

Practice Makes Perfect

In the following Revision Process, I have provided a detailed description of the steps that were taken to construct an effective introductory paragraph and body paragraph. The Revision Process sample was compiled from the first writing assignment that was given this semester. The purpose of the assignment was to compare and contrast the theme of heritage in Ralph Ellison's "Battle Royal" and Alice Walker's "Everyday Use." Throughout my revision process, I made numerous changes to the content, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure of the paragraphs, which resulted in a more cohesive and coherent paper.

The general steps that were taken during the construction of these paragraphs and the writing assignment as a whole included:

- (1) Formulating a draft
- (2) Proofreading for errors
- (3) Submitting a draft for peer review
- (4) Editing the paper based on the comments made by my peers
- (5) Discussing additional changes with my instructor
- (6) Making additional changes based on the instructor's comments
- (7) Proofreading for additional mistakes
- (8) Making final changes, if necessary.

The key for the color scheme is as follows:

Portion to be revised
Revised Portions

The Revision Process is as follows:

Draft One

In essence, one's heritage is an indispensable aspect of one's life. However, whether one chooses to embrace one's heritage in its entirety is essentially based on one's personal values, beliefs and experiences. As a result, each individual may choose to embrace his or her heritage at different stages in life. Regardless of the point in time in which an individual becomes mindful of his or her heritage, it is safe to assume that most individuals ultimately develop an appreciation for their culture. Consequently, in Ralph Ellison's "Battle Royal" and Alice Walker's "Everyday Use," the general concept of appreciating one's heritage forms the basis of each story. In "Battle Royal," it is evident that the narrator develops a greater appreciation for his African American heritage, as is the situation with the character, Dee, in "Everyday Use." However, the most captivating aspect of each character's newfound appreciation is the contrast between each character's process of becoming appreciative and the distinctiveness between their resulting attitude. From an in depth analysis of both stories, one can surmise that even though an individual may become more appreciative of his or her heritage because of new experiences endured as time progresses, his or her understanding and appreciation of heritage will vary based on the nature of those experiences.

Commented [Teneil Sa1]: The opening sentences are unnecessary generalization. My opening sentences should address the subject of the paper directly.

Commented [Teneil Sa2]: This phrase is unnecessary.

Commented [Teneil Sa3]: This phrase is also unnecessary and may portray a negative tone.

Commented [Teneil Sa4]: The thesis statement needs to be more specific. What does "the nature of those experiences" specifically address?

Even though the narrator in “Battle Royal” and the character, Dee from “Everyday Use” have both learned to embrace their heritage, there is a contrast between how each character develops an appreciation for his or her heritage. In “Battle Royal”, the reader instantly becomes aware of the narrator's initial perception of shame for his heritage when he overtly states: “I am not ashamed of my grandparents for having been slaves. I am only ashamed of myself for having at one time been ashamed”(Ellison 227). However, as the narrator describes his experience of unjust treatment and social inequality, one begins to witness his change in attitude. Though not explicitly stated by the narrator, it is apparent that being misled into partaking in the battle royal had a short term and long term effect on his decision to remain bounded by social inequality. It is clear that the narrator has been struggling with the decision of whether or not he should openly embrace his heritage in a society in which African American's are viewed as inferior to the white man and have the “social responsibility” to remain submissive to their superior culture as revealed by the narrator when he exerts that African Americans should “[c]ast down [their] bucket...in making friends in every manly way of the people of all races by whom [they] are all surrounded” (Ellison 234). However, it is obvious that the abuse that he endures from the white men has subconsciously affected him which leads him to utter the forbidden words: “social equality” within their midst (Ellison 235). Undoubtedly, the narrator's horrid experiences have gradually molded him into an individual who has become more appreciative of his heritage.

Commented [Teneil Sa5]: This phrase can be re-written as one word.

Commented [Teneil Sa6]: I need to explain what the “short term” and “long term” effects are so that my statement is more specific. I also have the option of deleting this sentence because it does not have a strong relationship to the topic sentence.

Commented [Teneil Sa7]: This phrase is unnecessary and sets the stage for a negative tone.

Notes of Revision for Draft One

Based on the comments made above, most of the revision for the first draft involved changes in content. The opening sentences of the paragraph were unnecessary generalizations that were not captivating to my audience. During my writing process, I also discovered that I had a tendency to overuse introductory clauses, which have been italicized in the draft above. Another area of concern is effective construction of a specific thesis statement. Throughout my writing process, I noticed that my thesis statements were too general. As a result, I had to ensure that I revised my thesis statement numerous times so that it presented a clear and specific argument for my paper. For the second paragraph, I focused on sentence structure and ensured that my ideas related to my thesis statement and topic sentence.

Draft Two

In Ralph Ellison's “Battle Royal” and Alice Walker's “Everyday Use”, the narrators develop their stories on the notion that heritage is an indispensable aspect of one's life. Through the roles of the characters, they demonstrate that whether one chooses to embrace one's heritage in its entirety is essentially based on one's personal values, beliefs and experiences. Furthermore, Ellison and Walker show that each individual may choose to embrace his or her heritage at different stages in life and thus because develop an appreciation for his or her culture. In “Battle Royal”, it is evident that the narrator – The Invisible Man – develops a greater appreciation for his African American heritage, as is the situation with the character, Dee, in “Everyday Use”. However, the most captivating aspect of each character's newfound appreciation is the contrast between each character's process of becoming appreciative and the distinctiveness between their resulting attitude. From an in depth analysis of both stories, one can surmise that even though The Invisible Man and Dee may become more appreciative of their heritage because of new experiences endured as time progresses, his or her understanding and appreciation of heritage will vary based on the nature of those experiences.

Commented [Teneil Sa8]: The opening sentence is more specific to the stories and thus is more effective than unnecessary generalizations.

Commented [Teneil Sa9]: The term “they” is unspecific.

Commented [Teneil Sa10]: Incorrect grammar usage. The sentences needs to be revised so that the message being portrayed is effectively related to the reader.

Commented [Teneil Sa11]: The structure of this sentence needs to be revised because of its awkward wording and wordiness.

Commented [Teneil Sa12]: The thesis statement still needs to be revised to reflect a more specific argument

Although the narrator in “Battle Royal” and the character, Dee from “Everyday Use” have both learned to embrace their heritage, there is a contrast between how each character develops an appreciation for his or her heritage. In “Battle Royal”, the reader instantly becomes aware of the narrator's initial perception of shame for his heritage, before experiencing the hardships of being an African American, when he overtly states: “I am not ashamed of my grandparents for having been slaves. I am only ashamed of myself for having at one time been ashamed” (Ellison 227). However, as the narrator describes his experience of unjust treatment and social inequality, one begins to witness his change in attitude. It is clear that the narrator has been struggling with the decision of whether or not he should openly embrace his heritage in a society in which African American's are viewed as inferior to the white man and have the “social responsibility” to remain submissive to their superior culture as revealed by the narrator when he exerts that African Americans should “[c]ast down [their] bucket...in making friends in every manly way of the people of all races by whom [they] are all surrounded” (Ellison 234). However, the abuse that he endures from the white men has subconsciously affected him which leads him to utter the forbidden words: “social equality” within their midst (Ellison 235). Undoubtedly, the narrator's horrid experiences have gradually molded him into an individual who has become more appreciative of his heritage.

Commented [Teneil Sa13]: I need to expound on the narrator's “change in attitude”. What was the narrator's initial attitude? Did his attitude change as the story progressed? What evidence from the book supports this change?

Commented [Teneil Sa14]: The ideas presented in these sentences should be addressed in an additional paragraph. Once I formulate a new paragraph, I need to incorporate historical information on Booker T. Washington and relate my findings to my ideas as it pertains to the protagonist in “Battle Royal”..

Comments on Draft Two

The second draft of the introduction showed several improvements. The opening sentence was more specific to the stories and there was a reduction in the use of introductory clauses. Despite these improvements, a few of the sentences were wordy and unclear such as the fourth sentence. The thesis statement also needed further revision because it was still vague. The body paragraph also needed further revision. After re-reading the paragraph, I realized that I needed to expound on my ideas which resulted in the formation of a subsequent draft.

In the following draft, I have highlighted all the corrections based on my combined revisions of Draft One and Draft Two.

Draft Three

In Ralph Ellison's “Battle Royal” and Alice Walker's “Everyday Use,” each author develops his or her story on the notion that heritage is an indispensable aspect of one's life. Through the roles of the characters, the authors demonstrate that whether one chooses to embrace one's heritage in its entirety is essentially based on one's personal values, beliefs and experiences. Furthermore, Ellison and Walker show that each individual may choose to embrace his or her heritage at different stages in life and thus develop an appreciation for his or her culture. In “Battle Royal,” the narrator – ‘The Invisible Man’ – develops a greater appreciation for his African American heritage despite the hardships he endures during the 1930s. Likewise, in “Everyday Use” – set in the 1970s – the character, Dee, develops a strong appreciation for her heritage. However, the most captivating aspect of each character's newfound appreciation is the contrast between each character's process of becoming appreciative and the distinctiveness between their resulting attitude. From an in depth analysis of both stories, one can surmise that even though ‘The Invisible Man’ and Dee may become more appreciative of his or her heritage, his or her understanding and appreciation of heritage will vary because of the differences

Commented [Teneil Sa15]: The highlighted portion is worded awkwardly and needs to be revised or deleted for clarity.

Commented [Teneil Sa16]: The punctuation surrounding this phrase needs to be revised.

Commented [Teneil Sa17]: Punctuation needs to be revised.

Commented [Teneil Sa18]: This sentence provides more clarity to readers. The sentences are not wordy and state specific details. In addition, a time frame for each story has been established.

Commented [Teneil Sa19]: This is a hyphenated word.

between each character's path to cultural appreciation, and the influence of different perspectives on the advancement of the African American race during each character's respective time period.

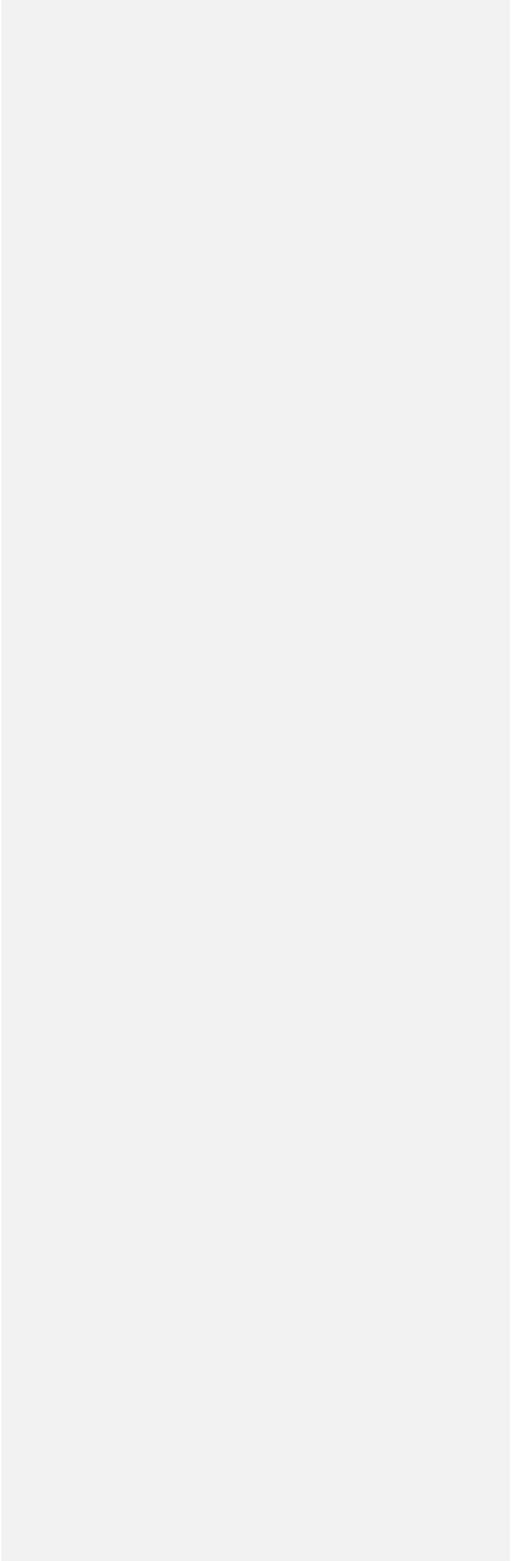
Although the narrator in "Battle Royal" and the character, Dee from "Everyday Use" have both learned to embrace their heritage, there is a contrast between how each character develops an appreciation for his or her heritage. In "Battle Royal," the reader instantly becomes aware of the

Final Version

In Ralph Ellison's "Battle Royal" and Alice Walker's "Everyday Use," each author develops his or her story on the notion that heritage is an indispensable aspect of one's life. Through the roles of the characters, the authors demonstrate that whether one chooses to embrace one's heritage in its entirety is essentially based on one's personal values, beliefs, and experiences. Ellison and Walker also show that each individual may choose to embrace his or her heritage at different stages in life. In "Battle Royal," the narrator, "The Invisible Man," develops a greater appreciation for his African American heritage despite the hardships he endures during the 1930s. Likewise, in "Everyday Use," set in the 1970s, the character, Dee, develops a strong appreciation for her heritage. However, the most captivating aspect of each character's new-found appreciation is the contrast between each character's process of becoming appreciative and the distinctiveness between their resulting attitude. Although "The Invisible Man" and Dee become more appreciative of heritage, his or her understanding and appreciation of heritage varies because of the differences in each character's path to cultural appreciation, and the influence of different perspectives on the advancement of African Americans during each character's respective time period.

Although the narrator in "Battle Royal" and the character Dee from "Everyday Use" have both learned to embrace their heritage, they have varying experiences that make their individual path to cultural appreciation unique. In "Battle Royal," the reader instantly becomes aware of the narrator's initial perception of shame for his culture, before he experiences the hardships of being an African American, when he overtly states: "I am not ashamed of my grandparents for having been slaves. I am only ashamed of myself for having at one time been ashamed" (Ellison 227). However, as the narrator describes his experience of unjust treatment and social inequality, one begins to witness his change in attitude. At the battle royal, one is able to identify the "The Invisible Man"'s initial attitude towards his race based on his perception of the other boys; he believes that he is "superior to them" (Ellison 228). His initial perception of the boys reveals his misconception that his educational advancement and his submissiveness to the upper-class white men will earn him the elite white men's respect. Though the protagonist remains oblivious to this fact by the end of the battle royal, it is evident that he is viewed as equal to the other boys because he is not exempt from the elite white men's barbaric behavior towards them. Even though there is no apparent change in his attitude towards the boys by the conclusion of the fight, the foreshadowing at the beginning of the chapter suggests that the protagonist realizes his ignorance later on in life and learns to embrace all African Americans regardless of educational status.

The narrator has been struggling with the decision of whether he should openly embrace his roots in a society in which African Americans are viewed as inferior to the upper-class white man and have the "social responsibility" to remain submissive to their superior culture. The narrator reveals this notion when he insists that African Americans should "[c]ast down [their] bucket . . . in making friends in every manly way of the people of all races by whom [they] are all surrounded" (Ellison 234). In fact, the notion that his fellow African Americans should become submissive to the white race is adopted from Booker T. Washington, who asserted that African Americans should "exhibit good citizenship, hard work, and elevated character in order to win the respect of the 'better sort' of whites" (William). Clearly, the protagonist seems to be influenced by the words of Washington. However, the protagonist's true perspective is revealed when he utters the forbidden words, "social equality," within the midst of the upper class white men (Ellison 235). His unexpected revelation not only proves that he has been affected subconsciously by the physiological and psychological abuse of the upper-class white men, but also symbolizes the beginning of his transition into an individual who accepts his background. Undoubtedly, the narrator's horrid experiences are gradually molding him into an individual who



becomes more appreciative of his culture.