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Pull quote: "While an attractive title may grab reader's attention, a boring title will be ignored and will only be jealous of its lucky peers."

Reflection

When instructed by my teacher to read an article from the book *Starting Lines*, I was immediately drawn to the title "Teardrops" and went on reading the article written by Madelaine Donnell. It was a great article, but I was impressed by the magic of the title, since if the article had a different title, I might not have noticed the article in the first place, and thus might have missed the hidden gem. Later that month, when choosing the topic for my second writing project, the idea of how to make a good title naturally came to my mind. I felt that despite the importance of a good title, few people knew how to make one, possibly due to the underestimation of the importance of a good title. Therefore, I decided to learn more about choosing a good title and share this information with as many people as I can. While reading articles on good titles, I was informed that the standards for a good title are different for various types of essays , so I narrowed my topic down to "how to make a good title for a narrative essay" (John S.). After some thinking, I decided to target people between ages 15 to 25 who would like their narrative essays to reach a wide audience. If they want to reach a wide audience, they probably want a good title, and since they are of a similar age as me, I would know how to write to appeal to them. People at this age may not have enough patience to read a lot of articles, so I chose an animated video as my genre to attract their attention and help them learn.

Since an animated video is very different from genres I am familiar with and comprises several parts, I first made a plan before working on the video. In the plan, I listed key elements of the video—script, illustration, animation and audio—and then prioritized them. The text is inarguably the most important element of the video, as everything else is based on it. I started off

with the text, marked where to show illustrations, and drew pictures according to the mark. I then recorded an audio file for my entire text, and then inserted pictures in my project according to the audio. The last thing I did was add the animation. Animation is surely an important aspect for an animated video, but I wouldn't know the effect until I finished other parts (for example, if my pace for a sentence is slow, I wouldn't add "fade in" as the effect, as it would only emphasize my slow pace).

Writing the text for a video is a very different experience from writing for an essay required by a class. I still need to have good grammar and smooth transitions, but instead of using formal language and fancy words, I tried to teach in a conversational way. I did this not only to match the relaxing nature of an animated video, but also to make myself approachable to my audience. I imagined my audience to be my friends, but unfortunately, they are picky friends who prefer to have a funny and concise conversation. As a result, I tried to keep sentences short and make the topic sound fun to keep the audience's interest.

While trying to hold the attention of my viewers, I didn't forget the purpose of this video: to teach them how to make a good title for a narrative essay and help them memorize key information. To achieve this, I carefully selected what information to include and what to leave out. For example, I didn't mention when to make the title during one's writing process, as this would probably require an explanation of at least 100 words, and I didn't want to overload my audience with too much information. For each point I mentioned, I kept it concise and explained in no more than four sentences. I tried to keep a balance—I divided my text into seven sections, with each section at approximately the same length. Before I did that, one of those sections was longer than the others, but I became bored after reading the long section and the next short section, so I made the change. Furthermore, I added a summary section at the end to reinforce

my audience's memory about key information. I thought of replacing my narration with background music, but Dr. Chenoweth suggested that I read it, as this is what most videos do for their summary part. Her advice makes sense, as my audiences would probably remember better if they looked at the illustration and listened to my narration at the same time, so I instead read the summary part.

Illustration is another key element of an animated video. When drawing, it is important to choose the right number of pictures—enough to represent the most important information, but not so few that it affects the audience's viewing experience (McCloud). The way I took to reach the balance was to watch the draft video from an audience's view - if some pictures distracted me from learning knowledge, I deleted them; if I stared at a single motionless picture for long, I either drew more or added an animation to it to make it vivid (I learned the latter trick from the video "How to STUDY", and the classic animation in this case is "zoom in").

As for each picture, I drew it as simply as possible, not only because it's hard to draw in an elaborate way on an iPad, but also to ensure clarity—that my picture conveys the exact message that I want my audience to know (McCloud). However, drawing in a minimalist way doesn't mean all my pictures are sketched in black. I portrayed some pictures in color while leaving others in black and white to create a contrast. Sometimes I did it due to the scene itself; for example, I drew the image of an article in black and white because an article is an ordinary thing, but for the scene of Chinese New Year, I drew it in color to highlight the festive aura. Other times, I did it to emphasize the key point. For instance, regarding the sentence "Tip 1: name your essay with an object," I wrote the word "object" in yellow and the others in black so that my viewers would remember the main point, "name with object."

Although this is an animated video, I didn't add a lot of animations due to unfamiliarity with this technique. Nevertheless, I still added animations of different types--"zoom in," "fade in," "move right," to name a few—to make my video a lively one. About a month ago, I watched a video about "dog therapy" and wondered whether I could make such an interesting video (Bohney). Now, I am glad that this writing project gave me the chance to explore a new genre, learn new techniques, and make my own video.

<div align="center">Works Cited</div>

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