

Example Answer for the Viewing of the Dead *Poets Society*

Note that this answer covers several topics from class, that a bit of the class activity is described, an idea is explained followed by personal reactions or thoughts, and that the answer shows individual thinking.

First we exchanged our homework. I thought that by having another group member read over my homework responses and compare them to the Answer Key was an effective way of giving and receiving feedback. Checking with the Answer Key helped me better understand what I need to do for the homework. Reading another students' paper showed me another way to think about the problem.

I learned a lot from the video *Perception*. Taking a second look and not jumping to conclusions are two simple ideas but tough to apply. I realize that I need to be more careful and evaluate my ideas, examine them and make sure I have enough evidence before I draw any conclusions. For example, I recently jumped to a conclusion. I saw my best friend spending time with her ex-boyfriend and I concluded that they were back together, but when I checked I was wrong. Every class in this course I realize I need to take a second look to try to learn more.

I had previously seen and enjoyed the video *Dead Poets Society*. Seeing *Perception* and *Dead Poets Society* in the same class emphasized that we all have different viewpoints and even on simple things we may see things differently. In *Perception* the inkblot produced a lot of different reactions. Further in the film the idea that what we see is colored by what we have previously seen and what we expect to see was clearly shown. I remember I was shocked to see the students tearing out pages from their book on poetry in *Dead Poets Society*. However, that event certainly reminded me what we need to make education our own rather than just accepting that education is to get a piece of paper when we graduate.

Looking at things from different perspectives and going beyond our first reactions came from viewing the students standing on the desk. In class we stood on our chairs and noticed the blinking light on the ceiling, the dirty tiles, the holes for the air conditioning, and how far the ground now was. This course is different and the two films explained how we will probably see this course in different ways and make different uses of it. At first I was not open to how this course was being taught. I realize now that I had blinders on because this course is not like any other course I have ever had. I now appreciate that this course is about my thinking and improving it which may be quite different than for others in my group.

I believe that most of my education has taught me to learn to please the teacher and to accept what the textbook said. I have worked mainly for the grade. I am developing a different viewpoint which holds that learning is for me and that I need to be my own thinker. This shift is difficult since I have so consistently been told to fit in, not make waves, and do what is asked by teachers. I want to go beyond that limited approach and develop my own perspective and ideas.