**Research Assessment #2**

**Date:** September 14, 2018

**Subject:** The Importance of Keeping a Journal

**MLA Citation:**

Heck, Edward T. “Keeping Your Sanity When Using SAE J-1113.” *SAE Technical Paper Series*,

2000, doi:10.4271/2000-01-2611.

**Assessment:**

For my second research assessment, I decided to read an article that argues the importance of journaling. The author goes through a well structured essay that highlights three main points: The benefits of keeping a journal, techniques for writing in a journal, and the drawbacks of journal writing. I chose to read this because I connect to it on a personal level. The reason I realized writing was my passion was because it helped me discover who I am. I think it is absolutely incredible to be able to look back on your past and see how far you have come. Nobody can remember every single moment in their lives, unfortunately, and journaling is such a great way to have a quick blast from the past or a long trip through memory lane. I loved that this article was in first person, because it felt very personal, which is something I really appreciate when I am reading different pieces; a huge part of creating a story, poem, paper, etc. is being able to connect with the audience you are targeting. That is how you truly and successfully reach them.

 A huge overarching theme in this paper was identity. Something that really strikes me about writing is the ability to not only discover who you are but also establish who you are as you record instances of your life. I have journals from as early as third grade, when I would talk about my day and complain about cootie-filled boys, and I can clearly see who I was and chart my changes and personal developments over time. That is why I feel so strongly about this article in the first place. Everyone should journal, it is an important skill to have, and it is cleansing for the soul, which is especially useful in today’s toxic society. I also believe journaling directly correlates with overall writing skill. The line that separates good writers from great writers is actually just a jumbled stream of consciousness. I have found that my writing has absolutely improved and my overall language skills have refined while increasing my journaling time over the years. I have also become happier, and I can definitely say that journaling is an underrated form of therapy. If you discover who you are, it is harder to feel like a useless mess (which most people with depression tend to feel).

 Ultimately, I would definitely say this article was a really fun read. I feel like a better writer now that I have been reassured that the way I do things (which is basically just endless stream of consciousness every day) is actually a great way to be doing them. I realize there are drawbacks to journaling, but for me personally those disappear in comparison to the benefits it provides for me and countless others. I am starting to wonder if I want to do an original work that is stream of consciousness, however, and have my short story collection become my final product. I will definitely be doing more research on this, since the premise of stream of consciousness is so personal that it makes my toes curl in the best way. I am getting excited about the future of my writing this year!