

Title: Portfolio of Writing

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BA course title: Graphic Design

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Word Count:

Task 1: Semiotic Analysis – 515 words

Task 2: Manifesto – 502 words

Task 3: Practice-based Writing – 522 words

For this assessment, I confirm that I have not used Generative AI to support me in structuring my submission, including creating a draft argument structure, identifying parts and headings. I confirm that I have not used Generative AI to create text for my submission. I confirm that I have not used Generative AI for creative materials, such as images.

Task One: Semiotic Analysis

Semiotics is considered the study of signs and how we can make meaning from them. As Daniel Chandler once said, “It can take any form – a word, an image, a sound, an odour, a flavour, an action, an event, an object, or whatever. Anything has the potential to be interpretable, but nothing has an intrinsic meaning; for human beings, something becomes a sign when it is interpreted as signifying something.” (Chandler, 2022, p. 16) suggesting that even the simplest graphics may carry layered messages if we investigate it deeper. Using my knowledge of semiotics, I aim to de-code how its colours, imagery help shape both its intended message and the meanings audiences form from it.



Fig. 1, (Unknown Artist, 2008, *Jokerized Poster*)

The Dark Knight is a popular superhero movie from 2008 directed by Christopher Nolan. It is based on the famous DC Comics character, the Batman, Christian Bale is embodying the role on this poster.

When the audience first looks at the poster they can get an uneasy feeling, an understanding of what to expect from the movie. The title itself, "The Dark Knight", can straight away give off a conflicting image of who this character might be. At first, he was presented as a typical comic book hero, but later the nickname began to show off his shift into a flawed hero who fights crime. (Matthew, 2025)

Taking a closer look at the poster, you can see that the image of Batman is put together by Joker cards. It feels a bit ironic because the two characters are the opposite of each other, the hero and the villain, yet as it is said in the movie by the Joker: they complete each other and one couldn't live without the other (London, 2021). The cards taking on Batman's form could reflect the idea that the Joker helped shape him into who he is now.

As said by Parmentier, "Signification would not exist without the sign." (Parmentier, 2016, p. 43), we can easily decode other elements of the graphic. The blood splattered across the visual could symbolise the bloodshed that occurs in the film. The bloody smile across Batman's face in contrast can be taken as a mocking gesture from the Joker. The bat symbol across his chest made of "ha..ha.." could be seen as a joke. The carved words on the poster, the Joker's thoughts, could also give the viewer a sense of fear and it can show the violence that is seen in the film. The scalpel, which may be viewed as a tool in arts, in the poster it gives off a more sinister mood, and instead of viewing it as an appliance it seems more like a weapon

in this setting. Overall, the poster, even with the colours gives of a gritty, uneasy feel to the audience without needing to take a closer look.

Analysing the poster through a semiotic lens revealed layers of meaning I hadn't noticed at first. At first, I just thought it looked 'cool' but now I can see the deeper meanings behind such simple design choices.

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Task Two: Manifesto

1. Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them.
2. You get what you give.
3. Growing old is mandatory; growing up is optional.
4. Imagination is more important than knowledge.
5. Be kind for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.
6. Don't you ever let a soul in the world tell you that you can't be exactly who you are.
7. Have no fear of perfection, you'll never reach it.
8. The only way to do great work is to love what you do.

1. Don't you ever let a soul in the world tell you that you can't be exactly who you are.



Fig 1, (Barbara Alper, 2022, Marsha P. Johnson at 1982 Pride March)

In today's world everyone aims to be a version of themselves that is accepted by society, often making people hide away their true self. Like Emerson said, "To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment." (Emerson, 1841) it is important to stay true to yourself,

and it is a powerful reminder of the importance of self-acceptance and individuality. In a world where judgement, comparison, and criticism are very common, staying true to yourself can feel challenging but it's also essential for true happiness. This sentence emphasizes that no one should have a say in your identity, dreams or your worth. It suggests that personal authenticity is vital even if people doubt or dislike who you really are. Overall, the statement shows the significance of identity, confidence and self-respect. You should never change to fit into the Mold of society and always express your authentic self and that you create your own conditions to your life.

2. Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them.

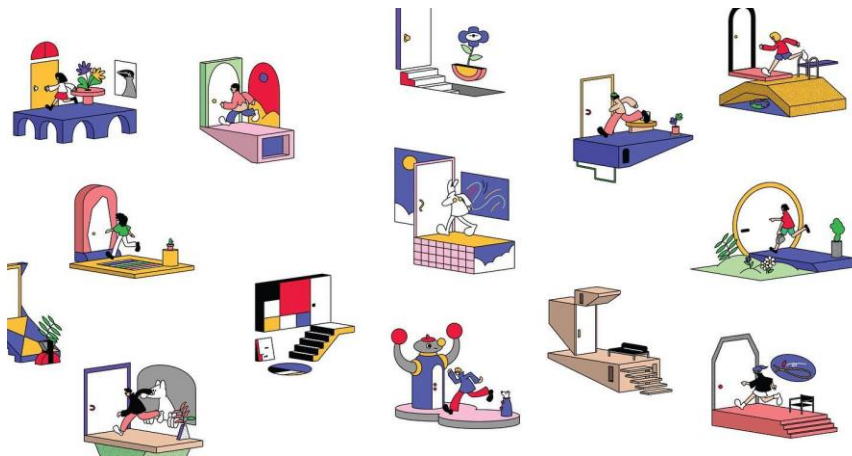


Fig 2, (Bloody Hell Big Head, 2022, Portal)

This statement emphasizes the importance of getting up and starting the goal you wish to achieve rather than relying on luck and the odds to be in your favour. It encourages an active approach to life, reminding us that we should not wait around for the “right moment” and instead create our own chances through hard work and determination. It suggests that opportunities are not always handed to us, “Fortune

does favour the bold, and you'll never know what you're capable of if you don't try.” (Sandberg, 2013). Ultimately it inspires us to be proactive, to not sit around, and instead to create our own opportunities for our goals. This mindset allows us to remember that even if the path ahead is uncertain, it is worth it to get up and start it on our own. By choosing to act rather than wait, we can give ourselves the best chance of turning our goals and ambitions into reality.

3. Have no fear of perfection, you'll never reach it.



Fig 3, (Amelie Satzger, 2015, Fragile Sky)

There's this pressure today where everyone is striving to be perfect, however there is no such thing as perfection. It is an impossible goal to reach and understanding that can be freeing. As John Wooden states “Perfection is what you are striving for, but perfection is an impossibility. However, striving for perfection is not an impossibility. Do the best you can under the conditions that exist. That is what counts.” (Wooden, 1997). There is a beauty of having flaws as it makes everyone different from each other. By releasing the pressure to be perfect, we can become more creative, open-

mindful, and expressive. Embracing our imperfections can lead to a more genuine achievement and personal growth. Even if we fail and make mistakes, we can learn from it and push harder. Accepting that true perfection is unreachable it can encourage a much healthier mindset towards achieving our goals and work. Once we let go of the unrealistic expectations of society we may become more open to try different and new things, ultimately gaining a newfound confidence in our abilities.

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Sandberg, S. (2013) *Lean in*, WH Allen.

Wooden, J. (1997) *Wooden: A Lifetime of Observations and Reflections on and Off the Court*, McGraw Hill.

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Figure 2: Bloody Hell Big Head (2022) *Portal*. Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CYYbCADPTAb/?igsh=ank5Y2h5aWJweWww> (Accessed at: 7th December 2025)

Figure 3: Amelie Satzger (2015) *Fragile Sky*. Available at: <https://www.ameliesatzger.com/series/visual-diary> (Accessed at: 8th December 2025)

Task Three: Practice-based Writing

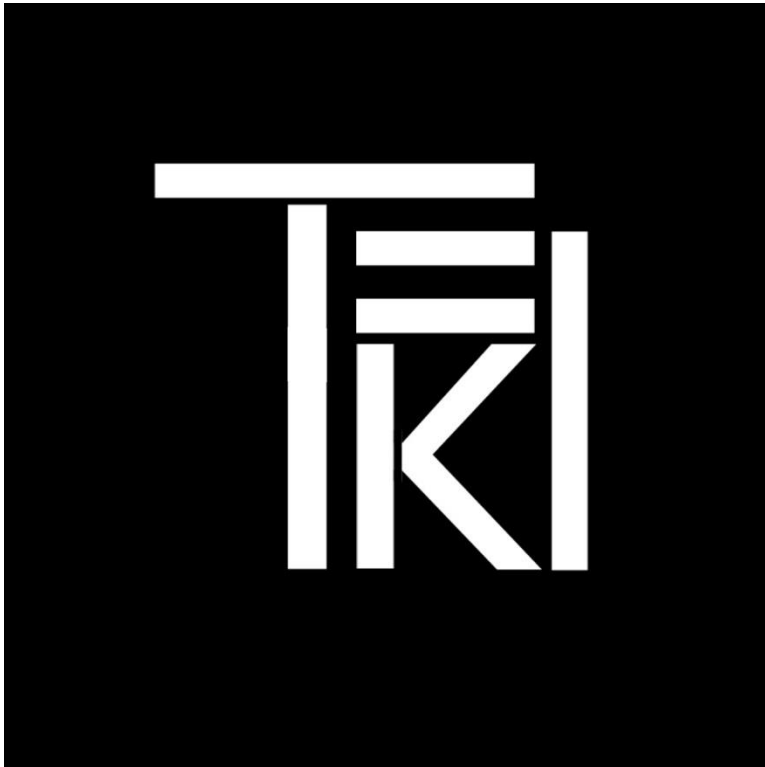


Fig 1, (*School Logo*, own image, 2024)

I remember starting this logo back in November of 2023. My school announced a competition that anyone could join, the aim was to design a new logo for them as the principle wished to rebrand. This was probably the first ever logo I designed with nothing else just my iPad and procreate since I didn't have any prior access to professional design softwares or had any art classes in two years. It was my first time experiencing what it might be like working as a graphic designer since I had to go back and forth with my school board and change the logo according to their wishes, by the end this was the finished result.

"You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated.' When you encounter defeats, you find out who you are, what you can rise up from." (Maya Angelou, 1998)

In the end I came in second and a professional designers final logo came first and is still being used to this day. I was and am still very proud that I managed to get that far when before that I had never done anything like it. It gave me the opportunity to get a taste of what it might be like in the future as a designer. It also showed me that stepping out of my comfort zone can lead to such 'big' accomplishments. This experience still keeps me motivated to keep going into achieving my goals and to pursue new knowledge and skills.

"Reflective practice has benefits in increasing self-awareness, a key element of emotional intelligence." (Candy, 2020, p. 251). When I made this logo, I didn't really take into consideration what my school was really being advertised as, I just had the fact that I wished to make it look 'cool'. Looking back on it I can tell that it is lacking a sort of warmth, friendliness from it as my school was known for being the smallest in town but had the best intention of the students in heart. My teachers and the principle loved my sleek, modern design but now I can see why it wasn't chosen at that time. If I could change anything on it now, I would take the time to understand who and what I am designing for and with everything I have learned since then I could probably come up with a much better design. As William Edward Hickson once said: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again." (1836)

As Vincent Van Gogh said: "As practice makes perfect, I cannot but make progress; each drawing one makes, each study one paints, is a step forward." (1883), I feel that this logo was a big step forward in my goal to become a graphic designer even

though at the time it might've felt a bit like a failure. Reflecting on this work of mine helps me realise that I have come a long way and it's okay to not make something as perfect as I wanted to and that all these steps are just progress into helping me become as great as I can be.

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