

Sarah Vincent

May 2, 2023

Professor Skelly

Writing for the Sciences

Reflection on “A Springtime Spectacle: The Kwanzan Cherry Trees of Madison Square Park”

From conducting this observation, I learned about my ability to appreciate the natural world and its impact on urban environments. As a student and a scientist, I discovered the importance of being open to new experiences and taking the time to observe and understand the world around me. My curiosity was piqued by the "mono no aware" concept and the "hanami" tradition, which enriched my understanding of the cultural significance of the Kwanzan cherry trees.

Before embarking on this observation, I had preconceived notions that an urban park might not provide a serene and transformative atmosphere due to its location in a busy city like New York. However, witnessing the enchanting atmosphere created by the Kwanzan cherry trees disrupted these assumptions. The fully-bloomed trees provided a peaceful and calming ambiance that allowed city-goers to momentarily escape the chaos of city life.

In retrospect, there were a few things I might have done differently when conducting this observation. I could have taken more detailed field notes, capturing the sights, sounds, and feelings evoked by the cherry trees. I could have interviewed visitors to get their perspectives on the cherry blossoms, which might have enriched my analysis by incorporating diverse viewpoints. Additionally, I could have explored other parts of the park to better understand how the cherry blossoms interacted with other elements of the park.

Overall, this observation has been a valuable learning experience, both personally and academically. It has taught me the importance of being present, appreciating the transient beauty of life, and embracing the sense of community that nature can foster.

### Self-Grading

Essay has an intriguing hook that pulls us in and compels us to read. (10%)

Score: 10/10

We understand who the writer is — your background is offered to help us understand your perspective. Article is self-reflective and includes personal responses to what you are observing — surprises, intrigues, and disturbances interwoven throughout. (20%)

Score: 20/20

Essay describes your chosen specimen and/or environment using at least two of the following four senses (sight, smell, sound, touch). (20%)

Score: 20/20 The essay describes the appearance and fragrance (sight and smell) of the Kwanzan cherry blossoms.

Essay includes a minimum of 2 secondary sources from supplementary research, cited in APA format (20%)

Score: 20/20 The essay cites six secondary sources in APA format.

Article reflects on the larger significance of your chosen topic and what role it fulfills in society.

(20%)

Score: 20/20

Submitting an additional 250-500 words in the form of a reflection that addresses each of the required questions, as well as a Works Cited (10%)

Score: 10/10

Total Score: 100/100