

Below-average Writing Model

Writing Process in Action: The Writing Process (Unit 2, pages 94–97)

Assignment: In one or two pages, describe a particular aspect of your personal history or heritage.

My Grandmother

My grandmother tells me stories about growing up on a farm in Texas. These stories show me how much the world has changed since she was a kid.

My grandmother had six sisters. Her oldest sister was nineteen when she was born. She tells me about how she had to get up at six in the morning every day to do chores. Had to help her mother bake bread, make soap and boil wash inside a pot on the stove. Today we have washing machines and we can buy anything we want in the supermarket, including soap and bread.

My grandmother became a singer even though her father didn't want her to. She moved to New York City and got a job as a singer. She showed her father alright. Her father was a cattle rancher. She showed me a picture of him, but he was already old. He was wearing a cowboy hat. Some day Im gonna move to Texas and become a cattle rancher. Cattle rancher's sold cows at cattle auctions in places like Chicago back then. I think this is where my great grandfather went to sell his cattle. My grandmother said sometimes they had a lot of money but sometimes they almost had to go to the poor house, or at least that's what he thought might happen. When this was the case, he would get mad at anyone, yell a lot and not be able to sleep.

My grandmother is almost 90 but she can still drive. She teaches me that its okay to be who you are in life. If somebody don't like it, then its their problem. But she does say never owe more than you can pay.

Summary: *This piece starts out well but loses focus. Except for the second paragraph, the essay doesn't address the main idea—the way in which the grandmother's stories reveal how the world has changed. Grammatical mistakes, imprecise vocabulary, and choppy sentences interfere with the writing. The piece could be improved by the inclusion of more details that support the main idea and by the revision of the conclusion so that it reflects on the main idea.*

The piece might receive a 2 if evaluated by the holistic scoring method. It might receive a 64 if evaluated by the analytic method—22 points for Focus/Organization, 22 points for Elaboration/Support/Style and 20 points for Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics.

Introduces the topic

Includes details that are relevant to the focus, but contains a sentence fragment

Grammatical mistakes, digressions, and unclear pronoun antecedents interfere with the meaning.

Ideas are not presented in an effective order; conclusion seems unrelated to the rest of the essay.