PR, W, C

Points from areas for special attention for P4:   154
minus points lost in other categories   -25= 129
minus points lost for missing items below*   -15= 114
plus points for good writing   +12= 126
PRtotal = 126   out of 200;

* **(a)relevance, if any, of the required courses in reading and writing (such as this one) for your vision. (b) finally, you will need to specify which aspects of this course, if any, help you implement your leadership vision and which do not;**

PR = 5.Proofreading: Typos, Spelling, and Grammar errors, worth 67 points: 52

5 There is one major error, and one minor errors but the prose moves along well enough.

W= 8. Word choice, worth 67 points: 45

3. The diction is adequate but the author does not appear to have taken the time to revise for word choice.

C= 9. Conciseness, worth 67 points: 57

5. Fairly concise prose, but various words if not sections suggest there is some redundancy or repetition that could cut to increase the conciseness.

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*ACTION PLAN, at least 500 words and at least 350 of those words must be devoted to specific, manageable goals, starting with your college years. (1) stretch goals (experiments, prototypes), (2) manageable goals (small wins, predictable successes) (3) timelines. (4) Must include plans for the rest of your college experience, including: (a)relevance, if any, of the required courses in reading and writing (such as this one) for your vision. (b)   finally, you will need to specify which aspects of this course, if any, help you implement your leadership vision and which do not; (5)   Must quote from the assigned readings listed at the end of these instructions. Double points will be awarded for citations from more than three sources in the assigned reading

"A picture is worth a thousand words."

What is a story worth then? For some people, a story's worth is measured by how much entertainment it gives them, what grade or paycheck they're given for it, what its sentimental value is, or maybe its worth nothing at all. But stories are worth so much more than

that. Stories can teach so many people so much, no matter their age.

From acting as a unifying force to dispelling antagonistic and harmful

beliefs, stories can do much more than what most people think.

In my Project 3, I mentioned how two of my passions are writing and

animals. For a long time, I've wanted to not only help animals but also

help people learn how to be more empathetic. I truly believe that the

world would be a much better place if people were more empathetic,

compassionate, and were why their actions can be harmful. As Cheryl

Strayed wrote, "Fear begets fear. Power begets power."[1] The human

race has a tendency to fear that which is different, misunderstood, or

inexplicable. And what do we do when we're afraid? We fight or we

fly. For some people, this instinct can warp into a need for control,

power, and domination. And even though "nature" sometimes wins

over "nurture"—there's not much that can be done for someone who,

quite literally, doesn't have the capacity to be empathetic—I would be

content if I succeeded in teaching even one person to be more

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[1] "Quote by Cheryl Strayed: "Fear begets fear. Power begets...," goodreads, http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/811385-fear-begets-fear-power-begets-power-i-willed-myself-to.

empathetic and compassionate. There's no telling how this could affect their lives, or the lives of others, but at least it will affect someone for the better. Thus, my goal is to write about rarely discussed problems so many people struggle through, in a way that is believable, persuasive, and enjoyable for a wide variety of audiences.

There were, and still are, a few problems though; it takes me so long to get any school work done, I always feel like I don't have enough information, and I didn't know how—nor did I particularly like—to write non-fiction without explaining either too little or too much. It also doesn't help that writing usually doesn't pay very much, and though I want to write as a profession, I also want to provide food, clothes, and a good education for my children, if I have any. There's not much I can do to get school work done more quickly, other than getting more organized, since ADHD isn't something that can just be swept under the proverbial rug. However, I eventually realized that I don't have to write non-fiction to teach others about compassion and empathy—it's actually preferable that I don't.

A couple of years ago, my humanities class was reading *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, a novella based off of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the Stalinist era of the Soviet Union.[2]

While some of the animals represented a specific person (i.e. Napoleon, one of the pigs fighting for power on the farm, was based off of Joseph Stalin), others represented groups (i.e. Boxer, a horse, represented the exploited working class).

My understanding of that era was so much better than it probably would've been had I just been reading a textbook. Not only that, but I felt more empathy for the people who lived through that era because they were no longer faceless people, but were instead embodied in the characters of *Animal Farm*, many of whom were relatable and likeable. But I don't want to only write stories based off of historical events.

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[2] "Animal Farm," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal_Farm.

Instead, I want to write about topics that society tends to avoid talking about or has a big misconception about, such as depression or asexuality, in such a way that children and young adults can understand.

Thankfully, there's been a slight increase in the discussion of topics such as sexuality and race. For example, the cartoon "Steven Universe" centers around the titular character and his three surrogate moms (as depicted above). Though it might be viewed as "childish," the series consistently confronts topics such as racism and same-sex relationships in such a way that is both understandable and enjoyable to any age group.

At this moment it's a little hard to say exactly what my plans are for the rest of college. I started off as a premed student, but I realized that I don't *know* if I'd rather go into medicine or some other field, like the fine arts or business. I hadn't "consider[ed] leadership as a component

of that vocation."[3] So next semester, instead of taking classes that are

required by medical schools, I'll be taking a variety of non-natural

science classes including architecture, philosophy, acting, and either a

fine arts class or art history. The flexibility and variety of courses I can

freely take, since "[t]he English major associated with scholars in all

branches of literature in the English language, but also [finds] it

necessary to take required courses in virtually all the humanities,"[4] is a

blessing. This variety allows me to not only figure out what I want to

do in life, but it will give me a chance to see issues from multiple

perspectives. What classes I take after that semester will really depend

on whether I decide for sure that premed is or isn't for me. However, I

do know for sure the kinds of classes that I absolutely must take for

Plan II, such as history. I don't believe that government and US history

will affect my leadership goal very much, not only because I'll be

taking those classes online, but also because the majority of all of my

history classes have been focused on the oppression of people of color--

with the exception of Asians and Middle Easterners--by whites (which

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[3] Robert J. Lee ("Composition and World Literature: Volume 2", pg. 574).
[4] Margaret Cousins ("Composition and World Literature: Volume 2", pg. 586).

is a pretty hefty portion of American history). So it's a little doubtful

that either class will add to my goals. Unlike these two classes, my

online Spanish class will in fact contribute. The professor doesn't just

have us learn the language, but she also gives us assignments to

research some part of a Hispanic country, and tells us to read a book by

a Hispanic author for extra credit. I'm also going to have to take non-

US history, which may or may not help me towards my goal. I might

be able to base some short story or an entire book on a historical event,

much like *Animal Farm*. I'll also be taking a creative writing course in

the future, which should help me to develop believable characters and

settings. As for this class, I'd say that the most influential parts to my

goal were the sympathetic imagination halves of Project 1 and 2, and

Earthlings.

Writing from the point of view of a canine in both of this course's first

projects was something I really enjoyed—perhaps because I love

wolves and dogs so much. It was also a really great way for me to

practice writing from the point of view of an individual, not only of a

different species, but one that utilizes its senses in a different way than

humans do. I'm optimistic that this will help me when creating characters—whether they're of a different species or if they have a physical disability.

While I do want to give a lot of credit to the first two projects for helping me figure out how to write from the point of view of someone who uses their senses in a different way than I do, I'm going to have to give a lot of that credit to a Summer school class I took before my senior year of high school. The class was—surprise, surprise—a creative writing class of about ten students, taught by a Cuban-American author, Achy Obejas. The class was something I'd consider one of those once in a lifetime kinds of deals, especially with the prompts we were given for our assignments. One of these prompts was to write a short story from the point of view of someone we personally know and hate (or extremely dislike if we don't really hate anyone), but in such a way that the reader would be able to sympathize with that person. It was incredibly difficult for me to do so, because even though I find it easy to empathize with a lot of people, I couldn't think of a single thing the reader could sympathize with. Eventually, however,

the story I wrote was, and is, one of my proudest achievements. And if I can write an even slightly sympathetic story about the person I dislike so much, what would that mean for when I write about people I'm able to empathize with?

While Projects 1 and 2 helped with my ability to write in the point of view of someone (or something) who lives in a very different way than me, *Earthlings* did not. The documentary did, however, help me realize exactly what I want to do to help others. Before we watched the incredibly emotional (and slightly traumatizing) documentary, I was mostly set on writing a fictional book that may or may not have any impact on society. But after watching *Earthlings* I realized how much I wanted to help all living beings. Sure, I could just post something online and hope it spreads to people I don't know, but stories last as long as there's someone to tell them.

I don't want to write fiction stories that only provide entertainment. I want to write something that's also relatable to people who are underrepresented or incorrectly represented. I want my stories to help

guide someone to be compassionate and empathetic. The type and length don't matter—a hundred words in a children's book, or a couple hundred per book of a series—all that matters is that I give someone a character they can relate to (since current social media obviously can't) or use as a model for their own behavior. A person's actions and decisions have ripple effects, as each action has consequences, and each consequence prompts more action. So even if my writing changes only one person's life, they'll change someone else's life. Wouldn't the world be a much better place if the bully no longer bullied, and the bullied were no longer bullied? Even if it's only one person at a time, I can still make a difference.

Word count (not including captions): 1661
Without quotes: 1611