



Developing | Exemplar Essay

Prep Work

College Preparation



Claim and Focus

This essay begins with a specific claim ("I think that for me I did a good thing..."), but does not maintain focus on this claim throughout the entire essay. Opinions outweigh a formal argument, and off-topic tangents emerge ("I hope that I can find a good roommate who is nice and doesn't steal my stuff"). A possible counterclaim is introduced ("If I had started thinking about college before now..."), but it is without development.



Support and Evidence

Some evidence is offered to support the claim ("School and work make me so busy" and "I didn't want to get to senior year and have to worry about what I was going to do after school"), but it is not particularly strong or developed. Most of the essay provides general information about the student's personal experience, rather than specific (or cited) evidence to support a clear claim. No evidence is provided to support the attempted counterclaim.



Organization

This essay has a basic organizational structure (intro, body, conclusion), but it is simplistic and repetitive in nature. The conclusion is identical to the introductory paragraph, rather than even being a rephrasing of the information. Also, the relationships among the ideas within the essay, particularly within the body of the essay, are not consistently clear and often stray off topic because of a basic word association (mention of roommate leads to discussion of brother's roommate stealing food).



Language and Style

The sentence structure used in this essay does not vary, creating a monotonous tone. There is distinct repetition of words from the introduction to conclusion, and an informal style is used throughout essay ("gonna," "much much more"). Furthermore, errors in conventions that could potentially interfere with meaning occur throughout the essay.



Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait 'looks like' in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see "25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays" by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

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I think that for me I did a good thing starting to think about college when I was in eleventh grade. School and work make me so busy but if I wait too long then I can't even go to college. I didn't want to get to senior year and have to worry about what I was gonna do after school so I think that I did a good job thinking about it now.

I'm glad that I didn't think about it too much before this though. I had time to enjoy school and sports and all of my friends. If I started thinking about college before now I wouldn't have been able to have as many fun experiences. But now is a good time, which is why all my friends and classmates are doing it too. That's why they call it the college admissions frenzy, because everyone is trying to think about it now. There's a lot to think about though, like majors, tuition, roommates, and much much more. I hope that I can find a good roommate who is nice and doesn't steal my stuff. My brother had a roommate who kept stealing all his food all the time. It was the worst. I really don't want a roommate like that. I want one who is nice but likes to have fun and won't steal my food.

As a conclusion, I think that for me I did a good thing starting to think about college when I was in eleventh grade. School and work make me so busy but if I wait too long then I can't even go to college. I didn't want to get to senior year and have to worry about what I was gonna do after school so I think I did a good job thinking about it now.