

Dear Tutor

By Lisa Bisso

I'm a freshman in college, this is a new start for me
I must prove myself and make friends, a loser I won't be
So I thought classes would be easy, but that's exactly what they're not
English 101 is really starting to get me, my grades are absolutely shot
I heard there are writing tutors on campus and I think that's kind of cool
But I'd rather let my grades suffer than be the kid who needs help in school
Especially in college, I'd be one of the laughing stocks
"I saw you in the learning center, what's next, you gonna start wearing crocks?"
So I'll sit back and just let English take its toll
My future is in jeopardy, but at least my popularity won't be in the hole
-Freshman

Dear Freshman,

I know a lot of people feel very similar to you
Hell, when I was a freshman I thought the Learning Center was a place for losers too
Then my friends started going and I told them I was too cool
They said too cool for what? A successful future? You sound like a fool
So I made an extremely important decision that day
To create a future I'd be proud of, and just get a tutor for my damn essay
Eventually I realized we're lucky to have this great Learning Center around
The tutors are students just like us, opportunities abound
The irony in all of this is now I'm a writing tutor in the center as well
So I beg you to take that extra step, don't put yourself through this hell
-Tutor

Dear Tutor,

Your thoughts to me ended up hitting home
I've realized that my future is ahead of me, it's time to get in the zone
So I went to the Learning Center that you've spoken fondly of
Everyone greeted me kindly, you could tell there was a lot of love
I made my appointment for English 101 and couldn't wait to go back
But what happened next wasn't good at all, now I'm entirely off track
I must kindly say I will not be going back to the Learning Center where you tutor
I should've taken this into my own hands, I would've rather had the help of a computer
Thank you for your attempts to be of assistance
I appreciate it, but from now on I plan to keep my distance
-Freshman

Dear Freshman,

Wait! We've made a huge improvement on your thoughts in even such a short time
I wish you would tell me what happened so I can make an attempt to change your mind
I'm sure you've been told that first impressions are often wrong
If I thought the Learning Center was the wrong place to go, I would've suggested something else
all along
If anything horrible happened then perhaps I can try to make it right
After all the good you have heard about writing tutors, I think it would only be polite
-Tutor

Dear Tutor,

You're more than right in this situation, I'm sorry for being incredibly rude
After my first visit with a tutor, my opinion of the writing tutors are a bit skewed
Perhaps it was just a bad day where everything went terribly wrong
I know if all tutors operated this way, the Learning Center reviews wouldn't be so strong
I waited for my tutor for over ten minutes when I arrived right on time
He pranced in like it was no big deal and hadn't committed one single crime
As a result, I became annoyed right from the start
But I understand these things happen, so I didn't take it straight to heart
We went to the table, and the tutor didn't introduce himself
I felt like I was a bystander sitting aside on a shelf
So, first he asked me what teacher I have for English 101
When I told him, he started bad mouthing the professor, and I sat there stunned
Then I told him about the assignment I brought and I wanted help with grammar
He said he wasn't there to help with just that, and I was so upset I started to stammer
Next I was told to read my paper aloud
But I have anxiety with reading for people, I feel like I'm in front of a crowd
While I was reading, he decided to look at his phone
It was something I considered so rude, a phone should have never been shown
After that mess the tutor gave me advice I wouldn't use and ripped my paper apart
I can't tell you how much I felt like the furthest thing from smart
So the last thing that happened was probably the worst,
I included in the paper that I didn't believe in gay marriage, and my tutor just about burst
He said how many people I will offend and that I shouldn't write about it
But it's what I believe, how can I help that? I decided it was time to quit
So I hope you can understand where I'm coming from now,
And perhaps you know why I must tell the learning center 'ciao'
-Freshman

Dear Freshman,

Wow first I must apologize to you that sounds awfully terrible
I'm sure, especially for a first time tutee, that experience was unbearable
I will start by saying I'll make no excuses for this student
The majority of what he did was wrong and there's always room for improvement
The tutors are told to arrive fifteen minutes in advance
I'm sorry he was late, I'm sure it made our Learning Center seem terrible at first glance
In addition, they're supposed to say hello right away
I feel bad that it appeared like your tutor looked at the session with great dismay
What makes me the most upset is the professor was talked down upon
In our training we are told it's imperative not to do that, and shouldn't be foregone
Furthermore, it is never appropriate to have your phone out at a job
The tutors usually follow this well, but I'm sure it seemed like he was a big snob
As for the rest of the things that happened, I must take time and explain
There are things we writing tutors do that are meant to help you and not cause you pain
The purpose is to make you a better writer in general and not just focus on grammar
Although most tutees don't know this, so I understand your desire to make a clamor
There are grammar tutors you can request in the Learning Center if you'd like
They'll help you improve your grammar just like learning to ride a bike
Moving back on topic to address the tutoring session you had
The tutor asking you to read aloud was so you could find mistakes, a tactic not meant to make
you mad
So I suggest if you ever decide to go back
Tell the tutor you'd rather they read, so you don't feel under attack
As for the gay marriage dispute that you two had
Some people feel strongly, especially about that issue I may add
The tutor should have probably handled it in a different way
But may I suggest going to a different tutor next time, there's usually not many problems over a
tutee's essay
Your tutor should've explained all of this to you, and usually they do
But like I said, we all have bad days, it's just a fact that's utterly true
I hope this response helps you and convinces you to go back and try again
I promise the tutors are great, you may even make a good friend
-Tutor

Dear Tutor,

I am extremely thankful you took the time to explain all of this
Having the chance to be tutored in ENG101 is an opportunity I don't want to dismiss
So I took your advice and gave the Learning Center a second chance
My writing skills need improvement, and I had to take a stance
This writing tutor was amazing, she arrived right on time
And she helped me in every way, everything turned out to be just fine
We talked first about my major and what my goals were for writing
I told her I want to improve my grammar too, and her reaction was quite exciting
There was a nice blend of correcting grammar and reorganizing the structure of my essay
I was given advice on how to improve as a writer, this tutor had a great message to convey
She didn't even ask me to read my paper aloud, she just did it herself
It wasn't like my first session, I was no longer the bystander aside on a shelf
I now have a standing appointment with her and can't wait to go back
I really think I'm becoming a better writer, there were skills I definitely lacked
Thanks for your time and patience with me, I'm ecstatic I took your advice
Who knows, maybe I'll be a writing tutor someday too, I've begun to think twice
-Freshman