



To illustrate my experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic I created an illustration of a gas pump because of the extremely low gas prices during March and April of 2020. In March of 2020, the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire had the students living in the dorms move out. I was a freshman in my second semester and had recently gotten a job at the Menards Distribution Center in Eau Claire and was forced to move back to my hometown of Amery Wisconsin. With my brother losing his job in Milwaukee due to the pandemic, I decided it was best to keep working and hold on a source of income as long as possible. I was forced to drive 53 miles, from Amery to Eau Claire, for work and then drive back home. During this time, I would wake up at 9 a.m. to do schoolwork until 2:15 when I would leave for work. I would work from 4 p.m. until 12.30 a.m., returning home at around 2 a.m. I made this drive four times a week for three months in a 2011 Mercury Milan, which had a gas tank size of 17.5 gallons, totaling over 400 miles per week. Gas prices in Wisconsin were as low as \$1.21 per gallon compared to now at \$1.91. This drop in gas price saved me \$12.25 per fill up when going from empty to full.

My illustration shows the scenario of what it would cost me to fill my tank from empty to full at the price of gas during March and April of 2020. I show the price of gas with the octane rating of 87 or regular. This is a primary source because this is a scenario that I experienced for every week for three months. This shows how I was able to commute to work much cheaper than I would have otherwise paid.

This best shows my experience during the pandemic because it represents the fear I had of losing my only source of income and the experience of extremely low gas prices.

I think that future researchers can use this primary source to link the spread of COVID-19 in the early months of 2020 because spring break was also at the time of these low gas prices. Every year college students drive all over the country for spring break and with the cost to drive

being so cheap, some students would ignore the pandemic to travel. I believe this made COVID-19 much harder to contain and helped the spread of the virus all over the U.S.

In this class we have looked at many primary sources that are illustrations and that help tell a piece of story. This piece is much like that because areas all around the U.S. experienced severe drops in gas price may help tell a piece of the story behind pandemic in the U.S..