

Reanne Rogers

Mrs. McCune

Comp/lit 11 period 8

A moment that marks forever

When I look at the smiling little girl atop a short, fuzzy pony, I see the happiness I rarely felt during my childhood. Horses have and always will be my saviors. They saved me from the cold, harsh words of my peers, and supported me through my anguish. They gave me the hope and unbreakable the freindship I desperately needed. Horse saved my life.

It has been ten years since my journey with horses began, and I remember every single moment of it. I remember this moment as one of my happiest, my first horse show, on my first pony, winning my first ribbons. I remember my pony bucking me off in my second class, but that seems to make it even more memorable. Happy, a spunky, Pony/ Arab cross dumped me at every chance he got, which at that age occurred often. A second, third, and fourth place ribbon rewarded my pain and utter embarrassment. Now looking back on all the times that tricky little pony threw me, I have to laugh. This photo symbolizes that, and as long as I have it, I will never forget that day.

This moment both warms my heart and makes me sad, because it show the happiness that I felt when I spent time with my horse, and hides the pain I felt when I couldn't be with him. Rejection and neglect from fellow students made me feel worthless, and eventually made me feel

I needed to leave this earth. The only reason I didn't do something fatal, because of horses and my family. At eight years old I would have missed out on many good years. So when I say horses have saved my life, I speak the truth.

Unfortunately as people we live longer than our animal companions, and this pain I have felt a few times. I lost my big teddy bear, Caleb at age eleven. It proved to be one of the hardest experiences I had to go through. But he was good for me because I loved him with all my heart and he returned that love in full. A piece of my heart belongs to him. And I will always hold a place for Happy and my current horse Scout. Horses have shown me sacrifice, love, compassion, and trust, and for that I am grateful.

Horses are a huge part of my life and always will be. They have taught me important life lessons, love and understanding. Without them I might have done something I would have regretted. They give me a release and incredible power. As a great poet once said "Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start from now and make new ending."
(Mariah Robinson) This photo symbolizes a new beginning in my life.

John Wiman

Mrs. McCune

Comp/Lit 11 Period 3

5 October 2012

Turning it Around

The aroma of freshly cut grass and newly chalked lines entered into my nose as I approached the stadium. Late July in Waco, Texas brings an ungodly sensation of heat and humidity with it. Our little league baseball team had to win to stay alive in the regional baseball tournament against one of the best teams in the nation. Coach Taylor chose to start me on the mound against Texas West. During warm-ups I felt extremely complacent; the heat drained my energy rapidly. I did not want the fate of the team on my shoulders, and did not want to lose the game for us. I felt defeated before the game even began. By the end of the third inning the game stretched out of our reach and found myself resting on the bench observing the game from the dugout. After the game I felt responsible for our loss. I did not prepare myself mentally or physically to compete. I promised myself I would grow from this experience and never be unprepared again. The grief of letting down my entire team that depended on me felt detrimental for weeks, but ended up becoming a stepping stone in my life. That day made me a dependable person not only in sports but also as a student, family member, and friend.

During the school year I have an overwhelming amount of work between studying and practice. I find it difficult to always finish work at my highest ability because of fatigue. I have to find a way to persevere through times when I do not feel completely focused. During the baseball game I failed to do that. I let the too many outside factors like the heat and fear of

failure come between me and my goal. Any time I feel like quitting on an assignment I recollect on my experience at the game and it motivates me to continue working.

As a family member many times I do not want to help around the house or I want to go somewhere to have fun. Becoming more responsible now and allowing my parents to rely on me for tasks such as taking care of the house when they go somewhere or watching over smaller siblings for long periods of time makes me dependable. Completing small tasks correctly prepares me for later in life when others rely on me to do huge tasks right. Experiencing the humility letting a whole group of friends down as a kid has made me never want to let down a family member when they depend on me.

Victory is not always achieved on a daily basis. I experienced defeat that day but would not let it define me. From that day on I have lived my life to become a better student, family member and friend. Walking off the field that night I gazed into the sky and knew I would become a champion because I do not accept defeat.

Kassidy Flick

Mrs. McCune

Comp/Lit 11 Period 3

5 October 2012

Thinking on My Own

"I am Barack Obama, and I approve this message," shouted the President in the stuffed, sweaty auditorium. My family jumped out of their seats to applaud while my mother and I both waved around the signs stating "FORWARD" for the 2012 Presidential Election. Living in the small town of Grand Junction, Colorado, shock and awe filled my soul to see so many supporters sitting beside me, cheering on the President. I always felt I swam against the current of Republicans. While growing up in Grand Junction, I learned to fight for my beliefs even when they defy the norm.

The majority of the citizens in Grand Junction are Republicans. As a Democrat, getting bullied and harassed for vocalizing my beliefs did not faze many people. For example, during Barack Obama's first campaign, a classmate, Cassie, and I exploded into a verbal dispute. Quickly, more students joined her side and the argument exceeded friendly terms. Insults, tension, screeches, anger, the out-of-control classroom grew louder and louder. To republicans in Grand Junction, these outbreaks appeared acceptable; to them, nothing seemed wrong. As the second election gets closer, these altercations happen more often. Troubled and upset by these situations, I learned to defend my positions with facts and data, proving my points. I eagerly fight to uphold my values when someone questions my beliefs. Knowing I usually stand alone in my viewpoint, I discovered how to argue effectively with information and knowledge. I observed and listened to opposing points of view, researched the truth, admitted my wrongs, and defended

my values maturely. Because of these events, I define myself as a strong and independent woman.

Through conflict, I learned about myself, my values, and how to effectively fight for my principles. I questioned society; I gained independent, personal beliefs, and I established my own standards. Going against the current taught me to think on my own.

Alex Baker

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Comp/Lit 11

27 September 2012

Abby Blagg

The aroma of freshly brewed coffee fills the air. The hard pounding of keyboards and voices growing louder surrounds me. Sipping on a cup of coffee, I feel the cold breeze fight its way through the warm air as the door is opened for a split second. A sudden jolt of disbelief jumps around inside me as I look across the coffee shop and see her, as I see Abby Blagg. Abby Blagg has been missing since I was in kindergarten. I have thought to myself about what I would do or what I would say if I ever got the chance to see her again.

We stared blankly at each other, for I never thought this day would truly come. She ran up to me, I could barely choke out a hello before the tears started crashing down. The coldness of her hands as she touched my shoulder shot chills throughout my entire body. "It's been awhile..." was the first thing she said to me, three simple yet so complicated and mysterious words. "It's been longer than that, eleven years isn't just awhile." I exclaimed! Millions of questions were running around my brain, but one main question continuously popped into my head. That question was how? "How are you here right now? What happened to your mom? How are you not dead? How come you haven't bothered to get a hold of me? Where were you hiding? Were you hiding? Was it your dad?" I shot questions at her like you shoot bullets out of a gun.

So many questions and I was afraid she would not have as many answers. She responded in a sad yet serious tone, "All I can say is I am here, right now, and that's all that matters." "Are you alive or am I just daydreaming..? Is this real? Are you truly here Abby?" She looked me square in the eye, the way she used to when we were little and said, "Some questions you should just never know the answer to.." For a brief second I looked down. When I looked back up my eyes were searching for her. Except now, all I could feel was the warm air replacing that cold winter breeze that had found its way through the cracked door. She is gone.

Jordan Quintana

Mrs. McCune

Comp/Lit 11 Period 8

5 October 2012

True Love

My father remains the greatest hero of all time. Him laughing, cradling me represents my true essence—finding beauty and joy in everyone and loving with self-abandon. A raw joy radiated from his goofy smile, nearly-disintegrated t-shirt, and dorky Adidas sandals. My father displayed an unfailing sense of humor, courage, and joy despite his sickness.

My father lived a laborious life. He worked as a pipefitter. However, he used pipes containing asbestos. He unknowingly inhaled this fibrous mineral. Unfortunately, the asbestos formed into mesothelioma. When he inquired about his symptoms, the diagnosis shocked us. His cancer already advanced to stage three of four.

I refused to process the information. I never imagined that my “solid rock” would have three months to live. To me, my father had no limits. Regardless of his struggles, his attitude remained unchanged. The day before his death, he yarned about the complexities of life. He always uttered a joke: “What did one wall say to the other wall? Meet you in the corner.” Although his repetitiveness irritated me, I admired his pleasant disposition. My father’s transparent smile and sparkling eyes described his zest for life and positivity. Though his illness left him with little vibrancy, I cherish his grin in my picture; it helps me remember my true father before his ailment.

Though his sickness tried to break him, he remained joyful. On the eve of his death, my pastor visited him. After the friends chattered away, they partook in communion together. As they nibbled bread and sipped grape juice, my father’s emotions overcame him. He began

sobbing; he praised God for loving him enough to die on the cross. The tears running down his face unleashed the power of a roaring waterfall.

My father epitomizes courage; everyone expected him to enter a stage of hopelessness, but his love for God and courage maintained him when his physical body could not. I thank God he faced the darkness of the dawn even though death drew closer each minute. Hours before his demise, my father needed to use the restroom. He used all strength left in him reaching toilet. He never made it.

Crashing. Screaming. Sobbing. Silence. My father left to his eternal home. Regardless of his physical barriers, he pushed through them to face the inevitable music.

The picture of my father and me displays the core of his courage. He had no idea how he would impact my life; however, doing his best as a father demonstrated his bravery. I relive his strength through my picture.

My father demonstrated the type of man I want to model. He never expressed his pain verbally, and instead allowed his laughter, joy, and courage to mask it. He cared for his loved ones most when he should have cared for himself. Dad wanted to cherish his last moments with us, never allowing his daily grind to trump family time. Whenever I find myself whisked away by my set routine, I recall that photo and the memories within. I find my priorities again. My father will remain in my heart, and his presence will never forsake me when I feel abandoned.