

Amr Almaz

Professor Alexandra Cohl

WCGI Literature FIQWS 10105 HA10

1 October 2018

What's the point of writing this?

A little miniature headache aroused in my head just while we were reading over the course contract. I can hear Mr.Lipari echoing the words into my head, “Welcome Seniors to Participation of Government or as you may know it as: Quality of Life! In this course we will focus on improving the Quality of Life (QOL) of our community. To achieve this, we will be entering a contest by conducting a research paper known as the QOL paper.”.

Since I first heard about from freshman year's seniors, up until last year's seniors, I knew it was going to be unlike any other paper I've ever written. Never have I written such a paper that was going to be this important or completed over the course of the *whole* school year. Yet here I was.

He kept going, “ In this paper you will find an issue in your community that you feel if resolved will make the lives of the residents better in their everyday lives. You have a chance to win up to \$15,000 in scholarship money for first place!”.

At this point I was already overwhelmed, my headache worsened so I was trying to tune his voice out to feel better, but I knew if I didn't hear him explain it now, I was going to be

wasting more time asking questions later. Fortunately, the bell rang just as he finished his sentence to close it off.

I saw the faces of everyone staring off at each other as we anxiously exited the room. No one said a word as we were all left staggered at the upcoming work we had at hand.

Time passed, it was now early-mid December which is one of the *hearts* of the school year. The leaves of the trees have all fallen, the weather is freezing cold outside, and it always seemed to be cloudy and gloomy outside. All this was a recipe for giving up.

I was now in the middle of my project, well at least I was supposed to be. I ended up sticking with ‘Lack of Bike Racks’ as my topic as I envisioned that one day all students would be able to commute to school via their bicycle as their daily form of exercise. Initially I thought it was a great idea, however, it stabbed me in the back when I came to research it. For the first few months, while the rest of the class was done gathering information from various resources, I was still trying to find my first. I was stuck in a slump.

“What’s the point of all this? Why should I care? It’s not like it’s going to help me with anything. School is so generic. It’s built for all and not for everyone. None of this is worth my time. I’m just doing this for the grade and it’s not benefiting me at all. I really don’t want to do this anymore. This is all just irritating.”

I hit rock bottom.

I ended up failing my first ever class as I got my report card for the 2nd marking period back. I didn’t know what to do. I was frustrated. I was lost. I knew I had to keep going because if I failed the next marking period, I would fail the semester and wouldn’t be able to graduate. I

never thought I would see myself in that position. I decided on going directly to my teacher for help.

Although I was hesitant as I knew he would be mad. As I approached his office, anxious thoughts raced through my head and I tried to ignore them. When I walked in, everything became a blur as I wasn't thinking anymore, I was just talking about the situation I was in. I knew I told him how I struggled to find info about my topic and that I was really behind everyone else because I truly thought that I lost my motivation to keep going.

However, the one thing that I can bring out that he said was "Listen, life isn't always about what you want to do, sometimes you got to be responsible and mature enough to keep going through things you don't feel passionate about". *"it's more than just I'm not passionate about it, I really hate this thing. The paper is taking way too long, it's way too difficult, plus it's not helping me at all."* I didn't want to tell him that, so I kept nodding and listening, but he hit me with something else. He said "just so you know your topic is great and the judges love to see stuff like that. If you make it to the finals and you create an actual solution, you might start a movement for it which will have a ripple effect on bigger movements. Then think of all the lives that you might benefit and possibly *save*. Trust me, just keep going and even if you don't make it you might light a spark in someone reading it and at least one person might be motivated because of your topic"

I realized he was right. After much arguing within myself I finally found something that would motivate me to keep writing. I went home thinking about he said, repeating it in my head over and over. I got to work.

It's now the end of the year and we're putting together all the pieces of our paper, from the background paper, to graphs, to surveys, to the summary, to the conclusion. I was genuinely shocked seeing it all come together as I saw all the docs add up to 45 pages. *“Woah. I was really about to give this all up a few months ago”*

To this day, I'm still shocked that I've completed this paper. All the mental development that I had to go through to finish it was well worth it. If I hadn't gone through that experience, I would've never went to my teacher and never got that advice. For every writing piece that I had to complete since, I would think back to what I've gone through already and think “this isn't so bad, I've done worse.”. No matter how hard or irrelevant something got, I always think back to when my teacher said “You'll never know how far a couple of words can go”.