Portfolio Reflection Questions

1. Through the course of first semester, my writing has improved greatly, not only in content, but in structure also. In my summer essay I showed lack of structural abilities when I claimed that the theme of Tuesdays with Morrie was fulfilment. Although fulfilment is one of the many topics of the novel, a theme is a sentence expressing the deeper meaning of a short story or novel. In my summer essay, I did not have guidelines to follow, therefor writing what sounded good rather than what could have enhanced the piece. With these structural guidelines, my essays are higher quality and more organized.

1. The area I feel I have improved on most in my writing is my evidence, and my introduction to the evidence. In my summer essay I included no evidence to support my claim. In my *To Kill a Mockingbird* paper, I feel the evidence I chose, and the introductions to the evidence were very high quality. In my paper, to support my claim, I stated, “It is clear to the reader when Heck Tate, the Maycomb County Sheriff, stated, “It was her right eye, I said,” when referring to the side of her face where she was hit, when later Scout says, “His left arm was fully twelve inches shorter than his right, and hung dead at his side… I could see it was no use to him,” that Mayella Ewell, the alleged victim, was lying (192; 211)”. I feel that my use of evidence is what I have improved on the most throughout first semester.
2. Some of the components to the writing structure are more difficult, and some are easier, having come from a school out of the district, where I was taught in a different way than I am being taught now. I feel that the middle four sentences composed of providing evidence and explaining the evidence, make writing papers easier because they make thoughts more organized. The way I wrote previously, my thoughts were not as organized. The component that I find the hardest, and that I need the most work on is the final, link sentence at the end of the paragraph. I struggle with this sentence because I am used to the last sentence focusing on the next paragraph, rather than summarizing the previous one.
3. My overall goal is to master the ability to write high quality introductions and conclusions, the way I am able to write body paragraphs. Although only having the one chance to write the introduction and conclusion in the format given, I had to reference the outline paper many times. I would like to be able to know the format without having to reference the sheets many times. If there is one area that is critical that I improve on, it would be learning all of the forms of how to finish a conclusion paragraph. In the past there has never been a format for conclusion paragraphs, so with this new structure, I want to improve and perfect it.