

ENG 180

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Title: Literacy Narrative

The bell rang, the students quickly took their seats, and Mrs. Willhite began speaking about the upcoming poetry assignment. Little did I know, but this would be the first literacy as a writer experience in my life. Writing letters home while I was fighting two wars was another time where my proficiency increased. Lastly, writing saved my life as I transitioned to civilian life from military service.

I was an interesting student at Sherrard High School. I was always in trouble and could never fully apply myself. While I cannot remember a teacher ever giving up on me, I can certainly remember the amazing teachers I was blessed to have. Mr. Kovac a science teacher was one such example, but Mrs. Willhite, my English teacher, truly stood out as an example of what a teacher should be. She was an amazing albeit stern woman. The class and I were assigned to tap into our personal lives and creativity, then construct a rhyming poem that eqpxg{gf "qwt"j gctw"eqpv'cv'vj cv'r gtlqf "lp"qwt "gctn{ "rxgu"Y j kg"Kdo not have the poem anymore (it was lost quite a long time ago), I do remember how I toiled tirelessly to fully adhere to the assignment and produce extraordinary results. Through this assignment, the tutelage of my teacher, and my own inner ambitions, I planned to create a truly unique artistic creation that pq"qvj gt"eqwf "erck "qt"eqr {tki j vUqo g"qh'vj g'r qgo "gej qgu"lp"o {"j gcf "cu"Kt gecm'kw"uipi " f kwcpv'o go qtkgu"öUcddgf "d{"c"drf g"qh'f ctnguu."eqf "cu"y kvgtu"pki j v ö"Uj qtv."etqr r gf." and disrupted lines of text erupt into my brain. I am slowly remembering! I do hope that

someday the knowledge of that poem will come back to me. On the day that I presented and read aloud my poem, that old English classroom was filled with the sounds of clapping and

ej ggt lpi 0"Uvej "cu'o ct xgn qwu'ur gecveng'k'y cu#"O tu 0'Y knj kg'lo o gf kvgn{ "eqo o gpvgf . "ōKī'k' tgc m{ "f ctm'cv" { qwt "j qwug Aō "Kht gf "tk j v'dcem'y kj "ōQpn{ "y j gp "Kwtp'vj g'iki j wu'qhtō "Ky cu'cpf "

still am a facetious smartass. After class, a friend asked if she could have a copy of the poem that I had wrote, and hinted at what it had meant to her. Times like those make me wish that I could be young again, but the wisdom I have found since then overshadows them, and now I am merely humbled and left content knowing that I was able, in some small semblance and manner,

vq'r qukkgn{ "chgev'uqo gqpg'gnugō'rlg0

Through the rigors of battle, every ounce of my being was tested. My body, spirit, brain, morals, and innocence were all tested. I saw and did things

sparked me to pursue the art of letter writing. It was in this deployment and method that I learned how to use words like an artist uses a paintbrush. My letters were always honest,

j gct vgn. "cpf "qxgt n{ "rcxkj "y kj "tgi ctf u"vq "vj g"j ki j gv"j qr gu"ht "o { "tj xgf "qpgu"dcem"j qo g0"oVq"

situations. In a way, I was learning to live again by finally dealing with my trauma. Later still, I would find the happy moments in those sad times and create positivity.

My literacy as a writer was greatly influenced by a poem written in a high school English class, by writing letters home on deployments, and by writing about my combat experiences. These examples are only part of a truly complex and lengthy path, and my destination as a writer has not yet been reached. I will continue to develop my skills as a writer and someday I will write a book based on my own experiences, successes, and failures, all with the hope of my heartfelt words and most sincere wishes reaching a veteran whose life may be impacted in a profoundly positive and uplifting way. I do not fully understand the power of the words I write, but I can hope that they will be useful and bring peace to someone who has not known it for some time.