

Assignment 1

Write a 500 essay describing a person, place, or object.

1. Prewriting
 - a. Prewriting Notes
 - b. Outline
2. Drafts
 - a. First Draft
 - b. Edited Draft
 - c. Revised Draft

Prewriting Notes

- First apartment
- Old flat
- Goodwill furniture
- First impression (August)
- Winter/heating bills/no parking
- Loneliness

Outline

- First Apartment
- 1 Rented apt/Aug, why?
 - 2 First impression, good, big rooms
 - 3 Plans for apt
 - 4 Problems, money, parking
 - 5 Winter Bills
 - 6 Learned valuable lesson

First Draft

My Apartment

On August 18 2001 I rented my very first apartment. I was plan to live with my parents and attend and just take night classes at the South campus. But when I got laid off I decided to go to school full time. Which meant I needed to enrol downtown. I decided to get my own apartment. I saw a ad in the paper about a big flat on Newhall Street and decided to check it out. School was going to start in two weeks and I decided I had to move real fast. The apartment was huge. It was the whole top floor of a huge house. With two big bedrooms, a huge living room and dinning room and a big front and a small back porch. I thought it was nice so I rented it right away. Because it was only five hundred and I thought I could afford it because I had over three thousand in the bank and was still going to work weekends at my parents store.

But the whole thing was like a big mistake. There was no parking anywhere around so half the time I had to park my car blocks away near the river. Constantly afraid my car was going to be stolen. So no friends could stop by especially on weekends and the neighborhood was real noisy.

But the worost surprize happen in December when I got a bill for heat for two hundred dollars. The place had like no insilation whatsoever and the heat just came from a big space heater in

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the dinning room. Which meant it had to be on full blast at night and I still had to use a electric blanket to stay warm. In January there was a two week cold snap and even though I slept on the floor in the dining room to sleep near the heater and closed up both bedrooms and had to study with a electric blanket around me. Even with all that the heat bill in Feberuary was five hundred and fifty dollars. So I decided to move back to my parents to save money to save for a better apartment.

That first apartment taught me a valuable lesson.

Edited Draft

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What lesson is that? Explain

Revision Notes

- 1 Focus on contrast between expectations and reality - delete needless details.**
- 2 Edit for spelling and sentence structure.**
- 3 Replace wordy/awkward phrases.**
- 4 Improve ending**

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Revised Draft

First Impressions

It was a warm August morning, and I was anxious. Clutching a postage stamp sized ad in my hand, I could not wait for the landlord to open the door. Most of my friends were living in dorms or cramped studio apartments. This was different. For only five hundred dollars a month, I could have an entire flat. There were two large bedrooms, an ample kitchen, a dining room as large as my parents', and a spacious living room. In addition there were two large balconies.

Walking through the rooms, I easily envisioned all the parties I would host in my new pad. There was plenty of room for my brother to crash when he was in town. Having three thousand dollars in the bank, I confidently gave the landlord a check. My hands were shaking. There were other people tapping at the door wanting a tour. I was afraid I would lose a bargain.

When the landlord called, telling me the flat was mine, I was overjoyed. I spent a few hundred dollars on furniture, posters, bookcases, and lamps. I stocked the kitchen with extra cups and plates I was sure I would need for parties.

I had a rude awakening the first afternoon I came home from class. There was nowhere to park. Not on Newhall Avenue. Not on Cass Street. Not on Bucher or Stowell. I soon learned that by four

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or five o'clock in the afternoon, people come from work and park. On weekends patrons at the noisy tavern on the corner grab any empty spots. The parties I planned never materialized. My sister tried to visit once but gave up, calling me on her cell phone to tell me that after twenty minutes of trying to find a parking place, she had to give up.

Worse was yet to come. When the first cold weather came in October, I realized that there were no heating vents in the apartment. The sole source of heat was the mammoth space heater in the dining room, which blasted like a furnace, overheating the dining room and nothing else. The building had no insulation and cold air blew through the cracked storm windows and rotted window frames. At night the walls creaked and the loose gutters banged. In November my heating bill was a hundred and ten dollars.

Even though I was busy at school and had little money to spare, I bought duct tape, weather stripping, and heavy duty plastic sheeting. I spent a Saturday trying to winterize the flat as best I could. But the weather stripping failed to keep out the wind. The plastic sheeting I stapled around the windows, snapped so loudly on windy days, I had to take it down. In December I received a heating bill for almost two hundred dollars.

To save money, I bought an electric blanket and slept in the dining room, shutting up the rest of the apartment. I bought an electric heater but whenever I plugged it in, it blew my fuses. December

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was brutally cold. I wore sweaters while doing homework and lit candles hoping they might help generate some heat.

Even though I spent most of the Christmas vacation at my parents' and set the thermostat at 60 degrees to keep the pipes from freezing, my heating bill was three hundred and ten dollars. The money I thought would last until May was ebbing quickly. I took a job at my Dad's store on weekends, spending every dime I made just to keep warm during the week.

That apartment taught me a valuable lesson. I learned rather painfully the meaning of the old clichés about making snap decisions, judging books by their covers, etc. I learned that first impressions are very misleading. I learned to ask questions. I learned never to make a decision because I was afraid of losing out. That cold lonely freshman year gave me a bit of insight. I only hope I remember this lesson when I buy a car, purchase a house, or choose a career.

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