**Original Work Assessment**

For my second year in ISM, I wrote a fiction short story titled *Almost* for my original work. At first glance, it may not seem like a lot went into this project, but beneath the surface there lies more than meets the eye. The process of landing on this final idea took quite some time and a bit of effort, since my mind goes a million miles an hour and I thought of a thousand different directions to take my original work in. First, I was going to write a series of three short stories that all tied together, but realized I did not have the time for that so I scrapped that idea and started from scratch. Then, I decided to conduct an experiment with stream of consciousness and putting myself in different environmental conditions to see how each affected my train of thought, but lost interest in the idea. Next, I decided to rewrite the first novel I ever wrote, which was in the seventh grade. However, rewriting an entire novel in four weeks definitely was not plausible, so I settled on writing a short story. Except a little ways into writing that short story I was struck with a brand new idea for a different short story and decided to write that one instead. Thus, *Almost* was born. Although the process of starting the project was extremely convoluted, I was really happy during its completion. Since my study is creative writing, I got to use all of my previous knowledge as well as all of the techniques and other knowledge I gained from my secondary research and interviews thus far this year. Because of this, I can proudly say that *Almost* is a culmination of everything I have learned so far in ISM applied to the best of my ability as a nonfiction and prose writer. Writing my short story also required higher level thinking skills such as evaluation, analysis, and synthesis. By reading my old novel I evaluated and analyzed my old writing skills, and by editing both my original short story and new short story I also had to analyze and evaluate the content. Creating the short story itself based on the mixture of previous and new ideas required a huge incorporation of synthesis, which ended up being the bulk of my higher level thinking during the creation and completion of my original work.

The greatest challenge I had to face and overcome through writing my short story was being creative. It sounds weird, but I have not written fiction in so long that simply thinking of a plot and executing it properly was the most difficult thing for me and too way longer than I anticipated. I liked stepping out of my comfort zone, however, since I feel I have truly grown as a writer and have expanded my skill set, something I know will be useful to me in the future. The real world learning purpose my short story serves, is that it exists simply to inspire and educate others. The way I discovered I wanted to be a writer was through reading other people’s works, especially those around my age, and I hope to inspire someone like that one day. People tend to overlook the importance of art and creative work that exists simply for the purpose of sparking other ideas and showcasing creativity, but I stand by my original work and its overall purpose because I know it matters! Regarding my final product, I know I will raise the bar, but probably do something communications related since I did a creative writing project for my original work. I have an article to write for my mentor about ISM, so I will start with that to get myself ready for my final product, and then go from there. I am really looking forward to giving myself a challenge, because the more I struggle to create something the more proud I am when I finally finish creating it!