“Endtroduction”
Myranda Bellman

The second birth and creation essay was the hardest to begin. I had no idea how to write about confusion—it’s unnatural—or so I thought. Once I started the paper, however, it was easy to continue talking about the issues, which seem never-ending. I needed to write about my questions because it gave me a new experience in writing. I had never before seen an essay as an exploration through a topic. Before writing this, I used essays to inform my audience, persuade the readers, or (for exams) to regurgitate my notes and show what a great memory I had. I had never used it as a tool to open my mind—the way I had to in order to write this paper. Being able to write and include my questions allowed me to be more complex. Normally I would have had to prove a point, which means a complete understanding of the topic is necessary. In these topics, a complete understanding is virtually impossible. When I have to know everything pertaining to an issue about which I am writing, complexity in the paper is lost. Allowing myself to be confused, and using that to explore more into what confused me was liberating.

My peer reviewers identified points where they became confused or where they thought I needed more textual evidence. I remember Tim told me to talk about the “first abandonment”
more and use a quotation to show where my thinking and confusion was coming from. Another of my peer reviewers told me to add more quotations from the Bible to show the similarities between the two texts better. Taking their suggestions seemed to strengthen the paper, raise even more questions, and deepen the issues. This paper was the easiest to revise because all of the ideas were connected in some way. If I needed to add more complexity, it didn't interrupt the flow to continue exploring a specific idea.

In class, we always ask the question "Why?" In asking such a broad question, I realized that many specific questions come from that. That is what this paper was about. I wondered why Frankenstein was hated in the beginning, why God killed everyone (except Noah and two of every animal), why image seemed so important in the texts, and why the images caused fear.

This essay is significant because I think it brings a new idea about sight and fear. I talked about the "lashing out" that animals do when they are trapped, cornered, and afraid. In class, we hadn't discussed this concept at all, so bringing it up in this paper was necessary. The words this paper helps define are "image," "abandonment," and "fear." It also helps in clarifying how the three are connected. How image can cause fear, and then how fear can cause abandonment.

The story about Mike Rose, Simone Weil, Maya
Angelou, Sonia, and myself proved to be both easy and difficult. It was difficult because it forced me to look at concepts the way each of them would have. It was easy because it was fun to play with slang to make the dialogue more realistic. This was definitely an unusual task to complete—as always. Simone Weil and Mike Rose are very different characters with opposite viewpoints on almost every issue we hit on. Using them both in the paper forced me to think in contradicting ways. I needed to write this paper because it made me realize that I was partly responsible for my Sonia’s education because I am her friend. I now see that I should have pushed her to go to class, finish the homework, and make up the tests she missed. As her friend, I was partly responsible to keep my eye out for her.

My peer reviewers helped me to characterize most of the people in the discussion. Michelle noted that in my first draft, Simone Weil never mentioned religion. This was important because “Waiting For God” was about using education for religion (in the form of focusing the mind for prayer). Adding religion into some of the comments brought out Weil’s complex nature, which I had had a hard time capturing before. I also received suggestions about using dialogue to create sounds that people might have uttered. One of my peer reviewers told me to explain how everyone knew each other, but to do it through dialogue. When I added these things, the story seemed to come alive.
In class, we talked about how Simone Weil and Mike Rose place the responsibility of education on different people (student and educator, respectively). In my essay, I talk about how maybe a friend (that friend being me) or peer is sometimes responsible for the education of a fellow student. This concept is a bit related to what we talked about in the citizenship unit. Sometimes people should stand up and do something for their fellow man rather than sit back and follow what society says is right. In this case, society always places the blame on the parent, or the student, or the educator. Standing up against society for your fellow man means putting the blame on others, including yourself.

With this paper, I learned to how to use dialogue to make characters in a story realistic. By manipulating and playing with the dialogue, I learned to exhibit the underlying attitudes of each person. I even tried showing the sarcasm that Sonia uses so much, which was easier to do after having gotten used to the assignment. This paper was significant because it took a different stance on where responsibility lies in education. Therefore, the word that this essay helps to define is “responsibility.” It is almost as if it is a friend or peer’s duty to look out for fellow students who happen to be falling behind in a class.
Questions for discussion: How does Myranda demonstrate that she understands the conversations that have taken place in her class? How do her papers help solve those problems or questions that have arisen? What new knowledge have her papers given her? How is her introduction similar and different from Bret’s?