

All Grown Up

...

By Annabella Shea

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Not High School Musical

What have I learned from high school?

It's hard to sum up four years into 400 words. But it was nothing like the movies and tv shows. Although, as each year went by it got easier. I was one who struggled a lot, but most people didn't really know. I never had a group of friends I grew up with and had throughout high school, I felt left out. I had a hard time figuring out who my true friends are. Let alone that I was also struggling with ADD.

The end of freshman year, I stopped caring. I was going through a lot and gave up on myself.

In sophomore year, I was happier than I was before but I was still figuring out who my friends are. I got better academically, but still had ups and downs.

Going into junior year, I wasn't struggling with school much anymore. Finding friends was still a struggle, but I was in a relationship, so friends weren't the number one priority in my life. All was going well but then COVID hit and it was a downhill roller coaster from there. The world shut down and no one knew what to do.

Now it's senior year and the world is no longer normal. It's my last year, my year to have fun. But senior year is now ruined. I was in a year and a half long relationship that I was not happy in, but didn't know it at the time. I'm beyond confused with what I want. I have to make big scary decisions. I have to choose a college. I have to think what's best for me and what will make me happy. Do I make two big scary decisions and go to school in Hawaii and end my relationship? There's only three more months left until I'm out of here, so what do I do? Well, I put on my big girl pants and ended my almost two year relationship and chose a college. All the stress is gone and a weight has been lifted off my shoulders. I realized so much from making those decisions. The result from facing these decisions was me being the happiest I've been. These decisions were a big change I was scared to face, but I was ready for them.

I found my real friends and I'm a part of a friend group. I'm going out every day and living my best life. I've never been happier.

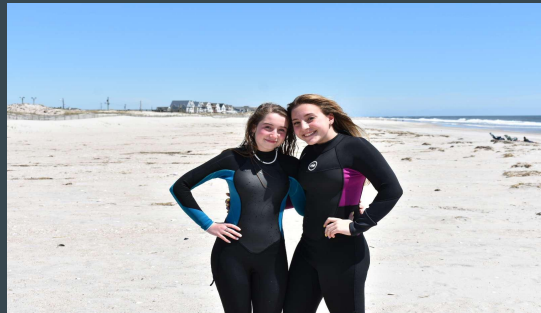
So what has high school taught me?

Valuable lessons. I've learned to listen to your friends advice, don't stress over the little things, even though it may seem like the end of the world, and always listen to your parents when they say you're young- take chances! Be brave!

Live your life!

Reflection

The reflection essay about high school was most likely by far my favorite piece we have wrote this year. The writing came easy to me. I was able to express what high school was and meant to me. I expressed my high school career, and what I've learned from it. This piece showed me how much I've grown up and matured not only as a person but a writer too. I thoroughly enjoyed writing this piece and all the words flew out of my mind onto the paper so easily.



Love Yourself

“I’m gonna love myself, no, I don’t need anybody else”- Hailee Steinfeld

Some people may say that they love themselves. But how many people can say they do and 100% mean it truly. Loving yourself is an extremely difficult task to overcome and truly mean it. For some it’s difficult to even put them themselves first. Many don’t understand and realize how important it is.

Learning to love yourself is a challenge most people don’t overcome. Some people may use being in a relationship as a helpful confidence boost because you hear it from someone else. Therefore it is more believable and it gives you more self confidence. Some may think that’s loving yourself but it’s not. You don’t need anyone to help you love you. Being in a relationship is really no help at all to help yourself love you for who you are. It may seem like it helps but it’s really doing the opposite. You can still not love yourself while being in a relationship. Most people don’t or don’t realize it when they’re dating someone. You tend to worry about the other more than you. The true key to a successful relationship is loving yourself first. You have to put yourself first, think about you, and be selfish. Loving yourself is a key in life. You will be more successful when you learn to love you.

Some people use music to help them with whatever they’re going through. In the song “love yourself” by Hailee Steinfeld, I took her lyrics more in depth and they had a deeper meaning to me. I felt the lyrics and deeply thought about them unlike most would. Just from that one song I learned more about loving yourself than most would from listening to it. Loving yourself is no easy task to accomplish. Some may say they understand it and that they do love themselves. But maybe they don’t understand the concept fully and don’t fully love themselves just yet.

Next time you say you love yourself. Stop and think if you 100% mean it and love yourself fully. It;s not something you can accomplish overnight. It’s a long hard process to overcome. There are many ups and downs. Once you truly accomplish the task of loving yourself, you’ll feel like the world is in your hands.

Reflection

This piece gave a line from a song a deeper meaning to me. Most people who listen to music these days don't fully listen to the lyrics of a song and look at the deeper meaning to it. With the song "Love Yourself", I deeply listened to the lyrics and took it to heart. I learned something very important in life that most usually don't learn. I learned a lot about loving yourself just from a line of a song. Trying to figure out how to word and write this piece was a struggle I had, but I overcame it.



Grown Up

In elementary school,
I wanted to be a big girl
Pick out my own clothes
Do my own hair
Hang out with my friends

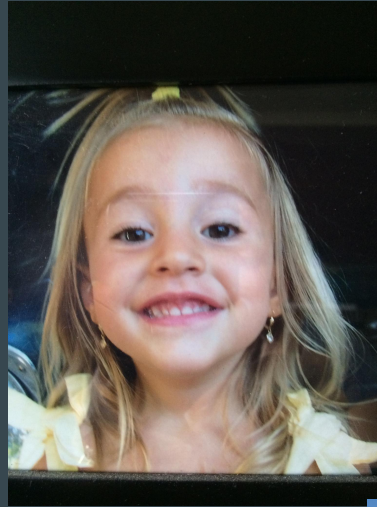
In middle school,
I just wanted to get to high school
Be able to drive
Go where I want
Do what I want

Remember when I said
I couldn't wait to grow up?
When I said I wanted to get out of here
Go to college far away
Get a job
Live my own life

Now I'm a senior
Scared of change
Meeting new people
Not living at home
Making big decisions
I'm a grown up

Reflection

With this poem it showed me how much I really will miss school even though I do dislike it strongly. This piece gave me a bittersweet feeling. It made me think about all the things I used to do and say as a little kid that I no longer do. I took some of it for granted. It really showed me the meaning of when your parents say "don't grow up." Overall I really enjoyed writing something different and easy.



Double Curve

As I sit in the back seat of the car already dreading the doctors appointment, my mom asks “are you nervous?”.

I replied saying “no”.

I think to myself, why would I be nervous if it's a doctor's appointment. I had no idea what was in store for me.

After about 30 minutes we arrived at the doctors. As I walked up to the door and stepped aside, I said to myself “this is not the normal doctors”.

I proceed to sit down with my parents and wait for an assistant to call my name. As I'm slouching in the chair, dreading every moment. I hear my name, “Annabella”. My parents and I stand up and start to follow the assistant. When I'm walking down the hallway I peek inside a different room. I see a guy put on a prosthetic leg. My head starts to fill up with thoughts of confusion but I try to ignore them. I continue walking to the room they assign me in and continue the dreadful process of this appointment. As I'm miserable waiting for the doctor, I look to my left and see a poster of a spine. All of the confusing thoughts come together and piece by piece add up.

“I know why I'm here”, I think to myself. I had an “ahhhh” moment.

“We're here for my back aren't we”, I say to my mom.

“Yes” she replied with.

I say to myself, “I know why I'm here now but I still don't understand why”.

Shortly after the small talk with my mom, the doctor walks in and introduces himself. Then he follows up with why I'm here. My face starts to show interest.

“Finally some answers”, I say to myself.

My mom proceeds to say to the doctor, “Annabella got screened at school for scoliosis and the nurses said she seems to have a mild case”.

The doctor then goes to ask me if I could touch my toes so he can examine my back. I stand up with annoyance but do what he asks. He goes on to explain that I do indeed have a mild curve.

He says “you have a double curvature of your spine, it's mild as of right now but will get worse as you grow”.

My mom then asks “what can we do to fix this”.

The doctor proceeds to say, “there's a brace that will help fix your back but not permanently and you will have to wear it for 23 hours a day”.

My jaw drops and I get so many different feelings and mixed emotions. All I want to do is cry. The doctor explains to me what the brace is and what I will need to do with it.

“It's an uncomfortable hard plastic brace with many curves, it will be on your whole upper body. You will need to wear it all day in school and when you go to sleep.”

The first thought that popped into my head was “yeah okay that's not gonna happen”. But my mom pushed me everyday to wear it so in the future I wouldn't have to get surgery.

After I got the brace it took a good amount of time to get used to wearing it for long hours but in the end I never got used to it. Having to wear something like that, you'll never get used to it. And so I would wear the brace for 16-18 hours a day. That was the most I could do. I was only 12 years old, how was I supposed to do this. Wearing this brace was a nightmare, every single part of it. Having to wear it to school and to sleep was a challenge for sure. I already struggled with school as it was with my grades, having ADD, and trying to find the right friends. Now I had to go with a brace to help fix my back, I felt like the new weird kid. Having to learn to deal with the uncomfortableness and trying to sit and do my work in class without having a breakdown and crying or having kids stare at me because they see something poking out of my shirt. The nurses became my new best friends and tried to make me feel better in any way they could. But my mom always told me I was strong. No one could ever possibly understand what I went through which honestly just made everything worse.

As I got to high school and got older wearing the brace just became less and less of a thing. I was over it, I didn't want to deal with it anymore. I certainly didn't want to start high school with it either. As much as I hate the brace and my back, it became a huge part of my life.

Reflection

With this piece I was able to look back and think about a memory and write about it. I'm the type of person that enjoys looking back and thinking about memories.

Therefore I really liked writing this piece. It was a heart touching piece that let the reader in just a little and read what I went through in middle and start of high school. I enjoyed how different and heart touching the piece was.



Mom's Little Girl

What she remembers is...

the constant battle between the schools and her,
never giving up for her,
to get her better help with school,
telling her that everything will be okay,

What she knows is...

that she will always fight for me,
she will always be there for her,
if she's sad or needs help with school or a shoulder to cry on,
she knows how proud she makes her,
with everything that she's been through,
because she is her mother.

What she doesn't tell her is...

how proud she is of her,
that everything she does for her never goes unappreciated,
how much she loves her,
and how thankful she is for her.

You have truly gone above and beyond.

So this is for you Mom.

I love you.

Reflection

The gift piece was one of the easiest and touching pieces I wrote in my high school career. I enjoyed how I was able to gift this to my mom and show her how much I appreciate and love her. It shows how much I've matured, grown up, and appreciate all the things she does for me. I thought of all the little things she does for me that I don't say thank you enough for.



Literary Log

Books	Author	Genre	Page #
Shawshank Redemption	Stephen King	Crime Fiction	527
Hamlet	William Shakespeare	Shakespearean Tragedy	104
One Flew Over	Ken Kesey	Tragedy	320

About the Author

The author of this portfolio, Annabella Shea, was born on April 23rd of 2003. She lives in Holtsville with both parents. One of her brothers lives in California. The other lives in Northport.

In Annabella's free time you can spot her on the beach surfing during the summer. When it's not summer, she's working at her local grocery store. Otherwise you can find her helping her dad teaching her the ways of life.

She hopes to achieve the degree of Bachelors of Nursing at Adelphi University. Her goal after is to find a job in the NICU or in labor and delivery.

Annabella is a strong, hard working person hoping she is making her parents proud of who they helped become the woman she is.

