

# Journal

26. 9. 2019

1. Sadly, I don't really write that much nowadays – it's not a lack of time, I would say a lack of motivation
2. I've always liked to write short stories and poems (although those were not really good). And surprisingly, last semester I also enjoyed writing research papers on books (not all the research papers we had to write, just the ones on the books I liked, with the others I just felt like I have nothing much to say)
3. Like I stated above – I don't really write when I don't have to these days
4. I must say that I do take pride in some of my works, mainly because I know that I did my best to write them. Honestly, I'm not that kind of person who can just say "whatever" and write some nonsense; I always strive (well, sometimes more like "struggle") to create something worth reading
5. It depends. Some days I'm able to sit down in front of a computer and write two pages worth of research paper (well, that happened only once and boy, was I surprised!) and other days, writing a short paragraph is worse than walking barefoot across a room full of scattered Legos
6. Once I know that it's the best version possible under given circumstances, I don't mind showing it to people. Actually, since primary school, whenever I write something my best friend is always the first one to read it and give me feedback, even though she just always says that she loves it (and that's not really a helpful feedback, although it is very nice to hear that)
7. I think that as long as a piece of creative writing has some deeper meaning or carries a message (and it doesn't matter if it's your standard good-beats-evil in fairy tales or something more intricate) it can be considered academic. Because as we concluded in the lecture, "academic" writing should educate you, make you think
8. I believe that I am rather open-minded about books (read: I'll read anything that looks interesting enough, no matter the genre). Generally, I like detective stories, fantasy novels and comic novels. My favourite book (although it's hard to pick a favourite) is Vango. It's 700 pages long and read it in three days, I was so engrossed in it! I especially like the structure – there are many characters and many subplots, but it all comes together in the end and turns out that everyone knows everyone (that's oversimplified, the real story is so much better – check it out if you want)
9. I'd say that during the semester, I'm able to read one book a week (however, it looks like that this semester I won't be able to do any leisure reading ☹). During the holidays, it depends on how much time I have, I think my total

record this summer was three books in a week (I know it doesn't look like much, but it was the Lord of the Rings trilogy)

10. Well, vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure come to my mind first. There is also the structure of the whole paper. Then it depends on what I'm writing. For research papers I often have to extrapolate information from outer sources and incorporate them effectively into my text. For leisure writing, I always just let my imagination run free (though I guess that's not a language skill per se)
11. I believe that an essay is a piece of writing where the author expresses his or hers thoughts and opinions on a chosen subject in an interesting and (for the reader also) enjoyable way.

30. 9. 2019

1. Character analysis: For me, a good story starts and ends with its characters. I don't want to say that the plot doesn't matter, it's just that when the characters are dull and flat, I just can't enjoy a great plot. That's why, when the characters are well-written, I like character analysis – I like to ponder on their motivations, behaviour and choices.
2. Joke: There's nothing really deep about this – I just like jokes and laughing. I especially love puns, because understanding them makes me feel smart (even when they are completely silly and easy).
3. Limerick: When I was in eighth grade, we had to write a limerick for our Czech class, and it was so much fun! It may sound easy, but in reality, it wasn't. I tend to write rather long sentences (as you may have noticed), so the third and fourth lines were a bit difficult. But I still enjoyed it. It's not some sophisticated literature that speculates about man's purpose in life, but sometimes you just want to relax and have a few laughs.
4. Myth: I like history and I like fantasy stories – and myths are like a combination of both. I especially love Greek mythology, because the gods are petty and self-centred and they make mistakes – just like humans. They might have their "I-am-better-than-you-humans" attitude, but they aren't, which makes exploring Greek mythology really fun and interesting.
5. Songs: This one is kind of obvious, who doesn't love music? I think that I have a rather wide range when it comes to taste in music. It largely depends on my mood, but I enjoy rock, metal, some country, pop and classical music (especially piano). I also think that movie soundtracks are important – sometimes you don't even notice the music, because you concentrate on the plot and it takes multiple viewings to pay attention to it as well. But still it subtly completes the atmosphere for action and talking scenes, and even creates it in silent (non-talking) scenes. My favourite soundtrack is probably the one from How to Train Your Dragon (by John Powell). It's just SO good! For example:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5JHOYmfPpo>

There's no dialogue during this sequence, just a few sentences in the beginning. The music perfectly captures the initial uneasiness, slow acceptance and final trust.

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### Analytical essay

The purpose of an analytical essay is to analyse one aspect of the whole (e.g. one symbol from a book). It is supposed to carefully explain your interpretation and provide evidence supporting your claim. The audience are usually educated people interested in the subject.

### Review essay

In a review essay, the author provides his or her opinion on a piece of literature. This opinion should be supported by evidence in the text, just like in analytical essay. However, review essay evaluates more than one aspect; it focuses on the whole book. The audience are people interested in the piece of literature in question, wanting to explore different opinion than theirs (or confirm someone has the same opinion as them).

I would read both analytical and review essay if they discussed a topic interesting for me, for example an analysis of the newspeak in 1984 and a review of The Lord of the Rings. I like to listen to (or, well, read) other people's opinions.

### Narrative essay

Narrative essay aims to build a short story around a single motif (or a theme) set by the author. The theme is usually some life experience and lesson learned from it. Narrative essay has a specific format - it should have one or more characters and dialogue. On the other hand, it also has a thesis statement and closed ending. It's like a mix between a short story and an essay, which is why it could interest wider audience than, let's say, critical essay.

Narrative essay is interesting for me, because it describes authentic experience of people. I'm not saying that you can't (for lack of a better phrase) "learn a lesson" from a fiction novel. It's just that this firm grounding in reality, the fact that a real person went through this concrete thing makes it somehow... more achievable for me (I don't really know how to express my thoughts on this).

### Genres and essays

My first chosen genre, character analysis, is basically an analytical essay, so that's that. The others are a tad bit more challenging. I'm not sure about jokes – maybe you

could write a narrative essay where the theme is something funny? Then again, a joke is not the same thing as a funny story, so probably not. I'm not sure about limerick and song either. I guess writing a review essay on these two would not be impossible. Granted, it wouldn't be very long, but who says essays must be ten pages long? As for myth, I can imagine writing analytical essay; after all, myths are full of symbols, themes and motives to ponder on. And maybe also narrative essay? It could be set in the environment of a myth, but with a unique, personal spin . Well, in conclusion, I think that my chosen types of essays correspond pretty well with my genres. I guess if you really are what you eat, you also write what you read. At least I do.