Throughout the twelve weeks of the trimester I would say I have grown a lot. At the beginning of this class I found it rather hard to write the poetry essays because I am used to a more concrete structure so writing in a more flowy style was a bit difficult. If I had to pinpoint when I finally started to find writing the poetry essays easier I would it would be the poetry essay for “I Felt a Funeral in My Brain” by Emily Dickinson. One of the most important things that I learned from the poetry essay was to be more selective in writing your interpretation instead of focusing on a variety of interpretations and then stating which one I thought fit the best. I have found I have also learned a lot from our tragedy blog posts because I have been able to put this into practice along with the Harris Moves you taught us. The Harris Moves I have really helped me be able to write in a less structured way which I will need for all of the AP essays.

With having taken many AP classes before this one I knew I would enjoy the challenges this course provides. I have found I tried my hardest at everything we did even though sometimes what we were doing didn’t always click for me right away.With our summer reading comparative essay I found it rather frustrating because I was the one who put forth most of the ideas, and I find that group work isn’t my favorite thing because I often feel I get stuck with most of the assignment. When we were starting are What is Literature? Project I was glad that we could work in groups or by ourselves because I often find that my best work is done alone.

In terms of my intellectual risk taking this trimester I have found many instances in which I stepped outside of my comfort zone. For example, when we would be sharing our bits of creative writing pieces I shared the most emotionally powerful lines I wrote. As I mentioned above working in groups in not something I prefer unless I really know the person, and know that they will be willing to put in the effort. I stepped outside my comfort zone in that I worked with people that I have never done any class work with. Another example of intellectual risk taking was in the tragedy blog we did about the TED Talk called "A Kinder, Gentler Philosophy of Success" in that I decided to connect the central theme of how we pick up expectations from others to real life examples. My example was that girls in particular pick up the expectation by the media to stay thin, and to look like the models in magazines which is reflected in that 20 million girls in the U.S. at some point will have an eating disorder.

When I look back and see how I have improved as a reader, writer, and critical thinker I see good strides. As a reader I have gotten better at connecting what we are reading in class to other books or articles. For example, I saw how the idea that tragedy stories always have a happy ending connect to Antigone in that Creon finally learns how to give in, and ask for forgiveness. I have also improved as reader in that I find it easier to pick out the main message of a poem than I did previously. In the past it took me reading it around three times to finally get the main idea, but now I find I have a idea the first time and then have my interpretation solidified in my mind by the second time reading it. As a writer I have improved, but I feel there is work I could do on the free response essay. I find I need improvement in that the essay often doesn’t flow as nicely as it should, and I feel like I am falling back into the habit of providing a concrete structure. I always have to remind myself to not directly state your thesis which is hard because I have gotten use to that style of writing. I have also found I have improved my creative writing ability in that it is easier for me to put more emotion into my characters, and make them more realistic to my readers. I know that not having to share my piece with my classmates helps because sometimes the stuff I write about can be very serious in nature. My critical thinking skills have improved in that I am to develop stronger evidence to support my interpretation of a piece with real life examples and other texts.