

My personal profile as a reader and writer

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Reading and writing are at the core of every subject area; without a mastery of these all important skills it is difficult, if not nearly impossible, to master the competencies of other areas in the curricula. As a pre-service Language Arts teacher, I view reading and writing as my most important pedagogical skills. As such, it is necessary to establish a profile of myself as both a reader and a writer.

As a reader, I find that the vast majority of my reading is done for Academic's sake rather than necessarily personal interest. I attribute this to the high demands of an equally high quality institution as McGill University. However, in my free time on the winter and summer breaks I enjoy reading non-fiction; my favourite author is Malcolm Gladwell. On occasion during the semester, I will actually opt to read the news online rather than watch it on television. One thing which I am noticing more of as I read on the Internet is the abundance of syntax errors; I find this highly disturbing especially when I find one on the website of a reputable organization such as CTV. When reading, I seldom do so for more than fifteen to twenty minutes at a time; focus is lost and sentences must be re-read lest their meaning is lost. As such, I will normally take breaks after every few chapters and return to my text after engaging in another activity. When I encounter a word which I do not know, I almost never bother to look up the denotation. Instead, I feel satisfied appreciating the word's meaning through its context.

Writing has always come easily to me; I have little trouble sitting down to write for extended periods of time and, as in real life, I am rarely at a loss for words. As a result, my texts can sometimes contain some excess information; it would be useful for me to trim down my thoughts. Yet, I find this can often be accomplished during an editing process. Throughout high

school and CEGEP I have contributed to various student newspapers. This was an opportunity thoroughly enjoyed as it allowed me an outlet to express my thoughts and opinions in a manner which would gain exposure from others. I do not write for any of McGill's papers or journals because, much like my reading habits, the bulk of my writing is to meet academic demands.

When I do write, I consistently express myself at a university level; I do not believe in writing properly for the classroom and throwing my skills out the window the moment I leave. In fact, even my text messages to friends are well-worded and punctuated beyond the use of emoticons.

One may say that I am a bit uptight when it comes to grammar and syntax; my chief pet peeve is when people use "its" and "it's" on an interchangeable basis. The most important aspect of my profile as a writer is my rigorous editing process. It is astonishing how many spelling and syntax errors come out of my first drafts without my realizing. As such, it is necessary that each of my written works undergoes a full and thorough editing process before being shared with other.