

## About Me



Writing is one of the best ways to access one's inner self. Therefore, my best writing occurs when I connect with my true feelings and emotions. My experience in English 1101 has been one in which my works have been reflections of who I am as a person. The assignments of my class each became personal expressions of different aspects of my personality: my first paper about optimism, my second paper about acceptance, and my peer revisions a display of my altruism and dedication to helping others. Each of these works, only outdone by the energetic and humorous rap song that is my wild card, come together to paint a vivid picture of the person I am today. This self portrait ties to my visual theme of Facebook because, like a Facebook profile page, my portfolio offers a look into the kind of person that I am.

The characteristic about myself that I cherish the most is my easy-going, and positive perspective on almost all aspects of my life. Our first paper assignment of writing over a thousand words on a single image, at first, seemed daunting to me. However, as I searched the web for a picture in which to do my analysis, I came across an image of a young boy running through the streets of Malawi. The unique aspect of the picture was that, despite the dirt roads around him and the tattered

clothes he wears, the young boy was shown with nothing less than a beaming smile and a pure expression of joy. The image resonates with me, as in my mind, it displays the power that optimism can give us to get through even the most difficult times in life. When I began writing about the topic, the words flowed out of me as if the Open Office document was a window to my heart. My first paper became an enjoyable experience and the once intimidating assignment of a thousand words became my opportunity to express my view on life. After expressing an aspect of myself in my first paper, I became motivated to continue with this theme throughout the semester. To properly express each aspect of myself required scrutiny and careful structure in my writing in order to make my ideas clear.

In the thesis of my first paper I stated that behind my image was “the importance of preserving one's child-like optimism.” While my thesis stated this connection, within my body paragraphs I began to make claims without tying those claims to specific aspects of the photo. My paragraphs, therefore, did not stay entirely consistent with the prompt. Yet with this mistake in my essay's unity, came an opportunity to further develop my skills as a writer. My development as a writer was shown in my second paper about stereotypes, in which I now made sure that my paragraphs and arguments were directly connected to my thesis. In this paper I argued that “labeling is the leading cause of false judgments and prevents a person's true self from being seen.” To support this claim, I offered specific supporting evidence from a short story, an official study, and even anecdotes from my own life. Keeping in mind what I learned from my teacher's comments on paper one allowed me to write a fully-supported and unified paper two, which is displayed in my Personal Revision exhibit. When organizing my portfolio, I felt that my audience would be more receptive to the revision process if they had not yet seen the revised, final draft. This being said, I intentionally placed my Personal Revision exhibit directly before my revised paper two.

My second paper is about acceptance of others: one of the most important qualities that I value in a person and in myself, especially. I believe that the best way to practice acceptance is to take the time to learn about a person instead of using stereotypes to make judgments. While stereotyping is

somewhat natural, it is also harmful because it makes true acceptance difficult to achieve. I have become passionate about the importance of accepting others partly because stereotyping and racism have been topics highlighted in my high school curriculum and also because I feel that I have personally experienced being stereotyped against in my own life experience. This being said, I chose to follow one of the paper two prompts, which asked us to discuss limitations that are caused by society's stereotypes. In my response to the prompt, I discussed how labeling can prevent us from seeing others as their true selves. With this message, I once again connected my writing with an aspect of life that has had a large influence on my personality. Although I was, at first, nervous about the other classmates and my teacher reading about my struggles with race and stereotypes, I decided to go with a subject that truly mattered to me. In my paper I shared my personal experiences of being stereotyped and spoke out to readers about the importance of accepting others. With my attempt to teach others an important lesson in my paper, I ended up learning and I began working further to avoid using stereotypes in my everyday life. I developed a paper which represented another important aspect of my character, and this aspect was made stronger for being articulated in writing.

The class introduced Peer Review to me as a new part of the writing process. To my surprise, I learned the most, not from my classmates' suggestions to me, but from my suggestions to my classmates. When peer reviewing the paper of my classmate, Stefanie, I began to look at the writing process from a different perspective. By discussing with her the importance of taking a strong stance in her thesis and by giving her tips on how to stick to her thesis throughout the paper, I learned a great deal about organization and how to go about my own revision process as well.

Finally, my wild card. For this assignment, because it was supposed to be a "creative work of our choice," I decided to create a rap. I have made many raps, including ones about my struggles with an ex-girlfriend, my transition to college, and now, my experience in my English 1101 class. By choosing a rap for my wild card, I was able to continue my portfolio's theme of showing who I am as a person. When one listens to this rap, they may get an impression of the kind of person I am. The

upbeat tempo, and light humor within the rap reflects my positive attitude towards life; and, by connecting a college class with an entertaining rap song, my wild card shows that I can usually have fun and make the best out of whatever life gives me.

Now, enjoy my portfolio, and take a further glimpse into the personality of Ravi Srivastava.