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Self-Reflection for Lab Analysis

This past assignment was the first time I have ever written a lab report analysis, although I have written lab reports before, I was now viewing lab reports from a different perspective. The lab reports were sourced from scholarly journals, and contained a substantial amount of academic jargon. It was my duty to interpret all of the information contained in the reports, and develop an analysis of each of them. I was critiquing how well the reports were written compared to each other, and if the content of the labs were helpful in allowing the reader to understand the lab's aim. I analyzed the different sections of all three lab reports together, and I provided evidence to assist my claims of why or why not that particular information from the report was relevant and helpful for the reader.

When I began writing this paper, I wasn't sure how I would approach this topic. Making an outline and conducting peer review sessions were extremely helpful for me. Making an outline allowed me to map out how I would approach the essay, and the format that I would use to write the analysis. I decided that I would compare and contrast each section of each report. The in-class peer review was advantageous for me because it allowed me to look at how my peers approached the assignment, and allow me to examine my own work to see what could be improved. The teacher's notes on the draft also allowed me to recognize what the analysis needed in order to be more effective.

I struggled in many phases of this lab report analysis. One aspect that I received many comments on, was my informal word choice. Throughout the analysis, I struggled to keep the writing formal, as I used the verb “very”, many times throughout the paper. I hadn’t noticed this before, and it caused me to look into more advanced nouns and verbs that I could use to enhance my writing and keep it professional. The feedback from the peer groups also helped me to notice that I had to mention the content of the labs more in my writing. In the draft of my analysis, I did not use enough evidence from the labs to support my claims, and provide context for the reader without having to relate back to the labs. In revising the analysis, I included additional evidence from the actual reports, which allowed the analysis to be less vague, and be more insightful for the audience.

Writing this lab report analysis allowed me to learn many things that I can apply to the rest of my writing in this class, and beyond. The lab report analysis obliged me to read and write from a different perspective; I had to be rational in examining the content of the reports, and I had to critique how well the author’s relayed their information to the audience. The final draft of the lab report analysis could have improved if I wrote from a more rhetorical perspective, and would have included more rhetorical elements such as enhanced language and vocabulary, and how these affect the reader. During the revision process, I included an abundance of evidence and support from the lab reports, and also adapted the language of my writing to make it more formal. Overall, I think I achieved what we set out to do: I wrote an analysis that critiqued the content of the lab reports while using comparison and contraction, using evidence from the reports to support the claims, and was written in a formal matter.