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Critical Response 2 Revision

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Discovering Your Intellectual Library

Two general tones can be used to approach a reader: formally or informally. “Shitty first drafts,” by Anne Lamott and the Fahrenheit 451 interview with Ray Bradbury are informal, while “How to Mark a Book,” by Mortimer Adler is formal; however, all three pieces give writing advice. Collectively, they believe that writing every thought leads to the best works of writing.

Lamott thinks a continuous cycle of writing leads to clarity. She writes as long as possible to reach ideas she could not think of otherwise. At work, creating food critiques was nearly impossible until she wrote down all the opinions she received from her friends and family. Then, she shortens and combines the opinions appropriate for her article (Lamott). As a famous writer, Lamott does not want readers to feel intimidated, thus she is relatable with her informality. She achieves this conversational tone through writing tactics. The biggest tactic is her use of sarcasm and inappropriate words. She makes fun of the stereotypical writer who seems to be perfect like God. She makes this comparison sound comically because of its unlikeliness. As a result, she informally uses God to show mutual hatred towards naturally good writers. Then, she uses words like “shitty” and “poopy” to talk in a language common to the readers. She shows that no matter your age or experience, no amount of writing will make the next paper easier.

Ray Bradbury uses an informal approach to encourage his viewers to write as well. He emphasizes that the easiest way to write, is to write about the things you love. As a child he was interested in topics, such as, Mars and dinosaurs, thus these topics became prevalent in his books. He encourages people to write continuously to generate the best stories (Bradbury). The interview is held in his personal library with his cat. This environment is welcoming and not professionally oriented. He does not use a lot of informal tactics; however, he talks to the audience in first person to create a conversation between him and the camera. Ultimately, he wants to stress the importance of writing because it allows people to participate in a community of ideas and provides guidance through confusing times.

Mortimer Adler explains how to reach clarity through writing in a formal manner with annotations. Annotating is an act of love because readers are engaging in a conversation with the author. The readers will stay awake, critically think, and remember the material longer. He shows how to achieve this communication through an organized system of topics in separate paragraphs. He explains the ways to own a book, types of book owners, reasons for annotating, and how to annotate (Adler). Adler's article has a formulaic structure to show how simple it is to annotate. The format resembles the simple steps readers can try. These steps may encourage readers to annotate because they have an easy, formulaic starting point and path.

As a student, I almost never write drafts, I treat writing like a chore instead of an outlet, and I strictly read to finish the material. I have grown to hate English because writing assignments take up a lot of my time. Now, I realize that English is purposely complicated. I am supposed to uncover an author's message and add my interpretation. I need to have this ability to expand my intelligence.

Works Cited

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