Reflection Essay

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Reflection Essay

Over the last semester we have been told to write three major assignments. These assignments were a summary, analysis, and synthesis. For our first two assignments we were given a list of options to use for our papers. As for the synthesis we were able to use our own sources to make a paper that we could relate to. I feel that for each of these assignments I improved on many different writing skills. These skills would include signal phrasing, correct citation, not being opinionated, getting my word count higher, and focusing on rhetorical strategies.

For my summary analysis, I used the article “Shein in the World’s Most Popular Fashion Brand – at a Huge Cost to Us All” by Astha Rajvanshi, which talked about the company Shein and its effect on people. For this essay I was really bad at being opinionated because I have used this shopping app before and have done my own research on how Shein affects different people. I would also add in the different ways that Shein has used different social medias to help brand themselves with different influencers when that wasn’t mentioned in the article. My other big problem for this essay was not using signal phrases enough. I only used it a couple of this in my draft, while I should have been citing the authors sources on what I was summarizing. Here is an example from my summary:

*When doing mass production the consumption of oil equals the amount of CO2 produced from 180 coal-fired power plants. They release around 6.3 million tons of carbon dioxide. While many people dislike Shein's CO2 production, they do have a goal to reduce their supply chain emissions by 25 percent by 2030.*

What I did wrong was not citing and using direct information from the article without using signal phrases. Although I did fix it in my final paper:

*According to Synthetics Anonymous 2.0, they reported “the manufacturers rapid use of virgin polyester and large consumption of oil churns out the same amount of CO2 as approximately 180 coal-fired power plants” (Rajvanshi). They release around 6.3 million tons of carbon dioxide. While many people dislike Shein's CO2 production, they do have a goal to reduce their supply chain emissions by 25 percent by 2030.*

As you can see, I used correct citation and more quotes from the article to help my point in the article.

As for my rhetorical analysis, I used the article ‘Blending sports with education is the secret to America’s economic success’ by Christopher Ramsey. In this article, I was having a hard time understanding what a rhetorical analysis was. I had heard about rhetorical strategies, but I never quite understood what exactly they were and how to find them. After I had my conference with my teacher it was all much clearer on what the assignment was. I was able to set up my paper by starting with the purpose of the article, then moving on to the evidence, audience, and then ending with the stance. Here is an example of how I found the purpose of the author’s article:

*One of these details would include bringing up collegiate sports and how it helps athletes develop skills such as discipline, perseverance, communication, and how to be competitive. He continues to describe how these skills are important to have in the business industry and how it’s a fundamental skill. Another purpose he brings up about sports is that it provides diversity since its main idea is performance in the game.*

I also used examples of ethos, pathos, and logos to help see how the writer was interacting and persuading his readers. Here is an example from my analysis of me describing how Ramsey interacted with his audience.

*Lastly it could also be used as a tool for persuasion for people who believe that sports bring no extra qualities to students in school as it is written out with many different ethos, logos, and pathos strategies. For ethos, Ramsey is credible because he was a water polo player and can vouch for the different skills it gave him. As for logos, he brings in statistics on how intercollegiate sports has benefited America’s economy.*

For my synthesis paper I was able to use my own sources to make a paper. At first, I decided to make my paper strictly about music and how it has affected the economy. Although I wasn’t able to find enough sources to get up to the word count. I then decided to make it mainly about its effects on the economy and how music recording and its audience has changed over the centuries. I did find that I had some sources that I did not cite correctly or thoroughly enough as my peer review told me I needed to fix some timelines and some of my phrasing in my paper. Here is an example of me not being thorough with my timeline:

*Analysts have seen that when digital music started “digital music sales grew from zero to almost $4 billion” (Richter). As more streaming services have come out, musicians can invest in more ways to promote their music with merchandise, tours, concerts, and more.*

As you can see I talked about how digital music sales grew from zero to almost $4 billion” but I was not specific as of what year/years this occurred. This is what I added to help improve my point and be more clear on timelines:

*Now we have music streaming services which not only helps us listen to music that we enjoy, but it also helps artists who want to be discovered. Analysts have seen that when digital music was launched in 2008 “digital music sales grew from zero to almost $4 billion” (Richter). As more streaming services have come out, musicians can invest in more ways to promote their music with merchandise, tours, concerts, and more.*

As you can see, I specified that digital music was launched in 2008 to make it clear. I also added an extra paragraph about how the music recording industry has changed over the years. Lastly, I included the significant changes in sound engineering and how it has progressed into the digital age.

The last semester has taught me many different ways of being a better writer. First it taught me how to be better at signal phrasing. That was my biggest problem in my first assignment, the summary. I wasn’t using signal phrases and I didn’t do correct citation throughout the paper. After fixing those two main problems, they mostly fixed themselves in my next two assignments. After completing the rhetorical analysis I had a better understanding of what rhetorical strategies were and how to find them. Once I completed my final assignment, I realized that I can have a problem with assuming that timeframes are known when I should be explaining them better. After this semester, I would have to say that I am a much better writer than I was before and I have learned much about how to improve my writing skills.

Summary

Revision Notes:

* I was told to use more signal phrasing.
  + I went about making revisions by adding more signal phrases such as, mentioning the article, the writer, or any source that was in the text.
  + I also used more quotes throughout the summary.
  + I also correctly cited my signal phrases.
* Not be opinionated.
  + I went through and made sure all of my comments were strictly from the text and not anything that I know personally about the article.

Shein’s Impact on the Fashion Brand

           In the article “Shein Is the World’s Most Popular Fashion Brand—at a Huge Cost to Us All” by Astha Rajvanshi, talks about Shein and its effect of people. Many different influencers have promoted their followers to buy from Shein with their low prices. However, what some people don’t know is how unstable their working and labor environment is. Shein is a hit with its fashion and low prices but at what cost?

           Rajvanshi talks about how social media has a lot of influencers that support Shein. One influencer that the article mentions is Mèlo, a blogger from Paris. She shows off a sparkly dress that she bought from Shein to ask her followers which one she should wear. Every follower that watched her video, got a 15% discount with their orders. “According to a report compiled by Money.co.uk, Shein has taken over giants like Nike and Adidas as the most-Googled clothing brand, and Zara and Macy’s in online sales” (Rajvanshi). Its main source of marketing is using influencers. These people are made up of celebrities, fashion bloggers, and reality show contestants.

The article continues to talk about it’s success but many different people and countries don't agree with its morals. One of these things that people disagree with is the unsustainable model that they have. According to Synthetics Anonymous 2.0, they reported “the manufacturers rapid use of virgin polyester and large consumption of oil churns out the same amount of CO2 as approximately 180 coal-fired power plants” (Rajvanshi). They release around 6.3 million tons of carbon dioxide. While many people dislike Shein's CO2 production, they do have a goal to reduce their supply chain emissions by 25 percent by 2030. Rajvanshi mentions that the company is starting a Carbon Leadership program, “which benchmarks and assesses carbon impact, and Clean by Design, which will aim to reduce energy, water, and chemical consumption in textile production at more than 500 of Shein’s partner facilities” (Rajvanshi).

The article mentions the boycotts and rallies against the workers unfit working conditions. Reporters that were on the case of Shein’s work environment found that employees were working 75-hour shifts with little time off. “Swiss watchdog Public Eye released another detailed report in November which accused Shein of violating Chinese labor laws”(Rajvanshi). This report led to further investigations on Shein’s manufacturing and packing process where they found that many of the ‘factories’ were set up in residential buildings. They lacked safety protocols such as windows and emergency exits.

Despite all the problems Shein has, it is still a soaring company across the world. Influencers that usually support Shein has been increasingly under criticism for supporting the company. Some influencers are cutting themselves from Shein completely until they change their working conditions. While some people are boycotting Shein because of their poor work environments, it doesn't stop everyone from buying the company's cheap and durable clothing.

The text I have chosen is ‘Shein is the world’s most Popular Fashion Brand’ written by Astha Rajvanshi. The author start by talking about how Shein has been able to use influencers to promote its site. She then goes into detail about how Shein’s track record shows a shocking number of human rights violations as well as environmental sustainability. It then goes into the details of how Shein started and how within a few years it went from a low-cost Chinese apparel to one of the biggest online-only fashion sites. She then goes in depth of how much of a carbon footprint Shein learns per year and it’s up towards 6.3 million tons. While they are below the 45% target to reduce global warming, they still extract quite a bit of carbon. Shein then talks about how they have addressed the concerns of labor. The text then ends with the increase in criticism towards influencers who promote Shein as a product they use often.

Works Cited:

Rajvanshi, Astha, et al. “Shein’s Fast Fashion Domination Comes at a High Cost.” Time, Time, 17 Jan. 2023, time.com/6247732/shein-climate-change-labor-fashion/.

Rhetorical Analysis

Revision Notes:

Higher word count

Focus more on some of the tools he used to convey his message

Add more quotes to help get my word count up

The Secret to America’s Success: Sports in Education

Many people have probably questioned, "Should schools be investing so much in sports?" or "Why don't we put more money into the student's core academics?". The article, 'Blending sports with education is the secret to America's economic success' by Christopher Ramsey (CEO of USA Water Polo), goes over many reasons why sports should have funding. Ramsey is a father of three boys who played in water polo and he goes over the benefits that were shown in his sons while they were in competition season. He goes over how sports help athletes with skills that couldn't be taught as effectively in regular classes. As well as the benefits sports have brought over the years to people of all ethnicities. Sports have tended to support diversity and people with exceeding performance. This article goes over numerous reasons as of why sports should be in education and the benefits it has brought to the economy. This could be the students who are playing, the lessons that are taught while being on a team, or the funding that collegiate sports bring.

As I was reading the article to find out what the purpose was, it gave a lot of details about sports and the benefits of it in education. One of these details would include bringing up collegiate sports and how it helps athletes develop skills such as discipline, perseverance, communication, and how to be competitive. He continues to describe how these skills are important to have in the business industry and how it’s a fundamental skill. Another purpose he brings up about sports is that it provides diversity since its main idea is performance in the game. Another strategy he uses is bringing up business people that were in water polo and how they got their way up to the CEO or leaders of big time companies. “This blend of work ethic, competitive fire, and academic preparation has created a secret sauce in American business which, in my view, is part of the reason American companies have historically outperformed most of our international competitors” (Ramsey). Lastly, he brings up business and what sports does for the economy by bringing up the GDP and the effects sports has had on it. Collegiate sports has had an outstanding performance on the revenue of the economy.

After finding the purpose, I then went to look for the evidence to support the purpose of the article. Ramsey begins his evidence with what famous water polo players have become and some of these things includes leaders of companies such as Nike, McKinsey, Walmart, and other stores. This helps intrigue readers by showing that some people who participated in sports ended up in really high position in several different businesses. He then gets on a more personal level and brings in his children. He talks about how his sons performed better in the classroom during water polo season compared to the periods they weren’t in water polo season. “Surprisingly, the structured season schedule resulted in improved academic performance compared to periods with more discretionary time on their hands”(Ramsey). He then continues with his own experience as a water polo player and how it helped him have better work ethic as well as having the compassion to be competitive.

As I was analyzing the article, it was clear that the audience was for adults who are intrigued with the success factor of sports blending with education. This article is mainly in support of sports being in school because Ramsey has personally had positive outcomes from it as well as his children. He also brings in other views for people who would rather see success and talks about the many different CEOs or business owners that used to play water polo. Another example to who the audience is intended for could also include the readers of *Fortune* magazine. Lastly it could also be used as a tool for persuasion for people who believe that sports bring no extra qualities to students in school as it is written out with many different ethos, logos, and pathos strategies. For ethos, Ramsey is credible because he was a water polo player and can vouch for the different skills it gave him. As for logos, he brings in statistics on how intercollegiate sports has benefited America’s economy.

My stance on this article is that it is very important for sports to be in education. The reason I believe this way is because I have been in sports as well as band and have learned many different core skills that make me successful. When you’re on a team, you have to learn how to collaborate with others, work ethic, discipline, and other similar skills. I have also learned how to be passionate and hard working towards a common goals among my peers. Usually in core classes, you are focused on your own self growth with occasional group projects. However when you’re on a team, everyone has the have the same mindset on what they want. Usually this goal could contain winning competitions, having a good performance, or moving onto the next conference. Many different sports could have different goals, but you have to be on the same understanding to be successful. This skill can easily transfer to being in a workplace or corporate with a common goal among your fellow workers.

In conclusion, Ramsey uses different rhetorical strategies to help with getting his point across in this article. He brings his own experience as well as others to help bring readers empathize to what he was saying. He also uses many different logical reasonings to prove his point that sports in schools help the economy. As you read through the article you can see that Ramsey is very passionate about this subject and wants to convince his readers that sports are meant to be in schools. Sports help build students character and other skills that will be beneficial to them in the future when they’re working.

Works cited:

Ramsey, Christopher. “USA Water Polo CEO: 'Blending sports with education is the secret to America's economic success.’” Fortune, 30 August 2023, <https://fortune.com/2023/08/24/usa-water-polo-ceo-sports-education-secret-america-economic-success-christopher-ramsey/>.

Synthesis

Revision Notes:

More ideas that music is it's own economy.

Connecting the ideas that people are spending money on music so it's apart of the economy.

I need to work on timeframes.

Use other articles to synthesize timelines.

Be more specific about where the economist and analysts are coming from.

How does certain situations in music have an effect on the economy.

Explain what the Eras tour is and what Swifties are

Talk about the how small towns are affected by music tours

Bring up how recording has changed over the years

Bring up how people used to view public concerts

Talk about how handheld devices have helped upcoming music artists

How is the changes in music over the century helping music artists and the economy

Over the last century, music has become more popular than ever and accessible than ever before. As the music industry grows, the investors and fans grow with it. Many people may think that the progression in the music industry doesn’t have an influence on the economy, but statistics have proven otherwise. Music has been progressing in numerous different ways. Some of the ways it has progress includes recording, publicity, accessibility, and more. Not only does it help with the national economy, but it also has a great influence on local economies. For the cities that have been impacted by tours of different singers, there has been a boost in the local businesses. Whether those businesses are in transportation, food, housing, traveling, and merchandise, they have been affected in a way due to the music industry.

As the world has become more digitally driven, music accessibility has improved. Instead of using records in the 1920s we progressed to cassette tapes and CDs, which eventually was developed to digital downloads. “Between 2001 and 2010, physical music sales declined by more than 60 percent” (Richter).We are now in the time of easily accessible music. Now we have music streaming services which not only helps us listen to music that we enjoy, but it also helps artists who want to be discovered. Analysts have seen that when digital music was launched in 2008 “digital music sales grew from zero to almost $4 billion” (Richter). As more streaming services have come out, musicians can invest in more ways to promote their music with merchandise, tours, concerts, and more.

As musicians have become more digitally driven there has also been affects on the recording side of the industry. The original way to record music was by etching “cutting an image into a plate and then printing it affects what can be depicted and how we see it”( Fox, Christopher). They also had the inconvenience of only have a certain amount of songs on the records. The reason for this is that the gramophone needle could only go from the narrow gap between the edge of the record until the maker’s label in the middle. “For the first 50 years of the recording era the manufactured cylinder or disc was a duplicate of a live performance. As the musicians played, the disturbances they created in the air were caught by a horn, later a microphone, and etched into a groove” (Fox, Christopher).

There also has been a significant change in sound engineering and it continues to progress as it has been transitioning into the digital age. Around 1877 was when the first recording devices were made. These devices were “conical shapes were made from some solid substance such as wood, and the air that collected the sound forced its way to the smaller end of the cone.  The air pressure would move a mechanical device (needle). This might be familiar to people who have record players” (Rothstein, A). As the years continued into the Electrical Era the sound record labels started to be more proficient with their use money towards equipment. They bought materials from Western Electric which made it possible to hear tones clearly and the microphone was able to capture singers voice or other noises. The electronic transmission made it possible to be able to record multiple sounds and then etched into a record. Then the digital era came around, starting with Sony. “Sony figured out how to save music files on discs read by a laser light. These discs very small compared to records. The compact disc was not an instant success, but it eventually replaced tapes and records” (Rothstein, A).

As famous artist tour across the nation, their many fans tend to follow them. Economists have taken notice that as artist are touring the country inflation happens in the hotel industry. For example, “Beyonce’s tour contributed to an upswing in hotel prices that left the monthly inflation rate 0.2 percent higher than expected”(Carlo). The other big artist this year is Taylor Swift and the revenue it has brought, “a projected gross of $2.2 billion in North American ticket sales alone, and hundreds of millions of streams, reaching a nearly 90% spike in those listening to her music catalog in the weeks after the tour kicked off” (Kopstein, Espada). Analysts that worked with *Time* magazine have found that since the tour came out post-pandemic that numerous fans are looking for fun outings. It is assumed that by next March the Eras Tour will likely surpass the $1 billion mark while Swift is touring in net profits. As for consumer spending in the United States, it is assumed to be close to $5 billion.

As for the local economies, it is typical that “every $100 spent on live performances generates an estimated $300 in local spending on things like hotels, food and transportation.”( Kopstein, Espada). Although Swifties have taken this average spending to the next level with costumes, merchandise, food, and transportation. This has boosted local economies by hundreds of millions of dollars at each concert. With a vibrant music economy, cities can thrive. For example, “it fuels job creation, economic growth, tourism development and artistic growth, and strengthens a city’s brand. A strong music community also attracts highly skilled young workers in all sectors for whom quality of life is a priority” (Terrill, Jacob).

As the world has progressed into the digital age, music has also transitioned along the way. The boost in digital music as well as the improvements from recording has helped the music industry. As the music industry has progressed it has also benefited the economy with subscriptions to digital music, providing better audio for concerts, helping local economies with the surplus of consumers, as well as helping upcoming artist with being able to share their music digitally.

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Notes:

Throughout this course I found my main challenge to be that I was not good at citations nor signal phrasing. In the summary that was my main problem. I had to learnt that I needed to use a signal phrase almost every time that I referred to the assignment in any sort of way. I also found that I couldn't use my opinion in any sort of way in a summary. For me I thought that summarizing was paraphrasing in your own words and using your own opinions, but I learned that it is nothing like that after this course. As for my rhetorical analysis I didn't understand what rhetorical strategies were until I had a conference with [my professor], and we discussed in-depth what the rhetorical strategies were as well as how I should go about writing my paper. For the synthesis I didn't have enough information to meet the required word count. It was originally about how music has affected the economy, but once I found that there were not enough sites to help me have enough information to write a 1000-word paper over. I decided to also add how the music industry has changed. This included that music recording industry as well as the audience.