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Literacy Narrative

When I was a little girl, my mom, my aunt, and I would make weekend trips to our local mall. Every Saturday or Sunday, we would wake up, get ready, and then drive together to the mall. On the way we would figure out what we needed and talk about what stores we wanted to go to. My suggestions were always the same: Limited Too, the Disney store, and Borders. At Limited Too and the Disney store I would browse around, but never get anything. I would beg for shirts, key chains, and other non-necessities. However, when we went to Borders, I always got a book. Week after week, my mom or aunt would by me a book. These books ranged from sports books, coloring books, picture books, and any other types of books I wanted.

One Saturday, my mom, aunt, and I went to the mall like any other day. We shopped around, ate lunch, and then went to the book store. I browsed and browsed around the bookstore while my aunt checked the best seller’s shelf and my mom flipped through some magazines. After a few minutes of browsing in the same familiar sections of the store, I became discouraged. My aunt found me looking around and asked me what was wrong.

“I keep picking out the same books with the same stories in them. I want something different,” I said to her.

“I think I have an idea. Come with me,” she suggested. She took me around to the other side of the store to a small section. In this portion of the store, there were pens, notebooks, bookmarks, and journals of all shapes and sizes. She led me to a shelf with the journals on it and said, “Pick out your favorite one.”

I picked out a medium-sized pink journal with plenty of pages. I said, “I like this one because it’s pink.” She smiled at me and then took me to the checkout counter. I was confused so I asked her why I was getting a journal instead of a book.

“You said earlier that you didn’t want to read the same stories over and over again. Now, you can write your own story,” she told me.

It made me so excited to have a journal of my own to write in. Later that night, I got my journal out of the shopping bag, grabbed a pen and began writing. It was past bedtime, so I turned on the lamp in my room and sat in my bed to begin writing. I wrote for a good portion of the night until my hand and body were tired. I tucked the journal under my bed and went to sleep.

The next morning I woke up, went to school, and came home to do my homework. After dinner, I went to my room, shut the door, and began writing again. I wrote a different journal entry than I did the previous night, and again, I wrote until I was too tired to go on.

This pattern carried on for a while. It seemed ironic to me sometimes that I would spend all day sitting in a desk at school, I would go home and do homework, and then the only thing I wanted to do was write more. The more I wrote, the more I felt connected to my writing, and the more I feared what it would be like if anyone saw it. I was not scared because of what I was writing about; instead, I didn’t want people to see it because of the fact that it was mine. I felt so personally connected to my journal and I felt protective over it.

After months of writing different stories and different journal entries, my biggest influence in my writing came. My parents decided that my room needed a makeover, and that I would be getting some new furniture in my room. Along with new dressers and a new bed frame, I received a desk. We spent days figuring out where my new furniture would go and how we would arrange my room. Finally, we decided to put my new desk and chair against the wall that has a window above it.

I did a lot at my desk, but mostly, I wrote. I felt so excited that I that I finally had a place to sit at and write. Sometimes I used the desk to do my homework, but I did not feel comfortable doing my homework there, because I felt that it took away from the writing I did at my desk, so I found other places to do homework.

Eventually my desk and my writing went hand-in-hand with each other. If I wanted to write, I wanted to be at my desk, and if I was at my desk, it is because I was writing. I wrote at all times of the day and in any free time I had. Again, I felt that it was ironic that I spent all day sitting at a desk in school, and all I wanted to do when I got home was sit at my own desk. Now, I not only had a journal to call my own, but a place to own that journal.

One of the most rewarding feelings I got from my writing was filling a journal. When I completed that last sentence on that last page of the journal, I felt complete. I felt like my writing had a purpose and that I had completed the writing for a reason. I also felt anxious to get another journal. On the next available day, my mom, aunt, and I would go to the mall like every other weekend. I was so excited to tell my aunt that I filled my journal and that it was time to get another one. I loved the options I had, and I never picked the same journal twice. Sometimes I picked plain, colored ones. Other times I picked out journals with cute, girly designs on them, and other times I chose ones with sayings on the cover. Whatever I picked, I wrote in it just the same.

Over time, I began using my journal for other things besides just personal journal entries. I started to draw pictures, write quotes, and even write stories. I got colored pens and markers to make my entries more creative. My journal soon became a time for me to be more open. I sometimes drew pictures that went along with my stories or entries to make them more personal.

As I got older, I began to listen to music while I wrote in my journals. This helped me express myself even more. I enjoyed music, and I enjoyed writing, so I loved that I had the opportunity to combine the two together. At times, this proved to be very productive and influential for my writing. However, other times, I became easily distracted and began writing about the music. When I looked back on these journal entries, I realized that these writings were very sporadic and unfocused. At first, I was upset with these writings, but then I began to appreciate them more. The music opened me up to an even more personal and reflective type of writing.

As time went on, I wrote less and less. I became busier with school and work and softball. I still found time to write, but to me, it just was not the same. I still appreciate personal writing and the skills it provides for me. Even though I rarely shared my journal entries, I found my overall writing skills improved as well. I was doing better on writing assignments in school, and I liked when I had writing homework. My journal helped me not only become a more skilled writer, but it also helped me become a more open writer. I do not remember what the first word I wrote in my journal was; I don’t even remember what the first story I wrote was. What I do remember is the way I felt while writing: creative, expressive, free.

Overall, great job, Michelle! I loved your literacy narrative, and how that one experience of beginning to write in a journal really changed you. I didn’t notice any grammar or mechanical issues, and your story was solid all around (my only suggestion is to give a few more details throughout on not just what you wrote, but elaborate on how exactly it made you feel/thought as to why it did). Great work as usual ☺