

Interviewer: Abby McArthur-Self

Interviewee: Nina Thompson

NT: What I write depends on, kind of, the assignment and how I feel about it, so if I chose to write something on my own time, freely, it's going to be poetry or some kind of essay-article thing, like I have a lot of running documents on hercampus stuff and just stuff that I really enjoy talking about. I think academically, I write about -- based on the classes that I take -- mostly literature.

AMS: What's the first thing you do when you learn you need to write something for class or decide to write something on your own?

NT: The first thing I do is brainstorm a thesis -- just some kind of argument, and it takes a while for me to do that, I need to be able to think it and then see it on-screen or a piece of paper or something and be able to loosely construct a string of arguments where I'm excited about that thesis and where I have enough evidence to support that thesis. So I don't try and like overthink right away; I just want to figure out, what can I argue passionately about whatever this is? And if I'm not passionate about it, what can I say, that I can appear to be passionate about in what I'm writing. If I really am feeling stuck, I will write out topic sentences, but mostly, I just get a rough idea for what my supporting paragraphs will be for the thesis. Usually my thesis is the only thing that stays the same, once I start writing. Sometimes it will change, but most of the time, once I think of a thesis that I like, everything else is subject to change. I might end up changing a whole paragraph because I don't like the piece of evidence or I might end up doing an antithesis at the end. Everything happens organically -- or at least that's the way that I prefer for it to happen, but of course, I think being a writer is all about adapting to what you do and don't know about the subject and just working with what you have.

AMS: Once you start writing, what does that process look like?

NT: Once I start writing, I am typing on a computer. It just helps to get all my thoughts out



that can be really kind of destructive for their self expression in... in the world, not just in writing. If you don't let people be vulnerable because you kind of force a certain structure or language onto them, it can be really hurtful to their character.

AMS: What would you like other students to know about writing?

NT: I think I want other people to stop saying that they're bad writers because people often think of bad writing like grammatical issues, and you know, like... oh, this paragraph is only like two sentences long and I don't know what else to say. Or maybe like, I realised half-way through the paper that my thesis is flawed. And every time somebody says that to me, I'm like, well then write about it. Like, if you notice something bad about your thesis, make a paragraph that could advocate for that, and then tie it all together somehow. Like you get to be creative. And just because you notice your own flaws, it doesn't make you a bad writer. It actually makes you a good writer. Cus you're not just turning something in that's words on a piece of paper, you're actually turning in something that you invested time thinking about and you've made it your own, and so I'm just sick and tired of people saying that because it's so much more than the technical aspect of writing.