



Ways of Thinking

Developing A Voice (Writing Portfolio)

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Part 1: The Contemporary Human (Persuasive And Descriptive Writing)

Title: Someone's Screaming Outside

Imagine a room in which everything has a label, furniture does not move, and a single window gives a view to the outside world and a door in which you can choose to leave. However, in this room you are able to go through the motions. The window only gives you a static view. That is how humans lived in the past, with travel being a luxury for the upper class and mostly unnecessary, where the world wasn't connected enough that it didn't matter if you knew who was the current ruler of a foreign country.

The contemporary human's room however can be summarised as a room where windows surround us constantly, where a person's screams can be heard from every each one across the seven continents. Where the choice to interact and perhaps assist those who are screaming outside your home is easier than it has ever been. And yet many cannot, or indeed choose not, to interact outside their comfortable rooms where food is warm and everything is in place. The contemporary human is someone who increasingly sees apathy as the norm.

Humanity's increased connection through technology has long been considered the defining technological breakthrough of our age, and yet it has also shown the least appealing sides of ourselves. Jamie Varon notes that the internet is "a constant exposé into the wrongdoings of the world" (Varon 2025). I have lived through mass killings being filmed, women being kidnapped, proof of political corruption being filmed and documented. I have also seen no actual consequences being given to the preparators of these misdeeds and how that has affected my peers. No generation unto now has had such a front seat to the corruption of the world and the lengths in which they protect those in power.

The COVID-19 epidemic has added more fuel to the fire as the isolation of lockdown has proved to be universally mentally across the globe (Ferwana & Varshney 2024). Time reporter Lilly Rothman writes extensively on how the effect of lockdown has negatively impacted how the individual sees the world saying "We all have our own problems to think about, and sometimes it feels like that's all there's ever time for" (Rothman, 2022). In other words, the author is saying that humanity as it is currently is too busy dealing with personal issues and crises that the individual has no time left over to have compassion for their fellow man. This is relevant to the world today due to how due to an increase of apathy, less people are willing to move away from their personal bubbles in fact, choosing to bolt themselves in our rooms.

This is happening now, it is most likely happening to you. You go to your laptop. You sit in your chair. The screams outside your windows do not get quieter. You get your headphones and turn up the volume and slowly feel the screams pitter out. You recline in your chair and relax.

The screams are still lingering.

WORD COUNT: 500 Words



2/ Problem solving: Convergent thinking and Expository writing

Existentialism can be considered one of the defining philosophies of the ages, as for as long as man has been able to think, the question of your role in society as well as the meaning of our existence has been long debated and argued with one another. It is thus something that is still relevant to the contemporary human today. Two philosophers known for their lasting effects on the subject are the German Philosopher Nietzsche and the French Philosopher Sartre.

As stated previously it should be noted historically, these philosophers are known to more or less have similar view points in relation to the topic of existentialism with Sartre being speculated to have Nietzsche as a large influence in his works (Martone, 2014). The most standout in terms of philosophical conflict between these two individuals in terms of philosophy would be their personal opinions of free will or the idea of fate and how fate relates to man in their personal lives. Nietzsche was known to believe in 'amor fati' or the eternal recurrence-in other words he was known to believe that it is futile for man to make his own destiny, and that the idea of free will in itself is an illusions as he was a great believer in the

idea of destiny (Solomon, 2002). The use of the word ‘amor fati’ latin for love of fate can be seen as Nietzsche loving existence in itself and seeing the and accepting the reality around him as the ideal existentialist viewpoint in which his students should follow. Some have argued that he was in fact a fatalist in his ideas (Campbell 2022) which may have lead to conflict with Sartre if there was ever a chance of them meeting one another.

Sartre was known to have advocated his entire philosophical career on a person’s individual ability to choose, or in other words making their own fate. A proponent on the idea of “radical freedom” he rejoiced in humanity’s ability to make choices and thus their own destiny, using this reasoning to defend existentialism against those who thought the philosophy was inherently one in which the individual is being taught to be resigned with their place in life. (Goldhill, 2018) He may have agreed to the Nietzsche ideas of accepting reality; but only because he thinks that humanity has the inherent ability to make one’s own reality.

Ultimately, these philosophers both come from a place of wanting to help humanity find direction in the chaotic world around us, as well as to help us find a deeper understanding of reality in itself. Does fate exist in actuality? The concept of fate in the way in which we know it does not have a true concise answer. If the answer does exist however perhaps it is something that we as a race cannot personally fathom. However, using what we have learned from these two philosophers we can use these ideas to get as close to an answer as it is possible.

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3/ Who am I? Lateral thinking and narrative writing

Gathering my thoughts

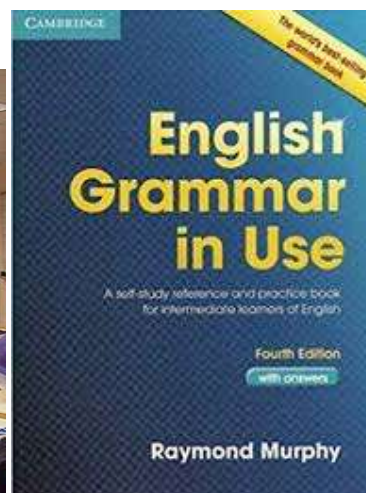
The quote “I Think therefore I Am” by the philosopher René Descartes (Descartes 1937) has always interested me. The philosopher means here that those who think are human, or that a person is categorised by their ability for higher thought, thus you cannot doubt yourself as a

person capable of higher thought because thought itself is a higher form of thinking. As a student who had to suffer through two semesters of philosophy classes, I think of it now as this; a person is a group of thoughts tied together trying to get by. To think is to know, to know is to be human. Who am I then, as a person who at times cannot clearly remember her thoughts and is still learning who she is? It is clear to me that the concept of 'who I am' is someone going through a constant state of identifying oneself.

The internet, has been my loyal companion in that journey. I do not remember a time before the internet, by the time I was a child in the 2000's it was unthinkable for me to not be on the internet (Verma 2021). I grew up learning English in Malaysia, for my father is an Anglophile. It was natural for me to learn it and to breathe it, to devour English books with glee. It had also made me frankly a terrible conversationalist and a frustrated child unable to read most of the road signs around the nice suburban area I lived in. The internet was the gateway for me to have an outlet, stimulation and for a chance to even try to speak to someone who understood me.

I know that I was not entirely beneficial for me however. I lack certain social skills that ultimately make me more anxious as a person (Blue 2017). Thus I am easy to influence. I do not wear that as a badge of honour nor do I think it is something to be ashamed about, it's just a fact about myself that I have to work around. When reading something I get pulled in before reading it again and noticing incorrect facts, when I see an advert playing on YouTube I immediately want to buy a product. It can be at times amusing in retrospect to see myself, more or less an internet veteran, sometimes still get pulled into crocodile tears and sad music. Positively I like to spin that as someone who is trusting. Someone who will give you the benefit of the doubt and not get too angry at mistakes. Perhaps that is passive, perhaps projecting myself onto a quote that for better or worse just says I'm a human is not the healthiest way of identity exploration for an individual. Perhaps my opinions are momentary lapses of judgments that I focused on instead of actually starting to explore myself. No matter what the future me will think, I hope to look back at these thoughts as experiences that made me who I am.

WORD COUNT: 500 Words



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