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English IV

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### Zenith Reflection

I have been thinking about what I wanted to do for my Zenith project since Senior Innovator presentations last year. I work at a church in the nursery, and also babysit quite frequently. When considering what I would like to study next year I was in between Graphic Design and Child Development. I felt that this project was a good way of combining the two fields and gave my insight on my decision.

Through my research I learned a lot about the history of children's literature and also how it affects the development of a young mind. I was definitely aware of some of the aspects of what makes literature in children's early lives important but the research helped to deepen my understanding. I learned more about the specific things that children respond to in books, such as bright colors, and repetition. This was extremely helpful in the production of my own book.

I collaborated with others by talking to parents about their opinions on children's book and what I should include in mine. It was successful because it gave me insight about things that I probably would not have thought of myself. The collaboration also really helped to me to not overthink the process. I was reminded by my collaborators to keep thing simple, because it is a children's book it did not need to be overly complicated. Many of the aspects that I had learned in my

research were confirmed by my collaborators. Parents reminded me to not make the pages too busy, to use bright colors, and to give them opportunities to ask their child to point things out to them.

If I were to do this project again, I would have liked to try to hand draw my illustrations rather than using Illustrator. While I did enjoy improving Illustrator skills, there were many ways that I felt limited by the program. Overall I was pleased with the final product but it didn't necessarily look the way I had pictured it upon conception, and I believe I would have been able to better achieve that goal if I had hand drawn the illustrations. Towards the end of the project I hit a rough patch. I wasn't pleased with how the product was turning out and I felt extremely discouraged. This was very difficult for me simply because it had been something that I was so excited about at the beginning. I think that this is something that I could have partially avoided if I had chosen to hand draw instead of using Illustrator.

I improved the most on the skill of Visual Literacy. Through the process of writing and illustrating the story I learned a lot about visual storytelling. This is a skill I have been working to improve throughout my Freestyle career, and I am very pleased with my progress after this project. The skill I did not improve as much as I had hoped I might would be Self Direction. I was good at setting goals and deadlines for myself, but I was not very successful in following through on them. Which created a lot of unnecessary stress in the end.

As I said before this project gave me a lot of insight as to what I want to be doing next year and potentially for the rest of my life. Because of how I felt about my

book near the completion, I start thinking more seriously about other options. Before this project I was very sure that I wanted to be studying either Graphic Design or Child Development in college, now I have accepted the fact that I don't really know what I want to do with my life. While I am still considering Graphic Design and Child Development as career options I have begun to consider other possibilities.

Despite the struggles I experienced with this project I am pleased with the outcome. I do feel that this elevated my skill and ignited my passion. I was happy with everything that I learned throughout the different aspects of this project and with the personal growth I made.