

FROM LYRICS TO SENTENCES

Instructor: Jennifer Johnson

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Having to translate from one genre to another is a difficult task all on its own, but having to change from one audience to a completely different group of people is a bit more difficult. For my project, I decided to take the song “Pretty Hurts” by Beyoncé and make it into a children’s book. I figured the message behind the song, which is to love yourself regardless of what others say, would be easily translated into a children’s book, because the topic of the song can be expressed to children. I also took into consideration that the topic of self-love is not talked about much with children until they get older, and sometimes it is already too late. In order to change the song into a children’s book, I looked closely at the lyrics, the message it is communicating to its audience, and the language it uses.

One way in which I translated the song into a children’s book was by looking at the most important lyrics, which were the most repetitive, and I then tried to make them appear in several different pages of the story. Most songs have a few seconds of lyrics, which I would consider the “rising action” of a song, and then they get to the climax, which is usually what we call the chorus. The climax is repeated several times in a song, and in a children’s book, the main focus is also repetitive throughout the story. In a song, the audience is always looking forward to the chorus, because those lyrics are usually the most known out of the entire song. Whereas in a children’s book, kids are also looking forward to reading the same line again, because they become familiar with it after reading it several times.

The song uses lyrics to communicate the message it is trying to get across to its audience, and a children’s book uses clear sentences to facilitate the understanding of the story for kids.

The song's message is not directly told, but the audience that it is intended for will be able to understand the lyrics and find the meaning of the song. For example, there is a line in "Pretty Hurts" that says, "It's the soul that needs a surgery." If an adult would hear the song, they would know what Beyoncé means by this line, even though she does not directly say it; instead she uses this metaphor. A children's book, on the other hand, is very straight forward and does not use language that will confuse the reader. For example, in the book I wrote "Nobody should ask you to change for them, because you are pretty just the way you are." Anybody who can read is able to understand what I am saying in that sentence. The message is easily understood, because I do not use difficult words to confuse the reader.

A very distinct difference between the song "Pretty Hurts" and the children's story is the language used. The song, like much of Beyoncé's music, uses words that would not be appropriate for kids. However, since it is a song that is intended for a much older audience, it is okay for the song to use this kind of language. For example, there is a line that says "Blonder hair, flat chest, Vogue says, thinner is better." Obviously a children's book is not going to mention breasts and how being thin is good, so I decided to exclude that from the book. By eliminating this, the book is more age appropriate and eliminates the possibility of giving children the wrong message. I also took the ambiguous lyrics and made them clear in the book, when I felt they were necessary to include. For example, in the song there is a line that says, "The pain's inside and nobody frees you from your body." I changed the words and made it into a sentence that children would be able to understand. In a song, it is okay to be vague, but in a children's book, everything needs to be clear in order for the intended audience to know what the book is talking about.

The readings from Writing 2 helped me understand the different ways in which different genres communicate. One of the readings is Scott McCloud's comic "Writing with Picture". McCloud's work helped me translate a song to a children's book because it explained to me how to write in a clear and concise way (2013). In McCloud's work, he also talks about how to choose what information to include in a piece, which helped me pick out the lyrics that seemed most important (2013). Since comics only use the most important information, it made it easy for me to write my children's book using this advice, since they are both similar in the information they use.

Another reading which helped me plan out how I was going to translate "Pretty Hurts" into a book was Shelly Reid's "Ten Ways to think about Writing." This article explained to me how to keep the audience engaged, because after identifying the audience it is easy to bore them. I applied this idea to my children's book by being repetitive with the main point and by doing so, kids are able to see the pattern that occurs in the book and engage in the story, as if it were the first time they had read the repetitive line. Another thing this article taught me was to balance examples, which I tried to do in the book, from the few examples I found in the song. These examples were all very similar, so when I wrote the book I had to rephrase them, since the song did this same thing.

One of the challenges of changing from one genre to another was the different audience I had to write for. I had to leave out a lot of information because there was no way to translate it in a way where kids could understand and the information was not really important. For example, I left out the translation for the line "just another stage, pageant the pain away." This was unnecessary because it did not really flow with the rest of the book or the audience I was writing it for. I also left out some parts of the chorus, because the language was a bit confusing to try and


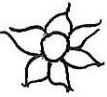
make into something less complicated for children to understand. Throughout the entire song we get the same message, but there were some lyrics that were vague so I chose not to include them.

Translating a song into a children's book required me to omit a lot of information that this age group would not understand and also add information that would make the book clear for kids, while still keeping the message of the song. I think the most important part of making a translation from one genre to another is knowing who your new audience is and knowing what is and what is not appropriate for them. The translation will easily come after identifying your audience and it will be much easier to know what details are appropriate to include in the new genre.

Works Cited

- McCloud, Scott. "Writing with Pictures." *Writing 2 Reader*. UCSB: Alternative Digital Printing, 2013. 8-37. Print.
- Reid, Shelley E. "Ten Ways to Think About Writing: Metaphoric Meaning for College Writing Student." *Writing 2 Reader*. UCSB; Alternative Digital Printing.

Everyone Is Pretty

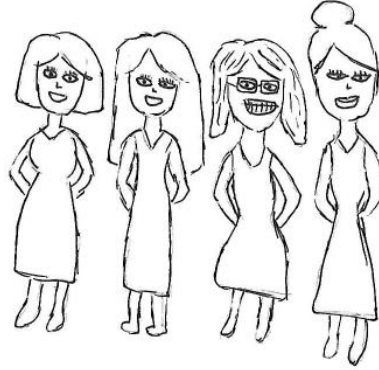
"you're 
 Beautiful"



By: Cecilia Ramos

It is okay to be a different shape from your friends.

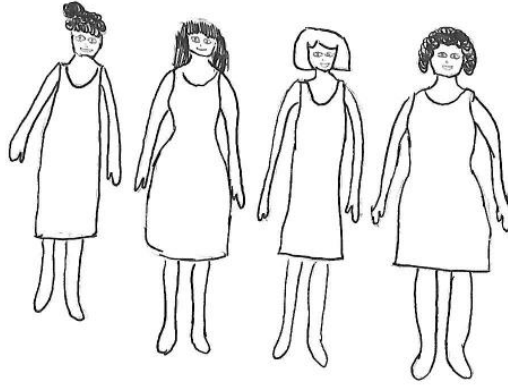
Everyone is pretty in their own way.



Everyone wants to look the same, but for what?

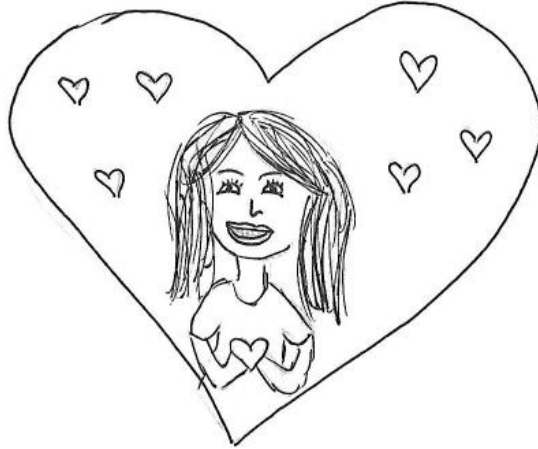
There is no such thing as a perfect body.

You are pretty just the way you are.



Make sure you love yourself and the way you look.

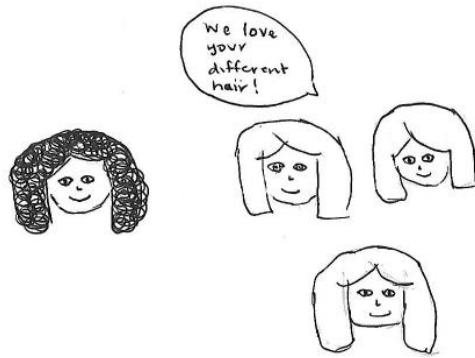
If you love yourself, then others will too.



Changing yourself for somebody is not going to make you happy.

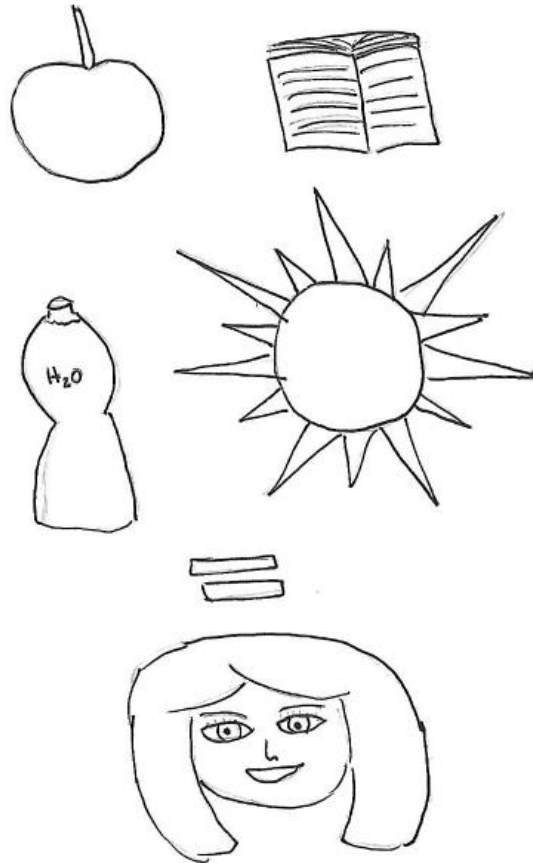
Make sure that you only change if you want it.

Do not change for others. You are pretty just the way you are.



Changing yourself will only hurt you, and you do not want to hurt yourself.

You are a very important person, and you should take care of yourself and your body.



People will tell you good things and bad things about your body, but do not listen to the bad things.

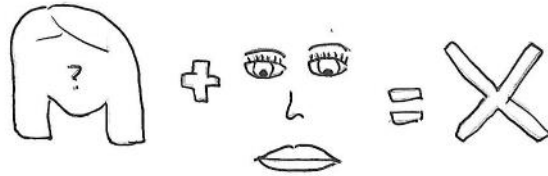
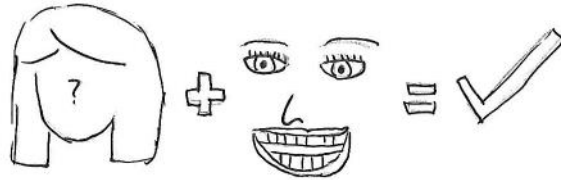
If you feel good about yourself, then you should not change for others.

Change = ☹️

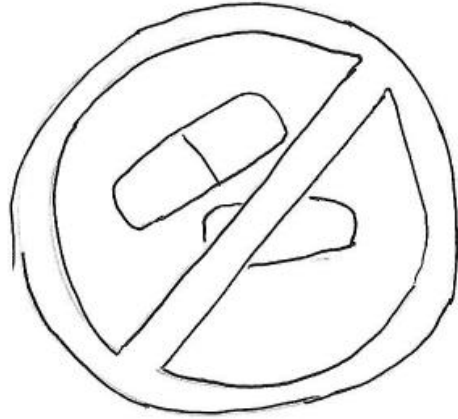


You should only do what makes you happy and not what others think will make you happy.

You decide how you feel more pretty.

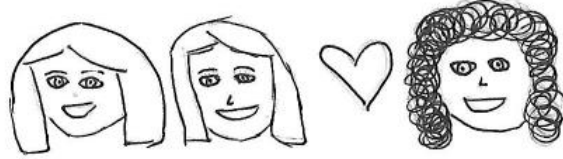


People will tell you about things you can buy that are supposed to make you thinner, but these things are dangerous and you should not take them.



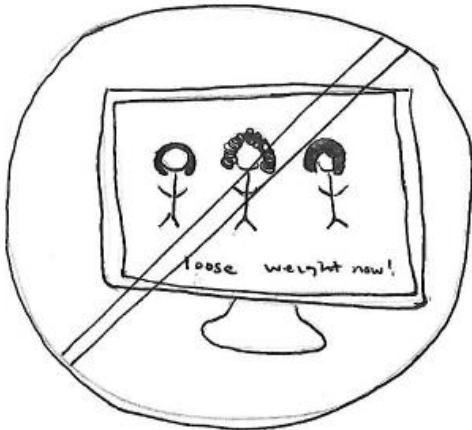
Everyone should like you exactly how you are, and if somebody wants to change you, they are not really your friend.

Nobody should ask you to change for them, because you are pretty just the way you are.



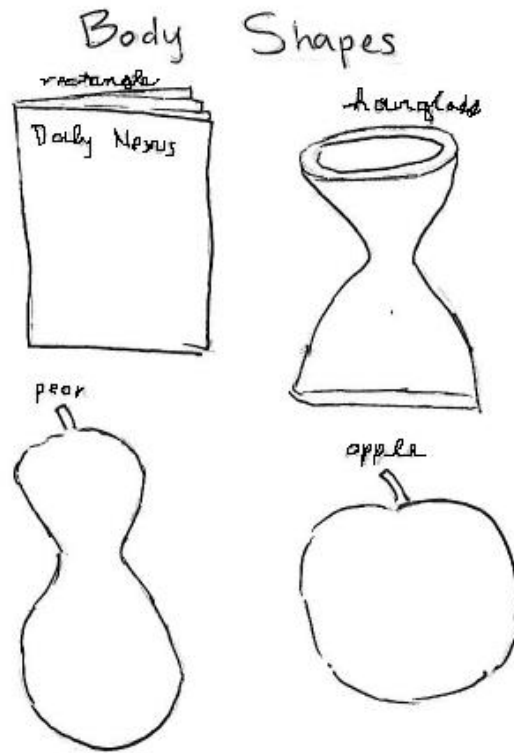
Girls always want to look like models, because they see them on TV and they think they are very pretty.

Models are pretty, but not everyone looks like them and that is okay.

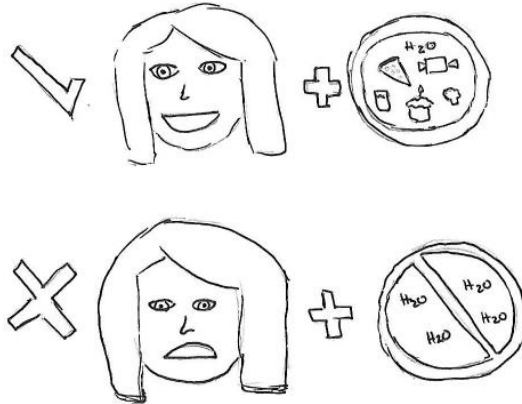


Do not hurt yourself to try to look like a model.

Girls have many different body shapes, and you should be happy with the one you have.

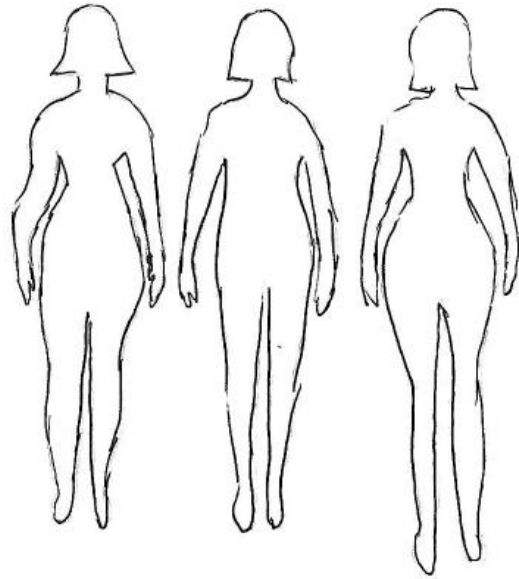


Hurting yourself to look like a model will not make you happy.
People might tell you that you look good, but if you do not feel good
with yourself then it doesn't matter what people think about you.



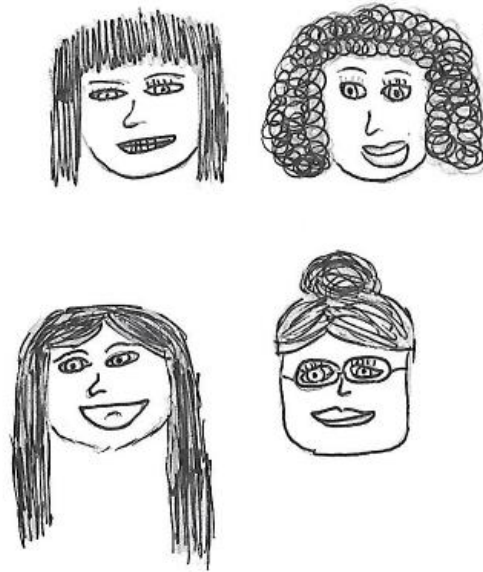
You should be happy with the way you look, and know that it is okay to look different from other girls.

Not everyone is going to look the same and that is alright.



Everyone looks different, but if we all looked the same wouldn't that be weird?

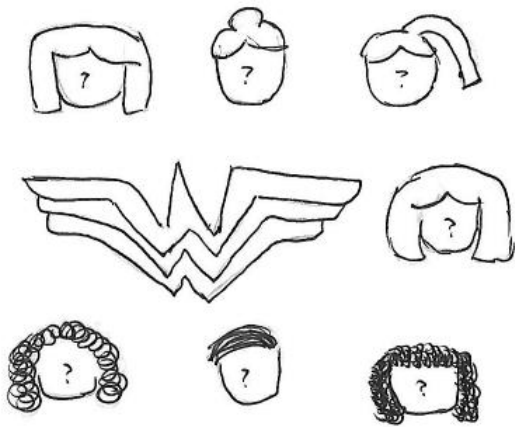
Every girl has differences that make them stand out, and your differences make you a special person.



Be happy with the way your body is and do not change unless you want to.

Remember that you are pretty just the way you are.

Wonder Women



Biography: I am a first year biology student. My plan is to attend medical school after graduating UCSB and hopefully become a pediatrician.