Interviewer: This is *** interviewing ***, and it's January 27th. How do you describe yourself as a writer?

Interviewee: I'd say generally writing isn't super-tough for me, but I usually don't like it much anyway. I prefer writing that's really structured, knowing exactly the kind of things I'm supposed to hit, like writing a psychology lab report, things like that, or structured literary essays where you know you're gonna have your thesis, your arguments, examples, that kind of analysis, that stuff where you know your structure, your layout. I feel like I'm pretty good at that. I'm not a big fan of creative writing. I feel like—I don't know. I don't think I'm uncreative, but when it comes to writing, it's just—it's just not my thing. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: Okay. How would you describe the role of writing in your life?

Interviewee: Primarily just school-related. I don't really like writing for fun.

Interviewer: Okay, great. How would you describe yourself as a writer when you began at the University of Michigan?

Interviewee: Pretty much the same as now. I felt like my high school prepared me really well for [University of Michigan], what was expected of me here. I feel like I just gained even more abilities in the areas that I already felt more comfortable. I never really liked creative writing, and then I never really got into creative writing here kind of thing.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. You still—that kind of structured writing you felt like it was pretty even when you started out and when you left?

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah, I'd say so. Maybe—I don't know. I feel like, particularly with English writing, I feel like I probably—eh, no. I feel like I definitely got better at writing in all of those areas, even though it's mostly the structured realms still. I feel like I definitely got better.

Interviewer: Yeah. In what ways?

Interviewee: In English, I feel like I can write a much more intricate, interesting thesis, things that are more below the surface as opposed to like, "This is how I analyzed this. Let me find a metaphor." That's kind of high school and freshman year or whatever.

Then I definitely learned a lot when I think about writing for the sciences, like for psychology writing, literature reviews, writing lab reports. What are the other things we did? Grant proposals, stuff like that. I didn't really know how to do that before coming to college. I definitely got better at that stuff.

Interviewer: What do you think helped you to get better at those things?

Interviewee: That was probably—I took one class, [Psychology 300 level course], which was like a methods-based lab and also an upper-level writing requirement. It had a full rundown of exactly what's needed in certain kinds of psychological writing, like if you're writing a literature review, you have to break it down this way. These are the things you need to include, this kind of data, this kind of summary. Then same with grant proposal writing: the different sections you need, how to write up data, all that kind of stuff. It really, really gave me a thorough understanding of that in that class.

Then I also worked in a research lab, and that was really helpful for learning how to write literature reviews, cuz I had to do that for real. *[Laughter]* That was good.

Interviewer: Can you talk about that a little bit more?

Interviewee: Sure. I worked in a cognitive science lab on campus, and it was my job to find all of the prior literature, all of it—it took my whole summer—on certain brain structures and their relationship to developmental dyslexia. Then I had to code everything into what difference in those areas caused what kind of difference for dyslexic children, and then figure out how to group different things together, and then write it up in a coherent way to explain the majority of cases where the brain was structured this way had this effect, but some also had this effect, and make sure it actually flowed and everything. *[Chuckle]*

Interviewer: That's great. How did you learn that structure or that grouping that you talked about?

Interviewee: Mostly trial and error. That was a pretty just independent project. I would bring it in to my professor weekly, and he would give me not criticism, but critique it, tell me what I could be doing better, what I should switch around, what I should still be looking for, stuff like that.

Interviewer: That's great. As you graduate, well, now that you are graduated, what are your goals for yourself as a writer?

Interviewee: Let me think. I think I want to learn to like it more, cuz I would actually really love to be an English teacher in the middle school level. I'm going to a program at [University of Michigan], the ELMAC [Elementary Teacher Education] program. Do you know it?

Interviewer: Huh uh.

Interviewee: It's like a master's program to get your master's degree to teach and also your teaching certification, all in one year.

Interviewer: Okay, and it's here at the university?

Interviewee: Yeah, mm-hmm. That'll start in June, and I want to be certified for all of elementary ed, but also middle school English, hopefully. I would really love to teach middle school English. I feel like it's mostly because I love reading and not as much because I love writing. I need to find a way to appreciate writing myself more so I really can get that into my students.

Interviewer: Yeah, definitely. Thinking across your experiences at [University of Michigan], what do you think it means to write well?

Interviewee: I'd say I have a lot of friends who—I don't know. Nobody knows your grades or anything, so I feel like that really has nothing to do with it. That's just a personal inside situation, I guess. I have friends who write for [local Ann Arbor newspaper], friends who write poetry, who do slam poetry, write for magazines. I have a friend who is the co-editor-in-chief of [magazine]. I think people who do those kind of things, and do them well, and are able to help add to really well-respected publications or are able to be, I don't know, just write awesome poetry like that, it makes you a good writer.

Interviewer: Okay. Can you just describe that a little bit more? What's good about that kind of writing?

Interviewee: It makes people feel something. I don't know, it makes people think. I don't know. That's the biggest thing. Things that people actually would want to read and care about reading, something that's insightful and different, interesting, especially bringing up perspectives that not everyone probably sees or thinks about on a regular basis, putting it in a really succinct way.

Interviewer: Okay, great. Which upper-level writing courses have you taken?

Interviewee: I took [Psychology 300 level course]. That might be the only upperlevel writing. No, I took [English 300 level course]. Do you mean upper-level writing as in the requirement, the—

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Okay, just [Psychology 300 level course] then.

Interviewer: Okay, so what were your experiences like in [Psychology 300 level course], the psychology course?

Interviewee: Yeah. That was the one that was primarily like, "This is exactly how you write this kind of psychological piece." It was very broken down. I wrote it in a lot of stages, like, "Today, we're gonna work on just the methods portion of this

write-up." I think that worked really well, cuz a lot of the kinds of writing seemed super-overwhelming cuz they're like 20-page grant proposals with really, really specific language and all that.

We had separate deadlines for everything, which made it a lot more manageable, and helped you learn to actually write each separate section. It makes you realize if you're going to gonna go into that line of work as a psychology researcher, it's not as scary and as like, "I'm writing 60-page things all the time." I can write 'em in pieces.

Interviewer: Great. How would you say that experience affected you as a writer?

Interviewee: It helped me with the literature reviewing thing that I did later in my lab. I don't know. I felt good about it. I did well with it. I don't really know just cuz I don't know when I'm gonna do that kind of writing again in my life. At the time, I wasn't sure if I wanted to go in and get a degree in psychology as opposed to education, but now I'm doing education, so I don't know. *[Chuckle]*

Interviewer: Okay, great. Do you—so you don't still make use of what you learned in that writing course now?

Interviewee: Not really. Maybe just in the sense of generally writing in clear and concise words, cuz that was a big thing in that class. It was literally like, "Cut out all the fluff. Get exactly to the point." I feel like I write that way. I try to write that way generally because, I don't know, I've read a lot of writing where it's just so many details. You just get bogged down, especially if it's a short, to-the-point essay, like an analysis. Something like that, you don't need all the fluff. It's helped me be able to cut down and realize what's actually important to what I'm trying to say.

Interviewer: Great. Were you able to take any writing courses other than that psychology one? Did you take—

Interviewee: None that were specific to writing except for the freshman writing course, I think.

Interviewer: Oh, okay. Yeah. What were your experiences like in that course?

Interviewee: It was a good class. I found that the professor seemed like he was one of those people who likes some people's style and doesn't like others. Luckily, he liked mine. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: What course was it? Was it [English course]?

Interviewee: Yes. Yeah, [English course]. It was a writing-from-personal-experience course, which was interesting for me, since I generally don't like

creative writing. But it wasn't just fully creative because it was based in truth. I don't know. I liked it. It was kind of like the most creative of an outlet I would like to do. It wasn't overwhelming that I had to come up with all these things. I just had to think about different things in my life.

Interviewer: Do you feel you still make use of what you learned in that course?

Interviewee: Yeah, I think I do. I feel I learned a lot about tone in that course. We read a lot of interesting essays that were just on everyday topics, but the tone made them really funny or really interesting. I feel like I try to do that generally in my writing, but who knows if I really do.

Interviewer: Okay, great. Were you able to take any writing courses in education, or did you not study education while you were here?

Interviewee: I did not. I took one ed [education] course. I took—the program I'm doing has all of the requirements that you need in undergrad in order to be able to be certified as a teacher is kind of the deal. I still got my degree in psychology and my minor in community action and social change, and then do ed as a master's.

Interviewer: Okay, but that program doesn't start until June.

Interviewee: Right, mm-hmm.

Interviewer: Okay, so you haven't done any writing for it yet. *[Chuckle]*

Interviewee: No, not yet.

Interviewer: Okay. Your concentration was psychology, you said.

Interviewee: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: Okay, and the [Psychology 300 level course] was the only writing course you took in that concentration.

Interviewee: Yeah. Right, mm-hmm.

Interviewer: Okay, so how confident do you feel about writing in your concentration?

Interviewee: Pretty confident, yeah. Yeah. [Laughter]

Interviewer: Okay, great. Do you feel like that summer internship experience in the lab helped you with that feeling confident?

Interviewee: Definitely in terms of literature review writing. That was pretty much specifically the writing I did as opposed to grant writing, proposal writing, stuff like that. But I still feel pretty comfortable that if I ever did go back to that, that I'd be able to pick it up quickly with a little bit of guidance.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm, great. How often have you used skills or strategies learned in one of those writing classes in your other courses?

Interviewee: Well, like I said, the writing concise and to the point I feel like I use in a lot of other courses, especially courses where you're required to write with a—yeah, there's a maximum you're allowed to write. Being able to figure out, "Okay, this sentence is super-long and fluffy and unnecessary, and I can cut this down. Just be straight to the point about it." I definitely have used that in a lot of courses, and that was totally [Psychology 300 level course].

Interviewer: Can you give an example of a course that you've used it in since then?

Interviewee: My history courses. I've had big, long essays for history classes that they always have an upper limit of how much you're allowed to write. It's hard when you're writing. I think I wrote an essay comparing Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, and there's just so much to say. Being able to figure out, "Okay, I don't need to go on for two pages about Martin Luther King's childhood when it's not really relevant to what the rest of my essay is about. I'm gonna put in like two sentences, bam, and call it good." Same with other psychology courses where you can be much more concise about studies that you're citing by just saying, "The researchers studied this and found this relevant because of this," as opposed to giving a whole, spanning overview of what was happening.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you feel like you have used anything you learned in [English course] in another course?

Interviewee: It's so long ago it's hard to even pinpoint. I know I learned things. I know we had specific things that we learned with each piece of writing, but it's hard to remember now.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. Did you have a minor in history? Is that-

Interviewee: No, I had a minor in community action and social change, but either one or two of those classes—that's a minor that doesn't have any classes that are community action and social change classes. They're all from different departments in the university. One of my history classes was through that because it was the history of American radicalism. It fit with it really well. Then the other history class I took was one of the requirements for the school then. You're supposed to have a general American history course. Interviewer: Okay, great. What was your experience with writing for that minor?

Interviewee: It was kind of fluffy. *[Chuckle]* I don't know. I feel like it's a major class about personal experience—not class, minor that's about personal experience and figuring out how you are going to connect with the community, what you're passionate about. It's much more that you can just write loftily on your thoughts and ideas and what's important to you as opposed to just—it's not as rigid and disciplined as my major was.

I don't think I ever had upper or lower limits on essays. We'd have to be prying that out of the teacher like, "Come on, at least give us a base that's like five to seven pages, or, 'It's supposed to be two pages." Yeah, very different. Much more relaxed. It was basically like as long as you're hitting on the right topics, you'd do well.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you feel like those experiences with writing changed you as a writer?

Interviewee: I don't know. [Laughter]

Interviewer: Not sure. Okay, great. Thinking back over the last two years, what experiences in and out of the classroom have had an effect on your writing? We talked a lot about in-classroom stuff, but maybe some outside the classroom.

Interviewee: I don't know if it would really have an effect on my writing, but when I was in [country] last summer I wrote in a journal. I usually don't do that. That was different. I'm trying to remember everything I did and use a lot of detail and all that, which is usually not the kind of writing—I'm used to just describing, summarizing, not really what I do for any kind of writing usually. That was different.

Interviewer: What were you in [country] for?

Interviewee: A [study abroad trip] through GIU. Yeah, GIU. It's the study abroad center on campus. *[Chuckle]*

Interviewer: Okay. How did you decide to keep a journal?

Interviewee: It was actually required for the program. Some people really stuck to it more than others. It was never checked or anything. It was just like we were supposed to keep a journal, and so I was like, "Okay, I'm gonna try to do this. I'm gonna try be good and stick with it."

Interviewer: Okay, so you think maybe that influenced you as a writer.

Interviewee: Yeah, maybe. [Laughter]

Interviewer: Great. What about your writing process? How has your writing process changed?

Interviewee: I really like outlining things now. I don't think I ever really did that much in high school, but writing longer essays in college and everything, especially with multiple examples and studies for psychology, it's a lot easier to break it down, have an outline, figure out all of what you want to say, restructure it, and then go. I also don't know if I always did this or not, but I also like writing my body paragraphs, and then going to my introduction and conclusion last. *[Chuckle]*

Interviewer: Great, that's helpful. If I use the term "reflective writing," what does that mean to you?

Interviewee: Looking back on either experiences that you've had and reflecting on them, talking about how you felt in certain moments or what you got out of them, things like that. Or writing about your writing experiences maybe, like how it felt to write a 15-page paper. Did you feel overwhelmed, or did you feel like you knew what you were doing? What could you have done better? Things like that.

Interviewer: Okay. Have you used any of that kind of reflective writing in your own writing process?

Interviewee: Yes. Also, just for the study abroad stuff, that was all it was. We had weekly reflective writing pieces that we were required to turn in about we'd sometimes have events we'd have to go to—it was all multiculturalism-based and understanding multicultural differences—before leaving on our trips. A lot of just short writing pieces on our experiences doing that. Also, writing about—we'd have short articles to read that were relevant to our trips as well, and then we'd have to reflect on those or watch movies and reflect on 'em.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. How do you think that reflective writing influenced you as a writer?

Interviewee: I don't know. [Chuckle]

Interviewer: Did you enjoy it or ...

Interviewee: Not really. For the requirement that it was, it felt very just like, "We have to get this done." It didn't really feel like it was going—not everything felt like it was super-relevant to our trip, because it was the same assignment over all of the study abroad places as opposed to always just for our specific site. The ones that were more specific to our site felt—I liked doing those, things that were specific to—we watched a movie about [country] and then had to say our

thoughts and feelings about that. That felt a lot more relevant, and I was happy to do that work.

Interviewer: Okay, great. What have your experiences been with working with other writers in your courses?

Interviewee: I've done a lot of just peer reviewing kind of stuff. It's fine. I always felt like I cared more or wanted more about content editing, I guess. I feel like that's what's hardest for everyone to do. Me, too. People were asking for content editing from me. Instead, it usually ended up being more like, "This writing, the wording here is weird," or things like that that I probably would have gone back and fixed anyway, because I feel like I'm pretty good at grammar and flow and stuff like that. It was fine. I don't know.

Interviewer: What do you mean, content editing?

Interviewee: Like, "Is this part—is this paragraph connected well to the next one? Is this example relevant to the rest of my piece?" Things like that. Like, "Does this actually support my thesis?"

Interviewer: Okay, and you feel you didn't get much of that feedback in peer review?

Interviewee: Some, but I didn't feel like it was always the most helpful. It would just be like, "See if you can connect this better."

I'm like, "Oh, really? I have no idea." I don't know.

Interviewer: Okay, so you were maybe looking more for like suggestions for how to change it.

Interviewee: Yeah. Yeah, maybe. I feel like that's also a lot to ask. I feel I'd have the same kind of trouble doing that for someone else who wanted that from peer editing.

Interviewer: Okay. Have you done any group or like collaborative writing projects in your courses?

Interviewee: Yes. For one of my history classes, we had a giant group project that included a group essay about the project as well. It sucked. *[Laughter]* It went well, but it sucked to do. It was just—it was really difficult to make sure that when you're writing separate sections of one larger essay that it all flows and that it's not redundant. It was really frustrating.

Interviewer: Okay, but you said it turned out well?

Interviewee: Yeah. We got an A on it, but it was really a painstaking process throughout.

Interviewer: What was your role in the group for the group project?

Interviewee: Let me think. It was a board game project where we had to create a board game that taught about some aspect of American history without it just being trivia. I created the whole game board, most of the ideas for the game pieces, like the cards where we had content. I'm very much a take-charge person in group projects because it drives me crazy if we're not hitting deadlines or things aren't getting done that need to be done. Then when other people would fall behind, I just pick up their slack. We definitely had one guy that was constantly falling behind, *[chuckle]* which was part of why it was so frustrating.

For the writing portion of it, I think we broke it into—we had our game broken into different eras of American history. We each wrote about one of—wait, no. How did we do it? Oh, we had it broken into different things, like cards related to race and ethnicity, cards related to gender issues, cards related to economic issues, political issues. I think I wrote on the economic issues, I think. We just had it broken down like that.

Interviewer: Okay. Did you help to bring the four pieces together at all in the writing?

Interviewee: I don't remember. I know I edited a lot of the other people's writing, but I don't remember if I was the one that made the whole thing flow. I think I wasn't. I think I told someone else they had to do that cuz I'd done a lot by that point. *[Laughter]*

Interviewer: Okay. Do you think that editing other people's work for that project had an influence on you as a writer on your writing process?

Interviewee: I don't know. Editing other people's writing is frustrating to me, but I also kind of like it if I know that it's going toward my work as well. Influenced me? I never know what to say for the "influenced me." What exactly do you mean by influence?

Interviewer: Just did it change the way that you think about your writing or about writing in general?

Interviewee: Okay, that's what I thought you meant. *[Laughter]* I don't know. I realized that group projects like that frustrate me. I know I prefer to just—if it's gonna be one flat grade for everyone, I'd rather just have my one flat grade for me and have my own work to show. I also think I'm definitely partial to my own style, and it made me realize that. Certain ways that other people would write are very stylistic as well, but if I didn't feel like it was professional enough or that it

was the right kind of tone for what we were trying to convey, I did a lot of editing of that kind of stuff. I guess it just gives me some perspective, I guess, on what I care about in my own writing.

Interviewer: Okay, great. What advice would you give to college students about writing? What are some of the things they should think about as they begin writing a paper?

Interviewee: Let's see. Definitely make an outline. It helps. I really like especially—I guess it applies to both my psychological writing and my English writing. I think it's really helpful to search for examples of what you think you want to write about before you start, before you decide on what exactly your thesis is, to get an idea of what you're actually able to support. Cuz you might come up with this idea for a thesis and realize you cannot find the research behind it or you cannot find the right examples in the piece of writing that you're reading, and then it makes it much, much harder.

I usually liked doing my research for psychology first, figuring out what's out there, and then coming up with a thesis or a proposal, whatever, for psychology. Same with English. If I had a general idea, I'd reread whatever writing piece we were supposed to analyze. I'd go back through, and I'd find everything relevant to that and then think, "Okay, based on these, I could write a really solid paper about this."

Just doing your background preparation before you start makes the writing flow a lot easier, and it makes you have to edit less at the end. Make sure that you have enough content going on. It's really awful to just go on an idea, get halfway through your paper, and realize you're fully out of content, or the rest of what you wanted to say is completely irrelevant to what you're saying now. Just prepare before you start.

Interviewer: Okay, great. Any other advice for college writers?

Interviewee: Start early. Don't always save it till the very end, cuz that's stressful, too. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Go talk to your teachers. I only did that a few times, but every time I did that I did a lot better on my papers. I felt a lot more confident about them. Teachers like that. They'll tell you exactly what they think would be really strong in that part of your paper if you're missing it, and then you can go back and do this thing that you know your teacher is gonna love. Definitely helpful.

Interviewer: Yeah, great. Have you had any experiences with new media writing like blogs or websites or an electronic portfolio?

Interviewee: Yes to almost all of that. *[Chuckle]* All for classes, though, not just for fun. For one of my English classes, we were required to tweet about the writing, just a thought-provoking idea or question.

Interviewer: About the readings you were doing or-

Interviewee: Yeah, mm-hmm. About the readings, or we were required to watch a movie or something, some kind of thought-provoking thing before class. Then we'd use that as a springboard for class discussion. I thought that was pretty cool.

I had to do blogging for one of my classes for my minor. It was a language and discrimination anthropology class. It was interesting, and what other people put up was interesting. I just thought the class in general was a lot of work, and with that on top of it, a lot of work. I wasn't really a big fan of the whole blogging thing for that class.

Interviewer: Just because it was too much work? Anything about the writing that was ...

Interviewee: It was also just—I'm trying to remember. It was a few years ago. I'm pretty sure it was a completely open format as well for what you decided to write about, which like I said before, I like my structure or to at least know what I'm supposed to write about. For English, even if it's free-structure, if you know you're analyzing a certain piece of literature, you have your base. Same with psychology. As long as you know that you're tackling this topic, you've got a base.

For that class, it was literally like, "Look online, and see if you find something interesting and relevant to what we're talking about right now." I was not a big fan of that kind of—I don't know. It stressed me out a little bit, cuz some people would just come up with the most awesome, random things. I'd be like, "I think it's gonna be boring." I don't know. It turned out fine. I just wasn't a big fan of that.

I've also done e-portfolios for two classes, well, one was for a class. One was for my [country] trip, and the other was as like the capstone for my minor.

Interviewer: Okay. Can you talk a little bit about your experience with the e-portfolios?

Interviewee: Sure. I generally liked doing them. They're a lot of work. They're very reflective, and I liked that. I thought that was cool. They had a structure. They were broken down like give a summary of what your experience was, what you think you learned or accomplished, what your role in the activity was, and your takeaways, things like that.

I liked it. I wasn't sure whether I actually want to use one for real-life experiences in the future, cuz that's what they were hoping for was that you would have this great e-portfolio you could send along to possible employers or grad school. I just felt like I wasn't fully invested in it, especially as it just felt like a school assignment. I have a million other school assignments, so it was just like, "I need to get this one done and move on to the next thing." I never felt like they were as great as they could have been.

Interviewer: Okay, great. Have those experiences influenced the way that you write or your understanding of writing?

Interviewee: Maybe a little. Those were my first professional writing—writing for a professional audience. I don't know.

Interviewer: The e-portfolios were?

Interviewee: Yeah. Knowing that your audience is your peers or possibly your employer, things like that where it's like you describe yourself, and you put yourself in your best light. As well as it's kind of like writing a resume, almost. It was good practice for that kind of thing, good practice for interviewing for a job as well. I don't know so much if it's relevant to writing, maybe like cover letter writing, in the future. Definitely for presenting myself, I feel like it was good practice for that.

Interviewer: Great. Do you think those experiences would have been different with the e-portfolio if it had been a hard copy or a paper portfolio and not an electronic one?

Interviewee: Probably. I don't know. I had never even thought about that, that that could be a hard-copy thing. I don't know, cuz one part of me is—I always feel like hard-copy is more concrete and permanent and whatever, but then also not as many people would see it if it was just a hard copy. You'd think I'd care more about having a perfect e-portfolio [...]. I don't know. I guess not. I don't know. I feel like the e-portfolio works because it's more interactive. I have links to descriptions of things that I did or the website for places I volunteered, stuff like that. That wouldn't really work with a hard copy.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. Okay, great. Has that experience with e-portfolios either experience with e-portfolios pushed your writing in any new directions?

Interviewee: I don't know. I don't think so. I'm not sure.

Interviewer: It was mostly for the class that you were in, right?

Interviewee: Yeah, right. Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: What about the writing for the e-portfolio for your [country] trip?

Interviewee: Pretty much the same. It was like—the portfolio I made for [country] was due a month-and-a-half before the other one was due. They were both due the same semester, and I ended up just being to edit the portfolio I already had for [country] to more fit the requirements of the other class, which was perfectly allowed. I felt like they were just lumped together. They were just slightly different at first.

The personal statement that I had for [country], that was required of the program. After that was done, I was able to just put in my personal statement for my minor and add more topics that were outside of [country] as well in my portfolio. Pretty much the same situation with [country]. Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: Okay. Did building that e-portfolio help you to understand the writing and learning you had done in other courses in any new ways?

Interviewee: Not really writing. It was more like reflecting on my role in different activities that I was a part of and the things that I accomplished. The only one that would really apply to writing would be that I had a section on my work in the lab. It was just—that was one of the things that I listed as one of my job duties in the lab was to write up this literature review.

Interviewer: Then you included your long literature review in your e-portfolio?

Interviewee: No, I included the—the article that the literature review was written for is actually currently under review.

Interviewer: Oh, great.

Interviewee: I don't know if I'd actually be able to do that. *[Chuckle]* I just included the abstract of the article as a whole in the e-portfolio.

Interviewer: Great. You've also been uploading pieces of writing to the study archive. How was that—how did that process go for you?

Interviewee: I usually just chose one of my favorite pieces from the semester, something I felt good about.

Interviewer: Okay. You chose them because you felt good about them each semester, like your favorite piece?

Interviewee: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: What was it like to look back over your old writing and upload some of it for the study?

Interviewee: I don't know, kind of funny looking back at my freshman writing, especially cuz that was probably my most maybe out-of-character kind of writing that I did. It was when I had that personal experiences writing class where I was like, "Well, if I'm gonna be writing about myself, it's not just gonna be dry and boring. I'm gonna try to bring some humor. I'm gonna try to write about something that you wouldn't really usually think to write about. It's not just gonna be the big things." It's funny looking back and seeing what I decided to write about for things and then decide what I liked.

Interviewer: Okay. Did it make you think differently about that writing that you had done before?

Interviewee: A little. I felt good when I reread one of my pieces from freshman year that I chose. I was like, "Okay, this was a pretty good piece." I feel like it actually was pretty funny. I felt good about it. I don't know. It's hard to see—to really process how you feel about a piece in the moment when you're stressed, and just trying to get it turned in on time, and hoping that it's all good enough. You let it go, and you try not to think about it until you get your grade back. It's nice looking back on it with no pressure.

Interviewer: Okay, great. Finally, what do you think instructors should know about teaching writing at the undergraduate level?

Interviewee: I think they should definitely know that kids have really different writing experiences in high school. I know my high school prepared us pretty well for especially analytical literary writing, but I know that a lot of other high schools didn't. I feel like most high schools don't prepare you well for scientific writing, which is a really big thing at [University of Michigan], really big in psychology, I'm sure in other science fields.

Just being sensitive to that I think is important for teachers to know so that they can make sure to provide a lot of resources instead of just listing in the syllabus, "Go see Sweetland. Go see the Science Learning Center." That's what it's called, right?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Interviewee: Because, I don't know, you know that stuff is there, but a lot of kids, it's just like you get busy with school, and you forget. Then you get overwhelmed by the time you're writing this paper, and you don't know what to do. Making sure you really stress that or have a very open-door policy for people to come in and talk to you about their writing, that'd be important.

Interviewer: Okay, good. Anything else the instructors should know?

Interviewee: Some people are a lot slower at writing than others. If you're having very frequent, long essays that your students might hate you. *[Laughter]* Or maybe just spread out the big things. I feel like I haven't had big problems with that in college. Usually, if teachers have weekly or biweekly writings, they're shorter. That's something I think the professors already know.

Interviewer: Okay, good. Do you have any other comments?

Interviewee: I don't think so. I think I'm good.

Interviewer: All right, awesome.

[End of Audio]