Lauer, Janice M. “Writing as Inquiry: Some Questions for Teachers.” *College Composition and Communication*,vol. 33, no. 1, 1982, pp. 89-93.

Janice Lauer is an English rhetoric and composition professor emerita at Purdue University who has written numerous articles and books on pedagogical theory. She argues composition teachers should help their students understand that writing is essentially a problem-solving process, a pursuit of discovery and insight. She synthesizes literature that addresses educational inquiry and the historical precedent established by scholars who espouse inquiry as vital to the writing process. This article is particularly useful for discussing the advantages of writing education that cultivates the ability to inquire and reason over writing education that privileges rote learning and “canned” lessons.

**Deconstructing the text:**

Author: Janice Lauer

Author’s Background: English rhetoric and composition professor emerita at Purdue University who has written numerous articles and books on pedagogical theory.

Purpose of the text: She argues composition teachers should help their students understand that writing is essentially a problem-solving process, a pursuit of discovery and insight.

      How?

What specific parts from the text make you think that?

What the text does: She synthesizes literature that addresses educational inquiry and the historical precedent established by scholars who espouse inquiry as vital to the writing process.

      How?

What specific parts from the text make you think that?

How the text will benefit the research project: This article is particularly useful for discussing the advantages of writing education that cultivates the ability to inquire and reason over writing education that privileges rote learning and “canned” lessons.

How?

What specific parts from the text make you think that?

How does this relate to the research project you are doing?

Lamott, Anne. “Shitty First Drafts.” *Language Awareness: Readings for College Writers*, edited by Paul Eschholz, Alfred Rosa, and Virginia Clark. Boston: Beford/St. Martin’s, 2005, pp. 93-96.

Lamott's article offers honest advice on the nature of a writing life, complete with its insecurities and failures. Taking a humorous approach to the realities of being a writer, Lamott's text are wry and anecdotal and offer advice on everything from perfectionism to struggling with one's own internal critic. For example, “The first draft is the child's draft, where you let it all pour out and then let it romp all over the place, knowing that no one is going to see it and that you can shape it later” (94).

In the text, Lamott includes her thoughts on the writing process. Lamott offers sane advice for those struggling with the anxieties of writing, but her main project seems to be offering the reader a reality-check regarding the emotions involved with writing and the struggles she has with her own writing process. Rather than a practical handbook to producing and/or publishing, this text is indispensable because of its honest perspective, its down-to-earth humor, and its encouraging approach. For example, “Even after I'd been doing this for years, panic would set in. I'd try to write a lead, but instead I'd write a couple of dreadful sentences, XX them out, try again, XX everything out, and then feel despair and worry settle on my chest like an x-ray apron” (95).

This reading is important for not only my paper, but it also helps me understand that writing is not a natural talent. In fact, even someone, like Lamott, with years of experiences has the same struggles when it comes to writing that I do as a college freshman.

**Note:** In the sample annotation above, the writer includes three paragraphs: a summary, an analysis of the text, and a reflection on its applicability to their own research, respectively.

* The first paragraph is summary.
* The second paragraph is analysis.
* The third paragraph is how will it help my project.