

English 12
Mr. Monsen
College Essay

Directions: Complete steps 1-10 in order in your notebook.

Step 1: Brainstorm ideas by completing the following two activities:

Activity One: Answer five of the questions below.

- 1) Create a hashtag that describes you and explain why that hashtag describes you.
- 2) You teach a course at Sachem East. What is it called and why?
- 3) Create your own College Essay prompt and explain why you believe that would help you get to know someone better.
- 4) You are required to spend the next year of your life in either the past or the future. What year would you travel to and why?
- 5) What matters most to you and why?
- 6) List one song that you think describes the way you live your life and explain how that song represents what you believe in.
- 7) What's your favorite word and why?
- 8) How do you feel about Wednesdays?
- 9) What is something that you have changed your mind about in the last year?
- 10) Name one overrated piece of technology and explain why you think it is overrated.

Activity Two: Copy the four categories below into your notebook (make them look like they do below in your notebook). Then, fill in each category using the directions below.

Directions: Make a list for each category stated below. For example, list all the people, places, objects, and events that are in your life and are special to you or have had an influence on you.

People _____ Events _____

Places _____ Objects _____

Step 2: Read the sample College Essay below entitled “While the World Sleeps” and answer the questions that go with it.

While the World Sleeps

When I wake up to the ear-splitting sound of my alarm clock, and blindly search for the snooze button, a sudden thought dawns: "What am I doing?"

The time is 5:30 AM; all is dark and hushed. My weary body feels completely drained of energy. While straining to open my eyes, still warm and snug in my comfortable bed, I am overcome with a feeling of lethargy. "Perhaps I should call in sick." Despite all my musing, and my bed's magnetic pull, I still manage to rise each morning at this ungodly hour to join the cross-country running team in rigorous training.

Cross-country running, a sport that requires the fusing of body and mind, strives to maximize your physical ability by testing your mental tenacity. Every day represents a new struggle to beat yesterday's maximum output, an issue of mind over matter. I have known the agony of this conflict since I joined the newly established cross-country team. As convincing as my morning doubts are, I do not heed them. Through pains and sprains and through adverse weather and unfavorable conditions, I run because I made up my mind three years ago to succeed.

With amenities such as cars and buses, I have no pragmatic reason to use my feet, especially if I lack a destination. I do not run to the gym to acquire a stylish figure, for my slender frame does not require it. And this grueling run differs from a relaxing jog to a coffee shop. I am pushing myself constantly to run faster and farther, for my team as well as for personal glory. Somehow with tireless effort and unflagging commitment, I run through the sleeping streets of my neighborhood with the awareness that I am steadily reaching my goal-maintaining the discipline that cross-country demands. In my mind I see a victory line that symbolizes the results of perseverance and hard work. This line makes me realize that ambition and tenacity do not go in vain. And it constantly reminds me that all those mornings in which I struggled to leave my cozy cocoon have allowed me to fly.

While the world slept, I, Jane Smith, was awake and working hard to attain my goal. I feel more confident now, that on the road of life, when others may be walking, I will be running. I will run through ankle injuries and through fatigue. I will endure the inevitable hills and valleys. I will endure, and I will achieve.

Word Count: 450 words

Questions about “While the World Sleeps” college essay:

- 1) List two adjectives that accurately describe the author of this essay (i.e. funny, sincere, etc...). Provide two examples from the essay that help you prove the author is the type of person you say she is.
- 2) What is the person or event that influences/inspires the author of this essay? And how has the author’s life been shaped by this person/event?
- 3) What is the best part about this essay in your opinion? Be specific.
- 4)
- 5) How does the beginning of this essay help or hurt the essay as a whole in getting the message across to the reader?

Step 3: Copy the “Definition of a College Essay” notes below into your notebook:

Definition of a College Essay

A College Essay/Personal Statement

is

Half Story and Half Essay.

It must get your point across like an essay,

but it should entertain like a story.

Step 4: Copy the College Essay Outline sample for this assignment below into your notebook and then complete your own outline:

College Essay Outline

Topic/Theme: Fishing with Grandpa Every Sunday at Our Cabin Upstate

I. Lead – Describe the two of us sitting on a peaceful lake at our cabin fishing in the early morning.

II. Explain the person/event/object/place – Grandpa and I would go upstate every Sunday for a fishing trip to relax and enjoy each other’s company.

III. Describe the impact it has/had on you– Grandpa and these trips taught me to appreciate life and what real family values are about.

IV. Wrap it Up (Self-explanatory)

Now, choose a topic from your list of ideas you created yesterday and outline it like the sample you just read. Use the format below to help you outline your essay.

Topic:

I. Lead –

II. Explain the person/event/object/place –

III. Describe the impact it has/had on you –

IV. Wrap it Up

Step 5: Copy the “Writing Effective Leads” notes below into your notebook and then write two different versions of a lead for your chosen topic:

Notes for Writing Effective Leads:

An Effective Lead (beginning) will draw the reader in so they want to read more of your writing piece. There are five major techniques that writers use to do this. They are self- explanatory.

Effective Leads

- 1) THE DRAMATIC LEAD
- 2) STARTING IN THE MIDDLE OF A SCENE
- 3) BEGINNING AT THE ENDING
- 4) INTRODUCING THE NARRATOR
- 5) KEEP ‘EM GUESSING

Step 6: Copy the notes for “Transitional Words Notes” below into your notebook and then take the quiz on Transitional Words in your notebook as well. Don’t cheat and look at the answers until you are finished with the quiz. Use the key to grade your quiz when are finished. Each question is worth 20 points. Write the grade you earned in your notebook by the quiz.

Transitional Words/Phrases Notes

Words or phrases that connect ideas to make them flow better.

Transitional Words Quiz

Practice: Number 1-5 in your notebook and don't skip lines. Read each sentence below and write just the transitional word or phrase that fits best.

1. I would like to see you tomorrow, (so/ however/ again) let's have lunch together.
2. That restaurant is awful. Yesterday, (and/ for example/ however), I found a bug in my soup.
3. She felt exhausted; (therefore/ nevertheless/ whereas), she took a nap.
4. John eats five big meals a day; (as a result/ despite this/ hence), he never gains weight.
5. Josephine ate too fast. (Consequently/ Likewise/ In contrast), she had indigestion.

Transitional Words Key

1. so
2. for example
3. therefore
4. despite this
5. consequently


Step 7: Copy the “Introductory Phrase” notes below into your notebook. Then take the Introductory Phrase Quiz in your notebook and grade it using the Answer Key. Again, don't cheat! Write the grade down next to the quiz when you are finished.

Introductory Phrase Notes

An introductory phrase sets the stage for the main part of the sentence. When you use an introductory phrase in your writing, you're signaling to the reader that the central message of the sentence is yet to come.

Introductory phrase example: *While getting ready for bed*, Susan heard a knock at the door.

Introductory Phrase Quiz

Directions: Write the word(s) that come before the comma and the comma for each sentence below. *I'll give you the answer to #1r.* For example, the answer for #1 would look like this  1. Yes, world,

Now do the rest of the questions in your notebook and grade the quiz.

1. Yes for many people around the world meat is not a daily food staple.
2. Serving as a main source of nutrition whole grains such as corn, oats, wheat, and rice feed millions.
3. In Mexico a favorite nutritious dish is a corn tortilla with beans.
4. Because the soybean is high in protein it has been a principal crop in Asian countries for more than five thousand years.
5. If you'd like more variety in your diet you may want to substitute unrefined whole grains for meat occasionally.
6. Offering healthful alternatives to meat whole grains contain nutrients such as vitamins, proteins, amino acids, and starches.
7. In the process of making spoilage-resistant products some food manufacturers refine whole grains.
8. Refined for commercial use the grains lose most of their food value because the nutritious outer hulls are stripped away.
9. If you take time in the supermarket you should be able to find whole grains.
10. Since many cookbooks now include recipes for grain dishes you can learn to use grains in many tasty snacks and meals.

Introductory Phrases Quiz Key

1. Yes, world,
2. nutrition,
3. Mexico,
4. protein,
5. diet,
6. meat,
7. products,
8. use,
9. supermarket,
10. dishes,

Step 8: Write the rough draft of your essay in your notebook first. *Try incorporating as many skills from this packet as you can into this piece. It will only make the piece and your grade better.* The skills you should use are: Effective Lead, Following an Outline, Transitional Words, and Introductory Phrases.

Step 9: Type up the **final copy** of your College Essay to look like the sample you read earlier.

Step 10: Submit the essay to Google Classroom by the deadline on the calendar.