

CASE CLOSED - The Steps to Getting There
(Exhibit of Composing/Revision Process)

In order to finish a case, that is, to write an effective analytical essay that offers new and valuable insight about your subject to your reader, a detective must be able write effectively. The essay must be cohesive, clear, and the ideas need to be supported with ample evidence and reasoning. To achieve this, the writing process is divided into several drafts. The drafting process was something completely new to me, as in high school (my pre-detective years), I had never worked on more than one draft. However, in English 1102 we worked on several, and I quickly learned how invaluable a procedure drafting several times can be. Personally, I know that the drafting process had its greatest impact on the theses of my essays. Writing and working on several drafts gave me the ability to spend a lot of time on my essay, and consider other possible interpretations when analyzing literature. Along the way, I would develop different ideas or new thoughts that challenged my previous held claims, which would result in the growing complexity of the thoughts embedded in my theses. I have chosen to use the second, third, and final drafts of the introductory paragraph of my first essay, “The Lion and Clock,” in my portfolio because it is a very clear example of how my thesis changed as I progressed to each stage of drafting. I have highlighted the thesis in each of my drafts.

DRAFT 2

The Jilting of Granny Weatherall, by Katherine Porter, is primarily about the last day of an elderly woman's life whose thoughts consume her as she progresses to death. The name of the elderly woman is Granny Weatherall (Ellen Weatherall) and she is the main character of the story. Portrayed by the story, Granny has been internally disturbed by the betrayal of her first husband, George, who left her standing at the altar on her wedding day. Sixty years later, as she lays dying, Granny reflects on her long life and tries to think about it positively, but her thoughts are consumed by memories of George and his terrible act on her wedding day. **As Granny's life comes to an end and she continues to reflect upon the fact that George jilted her all those years ago, she begins to fear that God may “jilt” her as well.**

My second draft needed a lot of improvement. In particular, the flow of the paragraph is poor, especially the second sentence. The third sentence is unnecessary and ineffective as well. Most importantly, my thesis lacks complexity. This notably changes throughout my drafts.

DRAFT 3

— *The Jilting of Granny Weatherall*, by Katherine Porter, focuses on the last day of an elderly

woman's life whose memories consume her as she faces death. Granny Weatherall, the main character of the story, has been internally disturbed by the betrayal of her first love, George, who left her standing at the altar on their wedding day. Now, sixty years later as she lays dying, Granny reflects on her long life. Although Granny Weatherall displays confidence and certainty on the outside, internally Granny lacks courage, a quality that was taken away from her by George on their wedding day. And because of this, Granny is unable to accept God into her life, and as a result, she is consumed by the darkness and desolation of death.

In the third draft, I did a wonderful job of giving my introductory paragraph both more flow and clarity. To enhance the fluidity of my writing, I made a major change to the second sentence of my draft. I corrected the awkward wording and combined the new and improved sentence with the one that follows it, which allowed me to share my information and to do so without wasting words. The most important change from draft 2 to draft 3 was the development in complexity of my thesis. In my thesis, I added the idea of Granny Weatherall “losing courage.” I also created “tension” in my thesis, a writing strategy that is advocated by our class book Writing Analytically, by first addressing one issue “Although Granny Weatherall displays...” and then following up with an idea that seems to contradict the first (“internally she lacks courage”).

Final Draft

“The Jilting of Granny Weatherall”, by Katherine Porter, focuses on the last day of an elderly woman's life whose memories consume her as she faces death. Granny Weatherall, the main character of the story, has been internally disturbed by the betrayal of her first love, George, who left her standing alone at the altar on their wedding day. As she lies dying, Granny reflects on her long life and although she displays confidence and certainty on the outside, internally she lacks the courage and the ability to trust people. These two qualities were taken away from her by George on their wedding day. Because of this loss, Granny dies with the mistaken belief that she has been “jilted” not only by George, but also by God

Fortunately, my third draft did not have too many grammatical errors nor did it need dramatic improvement in its fluidity, so I was able to focus on “polishing” my thesis – making sure it was clear and captivating. I added the phrase “As she lays dying” to the beginning of my thesis and took away the original preceding sentence to make my writing less taxing to read for my audience. I also considered the idea of Granny losing not only courage but also “trust” in my

thesis, which adds to the intellectual depth and complexity of my analysis. The most important change I make from the third draft to the final is that I specify the second half of my claim. Instead of stating “Granny is unable to accept God into her life,” I consider a more intriguing and specific idea: “Granny dies with the mistaken belief that she has been 'jilted' not only by George, but also by God.” This illustrates the maturation of my thesis, which is a product of the drafting process.