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Ten years old.

If we transport ourselves back to 2010, to this remote small town in Mexico, and ask ourselves, what is going on in the mind of a 10-year-old child? Marbles games? Night soccer? Cartoons? Saving your allowance, hoping that you will be rich enough so that you can buy the toy you have been watching in TV commercials? Perhaps that is the case for most 10-year-olds. But what do you do when you are not interested in any of it? What do you do when all the kids are anxiously waiting for it to be five o'clock so they can go watch their favorite cartoons but not you? What if instead of watching cartoons, you are more inclined to documentary channels? For example, National Geographic Channel, where you can learn so much about crazy theories, unique weird-looking animals but more intriguing yet, an impressive vocabulary. A vocabulary conformed of extravagant and fancy words, like *Amorphous*, *Anhydro*, *Taxonomy*, *Exogenous*, *etc.*

TV was undoubtedly a window to this beautiful new world full of wisdom. Wisdom enclosed in unique words and sentences. I wanted to acquire this wisdom. I wanted to harvest this knowledge, to learn all these extravagant words and sound as impressive as scientists did on TV. I asked my professors what I needed to do to be a scientist, a geologist, or even one of these crazy historians. *Read, read a lot, and then go to college*, I was told. I was never a fan of reading, and college was a new topic for me.

Nonetheless, I made up my mind to do everything needed to go to college, including reading. Living in a remote town, obtaining interesting books was quite a challenge; nonetheless, my professors would always lend me their old books. I learned all Mexican history. If it were not for the books, I would never have guessed that Mexico means "Place in the Navel of the Moon." Reading was a painful process yet exciting and satisfactory. It was a way of cultivating knowledge out of thin pages of the books. Time went by, and now I was 14, four years away from college, from a new life full of adventure -Reality said otherwise.

Soon I was told there was no way I could make it to a suitable university. Considering how bad education is in Mexico, I was not surprised. The only solution was to emigrate. Once I arrived in this country, I was placed in these ELD classes on my first day of school, which were intended to teach us this new language. I would not say that learning the speaking part was challenging, but rather a funny embarrassing process. At the beginning of my learning, I was so afraid of speaking this new language that I would wait for my classes to end before asking for permission to go to the restroom. And how could I forget the day I was doing an exposition in my biology class and was mispronouncing the world nature the whole time. One might think it is usual to mispronounce a world, but that is not when that world is present in your exposition tens of times. The worse thing is that no one said anything!

The grammar, on the other hand, was not easy at all. In contrast to Spanish, English is written differently than how it sounds, making it challenging to learn. I must admit I did struggle for quite a while; nonetheless, my goals of making it to college kept me going. The problem here was that I did not have the time to learn this new language when college was just three years away. Four of my periods were ELD and the other two Physical Education. I had no other choice but to go to my community college and register for additional writing classes to catch up to my

former classmates. At this moment, my life was all about reading and writing—none of which I was a fan of.

My junior and senior years were stressful and painful. I had to attend 7 periods in high school, do outside classroom activities, and go to community college at night. I would never have imagined that the life that 10-year-old kid wanted would be full of writing and reading. During this process, however, I learned much more than just a new language. It was just like watching TV but in a book. The difference was that I had freedom of choice. I could learn about anything; all I had to do was pick up a book of interest at any given time.

At the end of this process, I was surprised by how much I had harvested. I learned a new language and essential skills such as dedication, patience, organization, teamwork, and leadership. I developed this hybrid relationship with writing and reading that now forms part of my daily life. I get excited when a new article by NASA comes out or find a book that answers that very question that was hunting me for days. Just like when I was a kid but with articles and books instead of tv episodes this time,

Today, I am so grateful to have had this drastic experience that changed my life. Now I feel like a superhero -my power to be able to read and write. Tell me about something I do not know, and I have a resume/summary the next day. Ask me to teach you something, and I ask you for a pen and paper. It continuous to surprise me how much my life orbits reading and writing, which I consider to be a big trophy for all the struggle I went through. If we look back at this 10-year-old kid, I see him not watching TV but rather watching through a window, looking at his future without knowing how drastic it will be. Today, if I look at myself in the mirror, I see a sculpture shaped by TV, reading, and writing, something I am proud of, and that would never change for anything.

Cover Memo

For this assignment I found myself struggling a lot, especially in this second draft. I had a hard time understanding how to properly respond to the prompt, perhaps now I wrote my first essays I did not have a clear understanding of what exactly literacy was.

I want to say that this essay is not really responding to the prompt and instead focuses on something that is off topic, thus making my essay look like, unfinished (apart that I said is not responding to the prompt.) Like in my second draft I simply did not like my essay at all that I guess I just went blind and could not see a way to fix it, making it instead look unfinished and incoherent. Having said that I do not think this essay has any strength at all.

The feedback I received was basically a resume of what I just explained. The essay was a good writing piece for a free writing assignment, but not for an assignment with a prompt. They all like the essay and the story I was telling but said it was unrelated to this assignment.

For this second draft, I tried to make it more in topic, by focusing more on my writing experience and describing how that shaped my life, or persona. But again, as much as I tried, I could not properly fix it. I think that I was too off topic to be fixed. Maybe writing a new essay would be a better choice.

I do not think I have any specific question since I am feeling blind but am advice instead on how to properly respond to the prompt and not get off topic.