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# *Writer's Statement about "Switch off' before You Doze off: Exploring the Effects of Late Night Media Use on the Sleep Habits of College Freshmen at UCF"*

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When I was first assigned the task of completing my very own research paper in my ENC1102 class, I was overcome with anxiety. This was something I had little experience with. Immediately, I was overwhelmed with all of the possible topics to focus my research on. My professor provided my class with the direction of writing only a *chapter* of a book, instead of trying to write the entire book. We were instructed to explore the conversations already being held about any topic of our choice and further conduct our own secondary and primary research on that topic.

Because at the time I had been dealing with major sleep deprivation, the topic of sleep was something that came right to my mind. As a college freshman, I was experiencing many significant changes in my sleep habits. I found myself staying up into late hours of the night and feeling groggy and tired when I woke up. This was a problem I had never endured back home in high school. I was very interested in exploring why these sudden changes were occurring and what I could do to get a good night's sleep. This question sparked my first interest in exploring the broad topic of sleep deprivation.

This was where my writing process began. An important aspect to first note is the diversity of the writing processes from one person to the next. Writing has never been considered my strong suit and I have always struggled with that first moment of contact from pen to paper. "Where do I start?" is an immensely feared question in my writing process. At this point, I knew what broad topic I wanted to conduct my research on but I was struggling to narrow my focus. Because I only had a few short months to complete my research paper, I was forced to pick one aspect of *sleep* to focus on. My first thought was to meet with my professor, Scott Launier, to discuss the wide range of online databases available and how to use these to narrow my topic. Together, using keywords and phrases to navigate the databases, we explored the conversations that were already being held by scholars and came across the discussion of late night media use and its effect on the sleeping habits of children. From there, I decided to take this conversation and further explore it to develop my own research project.

Once I got past the initial struggle of where to start, exploring the topic proved to be enjoyable and I was able to complete several drafts for my project. My professor required that our drafts be read and scored by our peers. Receiving feedback from other students in my class helped

me to develop my paper into one that my audience would not only enjoy reading but also gain valuable information from. My purpose for pursuing the effects of late night media use on college freshmen at UCF was to provide a plausible answer and solution to a widespread issue affecting my peers. I set out to provide my readers with a solution that could better their sleep quality and, furthermore, help them to achieve a happier and healthier lifestyle.

Overall, this assignment taught me excellent research skills, such as how to use an online database and how to conduct primary research, and also allowed me to explore and challenge my own writing process. I have grown as a writer and as a researcher and I thank Professor Scott Launier for providing me with the tools and assistance needed to complete this task with ease and success.