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### Diverging Avenues of Appreciation for Writing

The appreciation an author has for their writing is evident in the way they write. After reading “Shitty First Drafts,” an excerpt from the popular novel *Bird by Bird* written by Anne Lamott, I was able to gain a better understanding of her unique writing process as well as reflect upon my own. I felt Lamott’s sporadic way of thinking explained how she writes. Rather than planning out an entire essay, Lamott likes to start off by writing everything down. From there, she likes to “trim” those first drafts and end up with another draft that she can begin to edit. After multiple editing sessions, Lamott is left with what she believes is a great piece of writing.

My personal writing process may be a bit different, however, I may try experimenting with Lamott’s form of writing. I usually like to begin writing my papers with an outline of my main ideas. From there I build off of those key aspects with supporting details. Depending on the type of writing I am trying to accomplish will influence how detailed my outlining process will be. For example, I usually like to jump right into a narrative. On the other hand, I take more time focusing on what aspects I am going to highlight in an argumentative or research paper. The overall message I took away from reading this passage from Lamott’s book was that successful writing comes from trial and error. You just need to start somewhere, whether that is outlining, or simply writing multiple “shitty” drafts. It is through a process like this that successful writers achieve greatness.

This appreciation for writing can also stem into an appreciation for literature as a whole. For example, in the essay “How to Mark a Book,” written by Mortimer J. Adler, passion and love for books is highlighted. Not only does Adler’s appreciation for books come alive, but he also shares his personal process for better connecting with the authors of the books he reads. Adler later goes on to state that reading a book should be a conversation between you and the author. Books are supposed to become a part of you, and if a book is left on a shelf to collect dust, Adler believes that “the soul” of the book never has a chance to influence the reader. Through his seven-step process, I learned the importance of marking up a book and how it helps to become a better reader. Annotating books also provides a better understanding of what the author is trying to convey as a whole.

After listening to Ray Bradbury’s discussion, a whole new level of passion and appreciation for writing came alive. Although Bradbury is the author of many popular pieces of literature, he believes that it is the characters that help him write the story along the way. The same connection with books that Adler describes is also evident in the discussion. Bradbury is a firm believer in the power of reading. He believes that if someone does not know how to read they are unable to grow intellectually and do not know how to make decisions for themselves. I read Bradbury’s popular novel, *Fahrenheit 451* back in high school and it was interesting to see the passion that drove him into writing about one of the things he loved most in this world—books. One of the main points that I felt Bradbury wanted to get across was that you should do what you love in your life. For Bradbury, that love came from books. It is appreciation like Bradbury’s that inspires me to read more and find myself in my own writing.