

27 May, 2023

To: Sydney Sullivan

From: Emmalee Miles

UWP 001V – Reflection Letter

For this assignment, Composing Messages In Multiple Genres, I chose to present the topic of “moving out for the summer” through the use of three different genres. I chose this topic because of its relevance to my actual present-day life. At the time the assignment was given, I was in the process of planning my move home for the summer, so it was helpful to pull aspects from my situation to make my writing sound more realistic. I have always been a list-maker in times of stress, so it was a natural decision for me to make my first genre a to-do list. I wanted to do at least two genres that involved writing because a list didn’t seem like enough effort, to me. So, I decided to make my second genre a letter. I also decided to write the letter in a way that was intended for my mom to read, with bits of humor sprinkled in. This genre helped me to make the topic feel more personal because a to-do list could be written by anyone, you don’t necessarily sign your name, and lists can all kind of look the same no matter who writes them. To add a visual element, I made an infographic for my third genre. I have some prior experience with making infographics for the events I hold as a peer mentor, so this creative process is familiar to me. My graphic is centered around giving tips to others and preparing them for their own moving experience. This ties back to the to-do list, because of the way I added helpful notes to some of the to-do items that some people may forget, with a special timeline that mirrors the sequence of tips on the graphic. I previously planned to do a vlog as my third genre, but the timeline didn’t work out for me to film because I was actually in the middle of moving in real life!

There are some key differences between my three genres and the way they convey my message (tips for moving out, specifically as a college-age student). For instance, a to-do list is a really cut-and-dry way to get a message across. Listing puts each idea into a more condensed version, which quickens the delivery of the message. The possible fault of a to-do list, though, is that some details might get lost when you cut down the amount of information that is written. I feel as though I avoided this by prioritizing the most important information and making every bullet point fairly detailed on my list. A list is different from a letter because it shows less personality. A letter allows you to show your writing style, where a list gets right to the point and often includes a lot of abbreviations instead of complete sentences. A letter can also be tailored to a specific audience or, more often, a single person. The way you write a letter can change depending on who your audience is and what the context for writing is. A list can only be so unique. An infographic is the most versatile, in my opinion, because it can include whatever text and/or images you want. This kind of visual genre has less rules attached to it than something like a list or a letter. When making my graphic, I was able to create it in a way that reflected my message pretty accurately. I was also able to make it more understandable by pairing appropriate photos with each tip/to-do item.

One of the biggest challenges I faced was choosing which genres would pair the best together, which ones I actually had enough time to put all of my effort into, *and* which genres best fit my skill set, so that I could make sure I was producing my best work. I ended up doing a quick google search for some unique genres and went from there. I was pleasantly surprised with the number of options available. I had no idea, until starting this class, that there were so many ways to present the same message. I now understand how this relates to everyday life. When I post on social media, I often choose whether I want to make a video on TikTok, put photos together with a caption on Instagram, or write a short update for my family who primarily uses Facebook. Many English courses at UC Davis include a final project in which you can choose between writing a report, making a slideshow presentation, or creating a physical item. For a class my first year here, I had the choice of writing a story, making a sculpture, presenting a slideshow, or creating a comic strip to retell the story of Beowulf. I chose the last option because I felt I was capable of doing a good job on it, and it gave me the ability to use some creative freedom. I tailored the comic book genre to my skill set by taking pictures of lego figures instead of hand drawing them, because I am better at photography than I am at drawing. What I didn't realize was that this project was giving me the opportunity to explore which genre I believed was best for me to retell the story. For classes after UWP 1V, I feel that I'll have an even better skillset to pick what genres convey my message best, and which ones I can do the best job at presenting based on my knowledge and experience.

Moving forward with my final corrections for my portfolio, I want to focus my energy on making my genres match so that they truly put across a universal message. Right now, my first genre (to-do list) is very fluid. It has little personal touches and doesn't have a clear audience. My second genre (letter) has a very clear audience: my mom. It is full of things that make it very obviously written by me. My third genre (infographic) is the one that I struggle with the most as I reflect on it more. You'll probably notice that my opinions on its ability to convey my message have changed as I write this reflection letter, but I think that is an important part of the reflection process. The graphic is directed at college students who need a place to start with their moving plan, and has no correlation with me at all. My main plan to bring a more cohesive message to these genres is to make sure my audience is more generalized. I will add a header to the to-do list that implies it is being written as a sample guide for students to edit and fit their own needs. I will change up the letter, as suggested in the comments, to be written for a broader audience of college students. To do this, I will need to change my wording from things like "I would really appreciate having your help" to something like "I would suggest asking for help early on" to make it sound more like I am giving advice. The infographic already has a generalized audience, so I will make minimal changes, if any. Making these changes will help make all of my genres match better, as if they could all be featured on someone's advice website/blog or a segment of a magazine.

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