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Ms. Garrett
April 19, 2016
Writing Reflective Essay

What I've learned

This year, I have greatly improved my writing. When I rewrote my essay, narrative, and poem, I saw how much I have learned and how much better my writing can be if I use what I learned this year.

One of my strengths in writing is excellent grammar and spelling. Another is being able to get out what I am trying to say, quickly and clearly. My main weakness is not rewriting as much as I should. For example, I feel that after I finished writing my good teacher essay, I should have re-read it through more than once.

Since the beginning of the year, I have learned how strong verbs can improve my writing. I have also learned how concrete language helps communicate meaning, as well as making my writing more interesting to read. For example, in my "The Result" poem, one of the original lines said "Where many people are poor." I changed that to "[Where many kids] live in huts made of Dole banana boxes." The revised line is far less boring to read than the first line. Another thing that I learned is how to show a character, instead of just telling about that character. In my Home Narrative, I showed the way the character Matt walked, instead of telling about him, and that way the reader was able to infer his personality.

Even though my writing is much better than it was earlier this year, I still need to work on using concrete details more. I usually write sentences abstractly, but I need to get used to writing with concrete and specific details regularly. One way I did this was in another part of my "The Result" poem, I changed the line "Where everything is connected" to "Where knowledge spreads like honey bees flying after a curious child." By using concrete details in a simile, the reader is much more engaged. Using concrete details will also make what I am trying to say more clear.

In conclusion, this year I have learned a lot about how to improve my writing. I learned how strong verbs, dialogue, concrete details, and showing instead of telling can greatly improve my writing. I now see how valuable it is to come back to a piece of writing after not seeing it for a while, and revising it. These skills will be especially helpful when I write for the Franklin Post next year.