

## Q & A

w/ Josh

**Q:** What high school did you attend?

**A:** I went to Mineral Ridge

**Q:** What did you think about having to take a writing course as a requirement?

**A:** I hated it. I'm not really a big fan of sitting down and writing. For me, this paper was a lot easier because it was, just, to write about something that you've used in a work environment, and that was a really easy choice.

**Q:** How did the idea to write "Tools of the Trade" come to you? In other words, what was your process in carving out this idea?

**A:** The idea of the title of the paper, "Tools of the Trade", kind of came afterwards, but we had to sit down, and we had to pick out one thing that we used. Some people picked their nametags or the slicer at work. So, when I picked my rifle, I just sat down in front of the computer and just typed and stared at the wall and what thoughts were there I eventually developed that into the paper. We were reading other personal narratives to help us get ideas of what we might want to write about. And so, that's where the story about my dad in the essay came from. I kind of took bits and pieces of what we were learning about and put them into my own words and own experiences.

**Q:** Okay, so how do you start an essay? Do you start with working on the introduction, or...?

**A:** I started with the introduction, but then, what I'd do is I'd make like a list of key points, bullet points. Those helped me keep track of.. "okay this is the next paragraph and this is the next thing I want to talk about." I'd just write one or two words, like went "hunting" or "dad", just enough so I knew where I wanted to go, what direction I wanted to go in. Then, once I came to that bullet point, I would know where to go next with the story. Then, I would pull that story out and mess with it and edit it around and make some revisions and go from there.

**Q:** How did you feel when your instructor nominated you?

**A:** Well, she kind of threw out the idea of what it was if anybody wanted to do it. At first, I was like eh-h I don't know if this paper even going to be good enough. It was our final paper. What we did was, we wrote our first paper as a narrative, and then our very last paper was to expand on one of the three papers that we'd written throughout the semester. So, I picked that one, and I expanded it. And, I sat down with her and said, "hey, do you think this would be good enough for me to submit?" She said, "I really think it would be." And so, between her and Pat at the Center for Student Progress, and I can't even tell you how many times I went down to the Writing Center for help, just to make sure, because I really wanted to make sure everything was perfect. Then, I submitted it.

**Q:** How did you feel when you learned that your work was selected... that you'd won?

**A:** I mean, I'm not going to lie, I really excited to hear that I'd won. You win things like this in high school, and it's not really that big of a deal. But, at the collegiate level to have your work published, it's something to truly be proud of.

**Q:** What was the most challenging part of your 1550 course?

**A:** What I thought was the most challenging was the research paper. I mean MLA citations aren't something that I'm good at. I was glad, though, that our instructor let us choose what we wanted to write about. She gave us a general category to write about - subcultures. From there, we were able to choose which subculture that we would research.

**Q:** Were there any activities or lessons that stand out as particularly helpful?

**A:** We did this one activity where she gave us papers from students. And, they weren't all necessarily good papers. In fact, some had one sentence that spanned the entire page. She would ask us to edit them. And so, when I would write my papers, sometimes I would catch myself making the kinds of mistakes that I'd seen in those papers and realize, "I have to stop this sentence somewhere, or I've got to change something here."

**Q:** What advice would you offer to students coming into 1550 courses?

**A:** I would say that I know it can be tough, but don't expect that you can write these papers at the last minute and do well, consistently. You've got to try to set aside time to think through your ideas and how you want to approach the paper. Go to the Writing Center. They are only going to help you do well.

**Q:** Do you feel that your experience has prepared you for 1551, for Writing II?

**A:** I can't really say if this will prepare me to write beyond 1550. I want to be able to say that it will, and that I learned some things and that I was able to do well. But, I'm not sure what to expect with any of my other classes as far as the type of writing or the type of assignments. I can't predict those things. I'm sure that 1551 will present a new set of challenges.