PORTFOLIO INTRODUCTION

"Got Perspective?"

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This whole semester I have had my science teacher tell me that my body is made of millions of atoms I will never see, my sociology teacher tell me that the United States is not the land of opportunity for all. I thought it was, my psychology teacher tell me we form our own realities around us, and my core teacher give me insight into human nature through harder texts than anything I've seen before. I no longer have a passive education where I go to school every day and have facts pounded into my head. Teachers expect a deeper understanding of the material and how it relates to life. Each one of my classes seems to have helped me form a new perspective. Sometimes I feel as if I'm drowning, but it is in that drowning that I am seeing my life from a new perspective: all the learning I have done in the past is just to help me realize I truly know nothing.

This semester has been a roller-coaster of events. I went from the high of discovering that I know something to the bottom where I cannot even understand what the professor is talking about. I wrote about death for my first writing assignment, a literary experience that profoundly changed my view of reading and writing. I did not understand how my cousin was killed, but it is amazing that looking back now I can see how the journal I kept at that difficult time gave me
the answers I was searching for. When revising this paper, it was suggested that I play around with the sequence of the paper. I never imagined that by telling a story in a different order I might receive a different lesson. The sequence change made it feel as if I was actually reliving the situation, and this time I realized that the journal was not only a way of releasing my emotions, but it was an important healing process.

During high school, I always relied strongly on my teachers to guide me in the right direction. I heard their words and repeated them like a parrot. That is why the contrast of Rosalie Naumann jumped off the pages of Lives on the Boundary at me. No longer was she just getting her student's attention, but she lured me in with her “tennis shoes” approach. However, just like my first paper, my readers suggested I take a different approach. This woman had such a casual and personal teaching style I missed how active it was at the same time. Naumann invites her students to participate in learning, which is what I was drawn to in the first place, but I never would have been able to tell that from my previous drafts.

When I first read Socrates' ideas on truth, I was sure I had drowned; I was completely lost. I struggled with the last paper because I was trying to answer the question of why some of us have good morals and some not. I had no idea what motivates people to be moral. I have always based my morals on the “pros and cons” of any situation. When I revised this paper I stepped back and looked at it from a different perspective. "Do morals come from the inside or the
outside?” I then found myself understanding Socrates more than before. My revised paper took the steps to realize that morality comes from inward motivation.

All the revisions taught me that there are so many different perspectives and that only using mine limits the things I can discover. My psychology teacher was right: by opening to new perspectives, I learned there is still much to be learned.