

Welcome to English 12!
Summer Reading/Writing Assignment

Your summer project contains 3 Assignments. Please feel free to email me with questions. Include "Summer Reading Question" in the Subject Heading of the email.

- #1: Write and Type a Resume
- #2: Write and Type a College Application Essay
- #3: Read one book from page 2 of this document, and complete a dialectical journal.

Assignment #1 RESUME: On a separate sheet of paper, include a typed, one-page resume. Update it to include jobs and activities through summer 2019.

- Sample resumes: <http://www.mass.edu/gearup/documents/WritingaResume.pdf>
- <https://www.thebalance.com/high-school-resume-examples-and-writing-tips-2063554>

Assignment #2 COLLEGE APPLICATION ESSAY: Choose one of the prompts below. Write a polished, final draft in response to the prompt. Type the prompt at the top of your first page. Essays must be double-spaced.

- Use MLA format: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/13/>
- Include a word count at the bottom of the page(not including essay prompt). Max 650 words.
- **Save a digital copy of the essay and resume that can be revised at school.**

2019-2020 Common Application Essay Prompts

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?

Assignment #3: Reading and Analyzing Personal Narratives

*Read each selected essay. For each essay, create a chart like the one below. Provide a quote/text example when answering each question on the chart. (You may type or draw and write (if you write neatly) this chart.)

Essay Title: _____		
	Quote/Text Example	Analysis
A. What words or phrases does the author use to establish the SETTING of the story? How does the author “show” instead of “tell” the setting?		
B. When did you find out the CONFLICT/central problem in the story? What is the conflict?		
C. Where does the author slow down the story to create TENSION?		
D. How does the author CONCLUDE the story? (What does the author do to make the story feel “finished”?)		
E. What were the “best parts” of the story? What did the author write well?		
F. Describe how the author uses one of the following: diction, imagery, irony, juxtaposition, metaphor, onomatopoeia, parallelism, simile. Define: https://literarydevices.net/		
G. If you were a peer editor, what suggestions would you give the author to make the story better?		

EXAMPLE=Narrative Analysis Chart Response to part G:

Essay: (from <i>Fast Food Nation</i> by Eric Schlosser)	
G. Diction Quote	Analysis
<p>“Doherty’s suggestions [of providing good wages and health benefits] received <u>polite applause</u>.”</p> <p>The keynote speaker Novak “<u>charmed the audience</u>” and talked about making work “fun.”</p> <p>“As the crowd <u>laughed and roared and applauded...</u>”</p>	<p>Diction=Word choice</p> <p>Schlosser uses “polite applause” to show the audience did not really care what Doherty said. It is clear the crowd <u>really</u> liked Novak, (the man who was against unions and raising minimum wage) because “the crowd laughed and roared and applauded” when Novak spoke. Schlosser implies the restaurant operators and executives do not really care about their workers.</p>

Personal Narrative #1 Amy, the author of this personal narrative, effectively uses voice to convey the fear she feels as she ascends a path to an area above a 100-ft. waterfall. Her expert choice of words helps to paint a beautiful picture of her surroundings.

The Climb

I have this fear. It causes my legs to shake. I break out in a cold sweat. I start jabbering to anyone who is nearby. As thoughts of certain death run through my mind, the world appears a precious, treasured place. I imagine my own funeral, then shrink back at the implications of where my thoughts are taking me. My stomach feels strange. My palms are clammy.

I am terrified of heights.

Of course, it’s not really a fear of being in a high place. Rather, it is the view of a long way to fall, of rocks far below me and no firm wall between me and the edge. My sense of security is screamingly absent. There are no guardrails, flimsy though I picture them, or other safety devices. I can rely only on my own surefootedness—or lack thereof.

Despite my fear, two summers ago I somehow found myself climbing to a high place, while quaking inside and out. Most of our high school had come along on a day trip to the Boquerón, a gorgeous, lush spot in the foothills of Peru. Its prime attraction is the main waterfall, about 100 feet high, that thunders into a crystal clear pool feeding the Aguaytia River. All around the pool and on down to the rushing river are boulders large and small. The beach is strewn with rocks. On both sides of the fall, the jungle stretches to meet it, rising parallel to it on a gentler slope.

After eating our sack lunches within sight and sound of the fall, many of us wanted to make the climb to an area above it. We knew others had done so on previous trips. A few guys went first to make sure they were on the right path. But after they left, my

group of seven decided to go ahead without waiting for them to return. I suspected we were going the wrong way, but I kept silent, figuring that the others knew better. We went along the base of the hill until we reached the climb. It stopped me in my tracks.

The climb ascended steeply above us. Along the right edge, the jungle hugged the rocks; passage through its trees did not look feasible. The majority of my view was filled with rocks. Looming high to the sky, the boulders rose in a tiered manner. Peering back down toward the river, I saw a steep slope of rocks all the way to the water. All I could think about was how far it would be to fall.

My tense thoughts were interrupted by the realization that my friends were already beginning to climb! My anxiety increased as I watched them.

Do I turn back? My whole being shouted, "Yes!" Will I regret it later? I really want to get to the top, but...

I voiced my uncertainties to my friends. They dismissed my fears and encouraged me to stick it out. Questioning my own sanity, I decided at least to attempt the climb.

I chose a path that seemed easiest. My friend Tom was ahead of me. Then, suddenly, he slipped and slid backward about 10 feet! I watched, paralyzed, until he stopped himself and assured us he was all right. My heart was hammering.

Now those who had tried the other way came back; it had not worked. Consoling myself that my friend Seth would be right behind me, I shakily began the ascent. The "path" led up a narrow area between boulders. In it, we reached a place where there just were no good handholds. Seth braced my foot, and those above sent down words of encouragement. I was soon past the first challenge safely, but not feeling much better about the rest of the climb.

The difficulties only increased from that point on, with scary spot after scary spot. Though I knew I should not look down, I could not always ignore the long drop to the boulders below. My breathing sped up, but my heart pounded even faster, growing loud in my ears.

My friends kept right on climbing. But they did not forget me. Someone was always behind me to help hold my feet steady when necessary, and someone else was always ahead to offer a hand up. I trusted them more than myself; I knew my feet could easily slip. With friends supporting me by words and actions, I slowly gained ground.

Finally we came to the worst section yet. To me the slope looked very close to vertical. The slight handholds were few and far between. Being short, I knew the stretches would be difficult enough in normal conditions. In my current panic, it would be much worse. The alternative was to go back down. Which was more difficult? I didn't want to go either way, but obviously I had to go somewhere.

The trouble was, we were not getting any nearer to the falls. By now, we realized that this route was not the way most frequented! But knowing this did not get me any closer to safety.

Since getting up this next part was next to impossible, and waiting for a rescue helicopter was not an option, with fear and trembling I decided to go down, but not by myself. Melody agreed to go with me, earning my eternal gratitude. She paused to pray for safety; I did not trust my voice enough to pray aloud.

Now, with our backs to the rocks, the drop was continually in our line of vision. It seemed even steeper than before. The song “Angels Watching Over Me” ran through my head as we began, Melody going first. I kept up a steady stream of chatter, my trembling voice betraying my fear.

One of the first tough places we came to gave us trouble. Cautiously stretching one foot down, Melody could not reach the bottom of the boulder. A slip would mean an extremely long drop. So we tried a different route where a fall would be shorter. It was somewhat wet and would entail a short slide to reach the bottom.

Melody made it safely. I hesitated, unsure of my footing, and picturing myself at the bottom of the cliff, bones broken and pain wracking my body, if I still lived.

“You can do it! I'm right here,” Melody called. She waited patiently, not pressuring me to hurry.

Inching carefully to the edge, I could see in the corner of my eye the boulders and river far below. As I started down the rock, my foot slipped! My heart jumped into my throat as the terror I had held just under the surface swept over me.

I'm gonna fall! I inwardly shrieked.

It had been only a small slip, however; I was not in midair! I took a few calming breaths, and my heart repositioned itself where it belonged.

With no further mishaps, we came eventually to the last troublesome spot, the stretch between two boulders that had given me problems on the way up. Thankfully, the rest of our friends had given up climbing to the top and had now caught up to us. There were two possible descents from here. One way included a short jump down. I decided to check out the other way. Seth was working his way down this second route when he fell a few feet and bruised himself! I again looked over the first option.

Do I want to jump? There's a big drop if I jump wrong or don't stop on the ledge! But the other way...!

I knew if I was to get down, it would have to be Seth's way. He was willing to help me however he could. I inspected the “path” he had taken. There was some low vegetation, matted down and sloping slightly toward the edge. Then came a drop down to a narrow inlet between rocks. That was not so bad. The hitch lay in the fact that there was no handholds or footholds, and my short legs would not reach to the rocks.

“Uh, I don't know about this. I don't like the looks of it!” I said, my voice quavering.

“You can make it, Amy! I'm right here. I won't let you fall,” Seth promised.

Slowly, painstakingly, I backed over the vegetation.

"I'm coming down," I warned, my voice unsteady.

"I'm ready," answered Seth. "I got you."

His assurances gave me the strength to go on. I trusted him implicitly. Flattening myself onto my belly, I edged my feet into midair. Seth held them tightly and slowly lowered me, guiding my feet to a firm place as I let my body slide over the leaves, twigs, and rock. When my feet made contact with the solid rock, I heaved a huge sigh of relief. I could feel the fear draining out of me.

My arms and legs were scratched up; I was dirty and sweaty. But none of it mattered. I was at the bottom!

"Yaaaaaaahhhh!" I yelled. I never felt so alive, and so thankful for that life.

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Personal Narrative #2 David deftly interweaves past events that lead up to the football game with the present events of the game itself. The author's voice comes through loud and clear in the dialogue and in his new-found zeal for football.

Huddling Together

"Let's kill 'em!" Bob exclaims as we walk toward the stadium.

"I'd love to see Zach Thomas crush Thurman Thomas," I reply.

We are not brutal people; we are simply expressing our need to win at all costs. The Miami Dolphins are playing the Buffalo Bills, their most hated opponent. We had this game circled on the calendar since training camp began. The thermometer on this Monday night reads a cool 68 degrees, but the atmosphere in the stadium burns like desert heat.

"It doesn't get better than this," Bob says as we occupy our seats just a few rows up from the end zone.

"I wouldn't trade this for anything else," I reply. "You, me, the fans, the noise, the action: what more could I want?" The countdown to the opening kickoff nears five minutes. The crowd files in while the players run onto the field through the giant inflated Dolphins helmet. Everyone stands united during the singing of the national anthem. The Bills win the coin toss, and they choose to receive the opening kickoff. "That's the only thing you guys are gonna win tonight!" I jest.

Bob has lived with my mother and me for five years, and he will marry my mother this coming March. Fortunately, I never experienced the crisis of anguish and rebellion that many children suffer in divorces and remarriages. From the beginning, I felt comfortable around him. He never attempted to dominate the household or me.

Naturally, though, we did not immediately feel a bond as strong as the one I share with my parents. Football sparked the beautiful friendship we have.

Football never interested me earlier in my life. I thought of it as a pointless sport in which a bunch of fat men jumped on top of each other. I rolled my eyes the first time Bob spoke about football. I figured I would have to put up with this nonsense until I left for college. “Lovely,” I thought. “Just lovely.”

I reluctantly allowed Bob to teach me the workings of the game. As he helped me analyze the game, I started distinguishing linebackers from running backs in a “dogpile.” We picked apart defenses as a quarterback would, and I called penalties before the referees did. The underlying organization of the game revealed itself to me, and its logic suited my predominantly left-brained mind perfectly. More importantly, though, football fostered a common bonding ground for us.

“Touchdown, your Miami Dolphins!” the announcer proclaims. Sixty-five thousand aqua-clad Dolphin fans stand cheering in the aisles; thirteen thousand blue-clothed, blue-faced Bills fans slouch dejectedly in their seats. Bob and I carry out our own touchdown ritual: we alternate high fives between our left and right hands six times: one for each point scored. Olindo Mare kicks the ball through the goalposts as if aiming at us, and we exchange another high five for the extra point. The Dolphins jingle echoes off the walls of the stadium while the residual smoke of fireworks blankets the stadium.

“They just can’t beat our defense,” Bob says in awe. The Dolphins take a quick 10-0 lead, and our devastating defense destroys the determination of the Bills when they threaten to score. The Bills offense drives down to the three-yard line after the Dolphin defense commits a pass-interference penalty. They attempt two runs and a pass; all three fail. On fourth down, they must kick a field goal, but they fail to convert the kick to a score because a linebacker blocks the kick. Bob and I howl like wolves and bump chests. We savor the goal-line stand as we laugh at the Buffalo fans seated two rows in front of us.

After just half a season, football established itself as an institution in my household. Every Sunday, I found myself glued to the television screen for nine hours soaking up football. Consequently, I spent a good amount of time with Bob on our reclining couch, by far the best place for guys to talk. Most of the talking involved football, but beer and car commercials supplied key opportunities for other topics to slip into conversation, such as my schoolwork, my progress in karate, his job, and his latest scuba dives. Deeper subjects such as marriage, my relationship with my father, and our feelings about my mother came up as well. Football provided us with the perfect excuse to get to know each other.

“And that’s the end of the half with your Miami Dolphins leading the Buffalo Bills twenty to ten.” We leaned back in our seats and put football aside for a while.

“So when are you taking the SAT?” Bob asks.

“I’m taking it in April. It doesn’t count, though, you know. I just want to see how good my verbal is so that I know what improvements I have to make.”

“So, do you have any girl interests right now?”

“No, not really. There was this one girl I liked a few weeks ago, but she’s too fake for me. How’s work going?”

“It’s all right. Some of the tech stocks took big hits this week, but the pharmaceuticals went up nicely. When are you going to Minnesota to visit your dad?”

“Not this coming weekend, but the next one. It’s starting to get pretty cold up there.”

We continue talking until the game resumes. Miami scores a quick touchdown to secure its lead. The offense drives on cruise control, and the defense stands its ground. Time winds down, and the Dolphins win by a score of 30-13. The victory song (“Na-na, na, nah; Na-na, na, nah; Hey, hey-ey, good-bye”) plays over the speakers. Players run to the locker room raising their helmets high above their heads; fans stream into the parking lot, shouting cheers of supremacy.

“That was awesome.” My words dribble hoarsely after yelling for hours. “We couldn’t have played a better game.”

“You got that right. Marino got us 30 points tonight, we only allowed one touchdown, and Mare was perfect on his kicking. It’s always great to leave the stadium like this.”

“Especially after Monday-nighters. The last thing I’d want is to lose, sulk on the way home, and then get only three hours of sleep because I’ve got school the next day. Phew, I’m so tired. The intensity just wears me out.”

“I had a great time, Dave. It’s always fun watching with you. You get so into it. You’re a nut!”

Through our mutual enjoyment of football, I have acquired a more son-like warmth toward Bob. That change reflects Bob’s transition from visiting us to living with us. I do not say, “Hey, Bob, how’s it going?” anymore; instead, I greet him with “Good morning, Bob. What are you doing today?” I am the son he never had, and he fills in some of the holes that my father left when he moved to Minnesota. Amazingly enough, it all started with a brown pigskin ball.

The beauty of football lies in its power to unite crowds. The beauty of love lies in its power to unite individuals.

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Personal Narrative #3

Karen, in eleventh grade, shares the details of a Saturday spent working for her family’s business. Her descriptions bring the subject to life, and her ending tells the reader why this work is important to her.

H's Hickory Chips

I look at the old tin building; it seems to have been there since the beginning of time. Its strong posts and nonchalant slouch make me wonder if it will be rooted in the same place forever. As soon as I walk in, the strong, rustic smell of hickory wood assails me. It takes me back to my family's last Fourth of July barbeque, when the hickory chips smoking the ribs gave off their thick aroma. I wait for my eyes to adjust in the dark, humid place, not taking a step until they do because of the ageless spider that could have made its home in my path. My tongue already asks for a drink of water as I breathe the musty air littered with sawdust. Spraying on sticky repellent, I wonder if the thirsty mosquitoes will stay away.

I walk to my work area, making sure I do not trip over the precious finds and the hopeful antiques. I brush against a wall of the old building that is really more of a shed, and a mat of spiderwebs clings to my shirt and refuses to come off. The gentle hum of the small fans and the roar of the monster ones fight against the humid air.

I pull out a machine that is supposed to tie the two-pound bags that are full of hickory chips, but it has a mind of its own. Placing the bulky machine on the high bench with its layers of gritty sawdust, I hope it has decided to work today and load a bag into it. As I pull down the top of the machine, I stare it in its mechanical eyes, willing it to work. I pull the bag back out of the machine and look down on another battle lost. For now the brute has won the war of wills, and I prepare myself with a box of red ties to close all 1,000 of the smooth bags by hand.

The clang of the shovel dumping its first load onto the ancient scale can be heard throughout the shed, signaling that work has begun. The salty sweat begins to bead on my forehead, and for the first of many times, I wipe it away, leaving a smudge of dirt and dust. Already I yell "First shower!" to assure my place in line after our work is completed. I hear my three sisters shout numbers throughout the shed. Amanda, the last to call a number, frowns, knowing she will have to wait a long time for the hot water to return after all the showers.

My grandfather walks into the shed, a cane in one hand and a pack of icy cold colas in the other. His deep Southern drawl permeates the building as he asks if we've had lunch yet. Our eyes brighten and smiles play on our faces as we silently hope he will offer the traditional sloppy whopper and golden fries. He leaves as silently as he came in, and our stomachs start to growl with anticipation for lunch.

My sisters' and aunt's chatting and soft laughter has started as they begin to catch up on each other's lives. I look around, wondering what people would say if they could see the Horne sisters outside of the house with no makeup on and their hair in disarray. I laugh and keep the thoughts to myself, listening in as my aunt's next story

begins.

At the end of the day, when all of the work is done, I pull the pallet—our makeshift gate—closed and pet my grandfather’s latest endeavor at a vicious watchdog. I sigh with relief that it’s over. Even though sometimes I dread the thought of work, especially when I know it is going to occupy another Saturday, the time spent with my family and the laughter shared will always be worth the sweat and scrapes. The memories will always be treasures in my mind and will continue to be among the things I laugh about and love the most.

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Personal Narrative #4 This model recounts an embarrassing public experience that provided the writer with new insight into teen pregnancy, single parenthood, and social stigmas. The voice of the piece shows the writer's personality and easily connects with readers. Many vivid details make the experience come to life.

It's a Boy!

“Congratulations, you have a new baby boy!” my child-development teacher said as she handed over the 10-pound bundle.

Last year in my high school child-development class, each student had to take the “Think-It-Over” baby home for a night to get a taste of parenthood. Even before I received the baby, I knew I was not ready to be a parent as a senior in high school. I could still remember when my brother and sister were little and I would have to take care of them all the time. At least the doll had no dirty diapers I would have to change.

It was a Friday night when my turn came to take the 10-pound plastic doll home. The doll really did look like a live baby from a distance. It even had a pleasant baby powder smell. After I took the baby home in his car seat, I changed him into some really cute clothes because my friends and I were going out that night. I then decided to name him Tyler.

Inside the body of this doll was a computer that was programmed to make periodic crying sounds. I was the only person who could stop the crying because I had the key. This key, tied to my wrist, could be inserted in the doll’s back to stop the crying. So far, so good. The doll had not cried, yet.

My friends came over, and we all piled into the car. It was kind of squished because we had the baby’s seat in there, too. I had to treat the doll like a real baby because the computer inside also measured any abuse to the doll, such as shaking or neglect. The hour-long drive to the restaurant was uneventful. It was rather chilly, so I decided to wrap Tyler in a blanket and carry him in that way. I also had a diaper bag with diapers, a bottle, and an extra set of clothes hanging on my arm.

Because it was Friday night, there were a lot of people waiting in line to get a table. When I walked into that crowded entryway, I got some very weird looks and quite

a few raised eyebrows. My friends also noticed the glares and stares, so we decided to make a game out of the whole situation. I stood in the corner pretending to rock Tyler to sleep. Every once in a while my friends would peek in the blanket and say, "Oh, how cute." I could not help but laugh. And although it was funny to my friends and me, some of the people did not think it was so funny that I had a baby. I overheard one couple say, "Why would she bring a baby here?" These people were giving me rude looks and forming judgments about me because they thought I was a teenage mom. Others just smiled at me sympathetically and felt sorry for me because I was only a child with a child.

We finally got a table, and the waiter, not knowing I was carrying a doll, asked me if I needed a high chair. I told him it was just a doll, but a high chair would be good. He thought it was funny that I actually dared to bring a doll into the restaurant, so he brought a high chair, plus a red balloon for the little one.

Again, during our meal, my friends and I received strange looks from the others in the restaurant. One couple kept walking by our table just to get a look at my baby. I think they were trying to figure out if the doll was an actual baby. As the couple walked by, my friends and I started discussing how people so quickly judged me and assumed that I was the mother of the baby. We decided that we would probably do the same if we saw a teenage girl coming in with a child and a group of friends. Teenage pregnancy is not accepted where I live and is definitely not the norm; many girls would hide their pregnancies if they decided to keep their babies.

We went to the mall after we were finished eating, and I had to take Tyler with me. My friends were looking at clothes, but I couldn't because I was carrying this "baby" (which was becoming quite heavy). So I just roamed around wishing I could try on clothes, too. Then the baby started to cry this horrible imitation baby's cry. It was so loud and terrible. I quickly put the key into the doll's back so it would quit crying, and then I had to explain to the salesclerk why I was carrying around a plastic doll. I was so glad to finally go home.

I learned a lot through my experience with the "Think-It-Over" baby. The doll definitely reinforced my thinking that I was not ready to be a parent, but it also made me more aware of the larger picture. It opened my eyes to the judgments people make about others. People do not realize that some things are not the way they seem. The doll seemed like it was my baby, but that was not the case. I was only carrying it around for a class project. The people in the restaurant were so quick to judge me because they assumed I was a teenage mom. They undoubtedly thought I was stupid for taking a baby to a noisy, smoky place; they didn't realize it was just a plastic doll underneath that blanket.

I sometimes catch myself judging people I do not know, just because of the first impression they give. In reality, I do not have a clue about their real stories. I especially think people judge teenage girls with babies too quickly. Sure, they may have made a mistake, but the girls usually know that, and they are the ones who have to pay the price. I only experienced the glares and rude comments for one night, but I thought of all the girls who have to deal with these looks wherever they go. We should all be slower to

judge these girls, or anyone else, and realize that some things are not as they seem.

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Personal Narrative #5 Lindsey, an adult who uses public speaking in her career, reflects on the childhood experiences that prepared her for success.

My Greatest Instrument

Some people express themselves through beautiful art; others are masters of the page and speak silently through writing. I, on the other hand, express myself with the greatest instrument I have, my voice. I make my living by speaking to groups large and small. Nothing gives me more satisfaction than public speaking, and my interest in public speaking began when I was quite young.

At age eight I realized that I belonged in front of an audience. I started giving demonstrations and speeches in local county 4-H competitions until I was eligible to participate in state competitions. I won every state competition that I entered.

Soon other public speaking opportunities arose; I represented an artist named Ann Cross at the Art Walk in Keene and was an active participant on the debate team and the captain in eighth grade. During March of eighth grade, I had the best opportunity yet to practice my oratorical skills: I was selected, out of all the students entered in New Hampshire, to write and read a four-minute speech on national television. My job was to introduce Elizabeth Dole, who at the time was interested in running for president.

I was notified the day before the event and so had only one night to write and memorize my speech. When I arrived the next morning in Bedford, New Hampshire, I was greeted by photographers, camera crews, and newspaper reporters! Then I was escorted backstage to meet Elizabeth Dole. After speaking briefly with her and having her review my speech, we marched through a crowd of flashing bulbs to our places on the stage.

Soon it was time for my speech. I was introduced, and as I walked to the podium, I couldn't help but smile at the audience. I had a feeling of complete exhilaration flowing through my veins. When I finished, I received a standing ovation, and Mrs. Dole surprised me by giving me a great hug and thanking me for my comments on the importance of education. But even after she finished speaking, the excitement was far from over.

I was with her for all her photographs, and I was interviewed for a few moments by WMUR and later by the *Keene Sentinel*. After the media finished with us, I met various supporters of Mrs. Dole's. They were all happy to meet me and flooded me with questions and praise. I truly felt on top of the world.

After that, I participated in various competitions and events. My favorite by far was Young Chataqua, a wonderful summer program. In Chataqua I portrayed the life of Margaret Bourke-White, a pioneer photographer, in a 12-minute monologue that took a month to research, prepare, and memorize. It was an amazing experience. Although the other students and I were only expected to perform our monologues once, two other organizations asked me to speak.

After Chataqua, I participated in my first play, *Everybody's Crazy*, and I organized a debate team at my high school. I continued my 4-H activities, did volunteer work, went to Chataqua each year, and participated in the American Legion's Oratorical Contest.

Those powerful first experiences transformed my life and gave me a career that I love. As I look back on a life shaped by public speaking, I feel a great debt of gratitude to that eight-year-old girl who first got up in front of crowds at the county fair. She helped me become the person I am today.

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Personal Narrative #6

Before Facebook, Snapchat, and Pinterest allowed us to gather and store images digitally, students kept their memories in photo albums and even shoeboxes. In this historic model, Alita writes about her shoebox collection of memories. Vivid details recreate the feeling of thumbing through pictures.

Snapshots

Most of the snapshots of my life are held in the photo albums of my mind. Some were captured by a camera, and those pictures I keep in a shoebox under my bed. I'm lucky to have "shoebox photos" of the earliest things I can remember. For example, three days after my third birthday, Katherine Emily arrived. I remember my dad taking me to see my new baby sister; we stopped at a gas station on the way to the hospital and bought my mom candy and a cola.

That day, the camera caught the tiny smile only a big sister could have as she holds one of the best birthday presents ever. I don't take up even half of a blue hospital

chair as I cradle Katie in my arms. She is wrapped all in white, like the little angel that every baby is. My white, hooded sweatshirt has faint patches of sky blue, and just a tiny crimson triangle of a T-shirt peeks out from behind the zipper. Looking closer, a third person can be seen: my mother's wrist-banded hand holds Katie's head up. My tiny arms weren't quite strong enough for that task.

That was the first time I ever posed with Katie. Looking at that photo makes me remember all the other pictures I have of Katie and me, even when there was no camera with film and batteries ready to go. It's these pictures that I'll never lose.

Before Katie and I went off to school, we spent our days in the tunnels and caves of cardboard boxes and secret hideaways under the kitchen table. Our house has never been short on toys (there were six kids born before Katie and me), but boxes have always been a favorite. I remember being able to easily slide through the long passageways, my back not even brushing against the "ceilings" of our tunnels and forts. Katie had an even easier time but often needed a flashlight in the darkness. Our cities of cardboard were draped in rainbows of blankets and quilts. On the insides, however, the less light we had, the better. It's too bad my memory camera has no flash.

"Picture Sales" were the basis for the kids' economy in our house. Competition was fierce in our system of capitalism. Jake is three years older than I am, and I'm three years older than Katie, but we all tried to outdo each other drawing pictures, attractively placing them around our bedrooms, and bringing in the customers. Prices ranged from 1 to 25 cents, and we loved counting the money at the end of the night. Katie and I often combined our assets and tried to steal Jake's business. Our walls were lined with neat rows of crayon drawings. We stocked anything from flowers to people, but supportive parents and older siblings made purchases from all of us.

Katie and I loved having our big sister Megan take us for summer walks. She was in high school, and hanging out with her added "coolness" to our status at Winkler Elementary. Filled with excess energy on the way to the park, beach, or the Hunny Tree gas station for pop and candy, we always loved to run ahead. Megan would let us, usually to the next telephone pole or two, where we would have to stop and wait for her. Shorter legs made the telephone pole seem distant, growing slowly closer as the Queen Anne's lace flew past in the ditch. I can recall countless times that Katie and I woke up late and found ourselves running down the road to catch the bus. Looking back, this has to be one of the more ironic rolls of my "memory film," because I ended up running cross-country; Katie wound up in poms and football.

Of my six sisters, Katie is the closest to me in age, and she's often been my closest companion during family events. We are usually the only teenage kids around at family gatherings and on shopping trips in the family van. This explains why Katie and I are expert mimes. The shopping trips provide hours of being stuffed in the van with our younger siblings, Scarlet and Michael; the visits to Minnesota to see relatives yield seven hours of driving each way. On one occasion, Katie and I boarded the van, choosing the back seat. After 10 minutes of being annoyed by everyone else, we formed an invisible wall between the two front seats and ourselves. We mimed a

smooth, perfectly flat, soundproof surface to perfection. The last picture on that roll of memories was Mom telling us to stop it.

The Niagara Falls/Canada/New York trip last year was the closest Katie and I have been. The same week of our shared 16th and 13th birthday-bonfire party, we spent days cramped in the back of my sister Sara's car, next to her one-year-old daughter, Hannah. Our quiet brother-in-law Brad was driving, and Hannah cried the whole way. That trip provided enough scenes to make a full-length movie, but I have only one shoebox picture of Katie and me in front of Niagara Falls. We are both bundled up like we were in the picture taken 13 years earlier. This time, though, we wear dark blue jeans and gray sweatshirts, our matching brown hair pulled back, hers in a ponytail and mine behind a pale pink bandana. The background doesn't take us to a quiet hospital room, but to the continuous rumble of beautiful Niagara Falls. On the left, the American Falls turn over beneath a rainbow of October foliage. Farther away, on the right, Horseshoe Falls bubbles under a mist that slowly rises above the horizon. Katie and I lean against the heavy, black railing, and against each other. Our smiles are sweet and happy, reminiscent of Katie's first birthday.

These two shoebox pictures of Katie and me are just two snapshots in a shared photo album, filled with every cake, thought, joke, and sweater we've shared. In the midst of looking through the collection, Katie yells at me, "Hey, that's my shirt!"

"You borrow my stuff," I reply.

"Not without asking."

"You had my black skirt for three months."

"I asked for it."

I let the fight peter out, not wishing to waste a memory on an argument about clothes. There will be plenty of hair-pulling, name-calling, and angry situations between Katie and me to come. I want to save my film for better times.

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Personal Narrative #7 Tenth-grader Lisa's voice comes through loud and clear in this model. The use of strong details and dialogue—including the author "talking" to herself—makes this a believable essay about a student's first high school crush.

The Boy with Chris Pine Blue Eyes

High school alone is the hardest part of any teenager's life, but when it gets mixed in with an awkward adolescent's idea of liking someone, life turns into a whirlwind emotional adventure. Like my plate wasn't overflowing already with a chemistry teacher who called me "Crash" (a name I acquired after dropping a beaker during our first lab), a

sassy algebra teacher who said that I didn't have the aptitude for the subject, or a French teacher who flirted with the class and laughed at her own jokes. No, I complicated things even further because, stupid me, I fell in love.

It all started one morning at my locker as I fumbled to find the French book I hadn't used in about a month. In the crowded locker bay someone stepped on my toes and, consequently, rammed me into the absolute zenith of high school popularity standing to my right. I accidentally hit Miss Popularity while she attempted to apply lipstick. In the reflection of the three mirrors that hung in her locker, I saw a red smear across her acne-free, rouged cheek. I also saw the image of the person responsible for this collision. When I turned to get a better glimpse, there he was.

Lockers may have slammed, Miss Popularity may have pouted, but everything stopped for me. All I saw was him. It felt like someone had reached down my throat and, with strong fingers, drawn my breath and stomach from my trembling body. His sapphire eyes drilled deep into my heart, and every nuance of his face became eternally etched into my mind. The tall, thin body stood out like a glistening jewel among the dull coal of the locker bay. Sensing my eyes burning deep into him, he turned around and said, "Ah, sorry. My bad." The words were spoken by a voice that could talk a man down from a ledge. I could tell by the tone and inflection that he felt deep remorse in his soul for displacing my body—or maybe the burrito he had at lunch didn't agree with him, I'm not really sure. From that moment on, during every free second, I suddenly became busy thinking about him. Wondering about this boy made sleepless nights overflow with sweet images. Dull math periods were filled with idle daydreams. I became obsessed with this senior with Chris Pine blue eyes.

I wasn't the only one who decided that having Blue Eyes as a boyfriend was a good idea. Miss Popularity decided that he, out of all the salivating dogs begging, whimpering, pawing for her attention, would be the perfect playful puppy. Worse yet, I had to witness her primitive flirting ritual in the lunchroom.

She would strut toward the soda machine, swaying her hips from side to side, in an effort to catch one of his incandescent blue eyes. She was beautiful and she knew it. This was when it really started to get good—for him I mean. Purposely, her skirt inched up revealing her fleshy thigh as she struggled to remove a quarter nestled in her warm pocket. Blue Eyes was rabid with lust. Foam gushed out of his mouth and fire burned within his eyes. He was imagining the heat of the metal, so close to her body, then falling from her manicured hand to the floor. As he picked the coin up, those blue eyes examined every centimeter of her shapely legs. He was so close he could smell the sweetness of her perfume mixed with laundry detergent and the playful scent of teenage girl.

The whole scene caused a churning in my stomach, which turned to a hopeless nausea. The colorful world of love turned into a black, grey pit. Every strand of my hair hung like a 400-pound weight. There was no way I was going to give in to Miss Popularity, who just happened to be my best friend. Yes, yes, I was the goofy sidekick. She could turn the world on with her smile, and I couldn't turn the world on with anything.

Through friends, acquaintances, and the grueling detailed accounts from Miss Popularity, I slowly gained more knowledge about my new love.

“Oh, Lisa, he smells so good!”

Smile. *Yeah, Miss Popularity, I bet anything with a pulse smells good to you.*

“And he’s so sweet!”

Bigger smile. *Oh, and why is he so sweet? Maybe it’s that shapely body of yours.*

“But I might have to work on his style a bit. Then he’ll be really hot!”

Smile. Nod. *Then he’ll be hot!? If the kid got any hotter he’d be illegal in 37 states and 2 territories! This boy should not be allowed to roam around in public.*

All the basics—name, address, and hobbies—slowly unfolded, and an elaborate plan of action for an encounter started to form in my mind. But before it had a chance to fully develop, I had a surprise Blue Eyes sighting. He came to my photography class during one of his study halls (by this time I knew his schedule) to do extra work on one of his pictures. My mind raced; my hands shook. Should I act like I like him? Should I not notice him? Should I talk to him?

Talk to him. He’s your best friend’s boyfriend. Talk to him! Oh, how can I look at his cherubic face when I know he’ll be looking back at mine? I don’t believe it. He’s got to be kidding. I don’t believe he’s wearing that shirt. He looks so good in that shirt. How can I talk to someone who looks that good in a shirt? That cotton clings to just the right places, and his jeans are sculpted to enhance and accentuate that squeezably soft...

So distracted by the mental roller coaster I was on, I couldn’t speak when he said, “Phat print.”

Left with my eyes agog, I missed my one opportunity to speak with that walking, talking piece of artwork. Days dragged on and so did Miss Popularity’s relationship with Blue Eyes. He would nip at her heels as they walked down the hall. They would cuddle in class, and she would even feed him at lunch! Whatever the phoniest couple thing that you’ve seen, they did it. I’m surprised that people weren’t driven to violent nausea and fits of puking when they saw them together.

But like most good things, their relationship had to come to an unfortunate end. After Blue Eyes wasn’t such a new puppy for Miss Popularity, their relationship deteriorated. From what I gathered after late night confessionals with Miss Popularity, he wasn’t learning any new tricks.

Later that year I went to his graduation, and with the toss of his cap and the flip of his tassel, a sense of defeat and despair filled my body.

Good-bye. Jesus Mary Joseph, you are such an idiot. You obsessed over him for almost a year! Do you realize you never spoke one word to him? Not a single syllable. Yes, but if you had he would have laughed at you and your silly, girlish crush. You didn’t deserve him in the first place.

Oh, but I really liked him. I liked him so much, and he didn't even know I was alive!

Get over it. Half the school doesn't even know you're alive.

I watched his blue Honda Civic race away. With the peel of the tires and the smell of burning rubber, I knew he had gone forever.

Then the pain lifted from my body, like a heavy weight, and was replaced by a feeling of accomplishment and relief. I made it through the grueling torture of a high school crush and lived to tell about it. There existed no class project hard enough or cafeteria food indigestible enough to even compare.

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Helpful Sources of Information for Essay Writing:

- Listen to examples of good narrative writing from the NPR Podcast *This American Life*:
<https://www.thisamericanlife.org/recommended/new-to-this-american-life>
- Examples of First Person Narrative “This I Believe” essays from NPR:
<https://thisibelieve.org/search/>
- MLA Format
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/13/>
- College Application Essay Writing Tips: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/essays/tips-for-writing-an-effective-application-essay-college-admissions>
- Personal Statement/College App essays:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/preparing_an_application/writing_the_personal_statement/index.html

Summer Reading Grades 11-12 Standards for Achievement:

___ I can cite textual evidence that strongly and thoroughly supports an analysis of what the text says and inferences it makes. (RI.11-12.1)

___ I can determine the author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective. (RI.11-12.6)

___ I can produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (WP.11-12)

___ I can write narratives to develop real experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. (WP.11-12)