to give advice for these

situations and encourage writers to stop putting so much pressure on themselves. The main message I wanted to communicate was that writing does not have to be perfect at the beginning. Sometimes the most important thing is just getting something onto the page.

I considered my audience while writing by using simple language and examples that students could relate to. For example, I included situations like having a paper due soon, getting distracted by a phone, or writing a sentence and immediately deleting it because it sounds stupid. I also included some personal examples because I think that makes the advice feel more realistic. I did not want to sound like I was telling people exactly what they had to do. Instead, I wanted to give suggestions that they could try and see what works for them.

During revision, I used feedback from my classmates to improve my project. One person suggested that I add more specific ways to come up with ideas when someone does not know how to start. I added different brainstorming techniques such as freewriting, making a list, creating an outline, and writing down questions about the topic. I think adding these ideas made the advice more useful because it gave the reader actual things they could do instead of just telling them to “start writing.”

Another suggestion I received was to add more personal and real-life examples. I added examples throughout the project about having an assignment due soon, struggling to write an introduction, getting distracted by a phone, and setting aside a short amount of time to write. These changes helped make the advice easier to understand because the reader can imagine themselves in the situations I described.

I also changed the organization of my advice sections. One of my classmates said that my first two sections were too similar, so I worked on making them more clearly different. The first section became more focused on finding ideas and getting started, while the second section focused on being a perfectionist and constantly deleting or editing your work. The third section focused on distractions and finding ways to stay focused. I made sure that these three main problems stayed clear throughout the project.

I also changed my ending during revision. I wanted the conclusion to bring all three problems together and remind the reader of the main point of my project. I emphasized that writers should try different brainstorming techniques when they are stuck, allow themselves to write imperfect first drafts, and remove distractions when they need to focus. Most importantly, I wanted to remind the reader that writing something messy or unfinished is still better than sitting and waiting for everything to be perfect.

This project helped me better understand what writing is and how it works. Before doing this project, I mostly thought about writing as just getting my ideas onto a page and making sure everything sounded good. This project reminded me that writing also involves thinking about audience, purpose, genre, and rhetorical situation. The way I wrote this project was affected by who I wanted to read it and what I wanted them to get from it. If my audience had been teachers or professional writers, I probably would have written it in a much more formal way. Since my audience was mainly students who struggle with writing, I chose simple language, relatable examples, and an advice column format.

Overall, this project showed me that writing is a process that involves drafting, getting feedback, and revising. My first version was not perfect, but the feedback I received helped me see ways that I could make it clearer and more useful. In a way, this project also connects to the advice I gave because I had to accept that my own writing was not going to be perfect the first time. I had to make changes and improve it as I went. This project helped me understand that writing is not about creating something perfect immediately. It is about developing ideas, thinking about the reader, and being willing to make changes. Overall, I learned that writing something imperfect and revising it is much better than never writing anything at all