



Advanced | Exemplar Essay

Stand Alone

No Longer Alone



Plot and Ideas

The narrative effectively establishes an engaging storyline with a clear exposition that supports the plot (“A time when I felt different than those around me was a few years ago when my Girl Scout’s held a mother daughter sleepover”). The central idea progresses toward a climax and resolution. The plot and ideas completely fulfill the demands of the task.



Development and Elaboration

The narrative establishes and maintains a clear setting (...so I would be attending the sleepover all alone). The writer develops the characters in an engaging and meaningful way and uses dialogue to advance the story (“Amanda, I know it is difficult without your mother, but you still have to live your life”).



Organization and Sequencing

The narrative uses a sequence of events to develop a definite beginning, middle, and end. Effective transitions are used (“at first,” “as the days passed,” “in the beginning”) to signal shifts in times and connect the parts of the story. The resolution offers closure and reflects on the narrative as a whole (“In conclusion, there will be times that you will feel alone in life, but you don’t have to”).



Language and Style

The narrative uses descriptive words, sensory language, and figurative language to create imagery within the story (“It felt like a century before I made it to the door”). The writing builds the voices of the characters in an interesting and engaging way. Point of view is well-established and consistently maintained.



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.

Stand Alone



Notes

No Longer Alone

Most people view being different as a bad trait. They think that everyone should fit into a perfect mold. Sometimes being different is better than being just like everyone else because it shapes you to be a better person. A time when I felt different than those around me was a few years ago when my Girl Scout's held a mother daughter sleepover. I felt different because my mother passed away when I was one, so I would be attending the sleepover all alone. At first, I was very hesitant to attend the function because I knew I would feel uncomfortable. "Hey kiddo," my dad addressed me, "are you all ready for the sleepover this weekend?" he asked.

"Dad, is it okay if I decided to stay home instead?" I questioned him.

He looked at me puzzled for a moment without saying a word. He finally asked quietly, "Is this because of your mom?"

I could see the sadness in his eyes, and I felt the same way. I knew I just needed to talk to him about it. My dad has always been there for me, and has taken the role of both parents. He has worked persistently to provide for us and to make sure I am taken care of. I never lied to him, and I did not plan to start now. I sighed and I told him my predicament. "Dad, it's just that all of the other girls will have their moms there with them," I said softly. I added, "And I might just feel awkward or left out."

My dad looked at me and said seriously, "Amanda, I know it is difficult without your mother, but you still have to live your life." He thought about his next sentence carefully for a moment and then added, "She would want you to go and have fun."

As tears streamed my eyes, I thought about what he had just said. He was always so great with giving advice and words of wisdom. Deep down inside, I knew

my dad was right about this. I knew it was best to go to this sleepover. If I stayed home, I would always wonder what could have happened if I attended. I did not want to have any regrets about this. I looked at him and finally responded. "I'll go," I whispered.

As the days passed, I became more nervous than ever. I wanted to have fun at the sleepover, and I didn't want to be left out because my mom had passed away. I hoped that the other girls would include me. I tossed and turned with worried with anguish until Saturday finally came.

As we pulled up to our scout leader's home, I felt emptiness in the pit of my stomach. I gulped and looked at my dad. "Dad..." I said nervously. Before I could get out the rest of my sentence, my dad hugged me and whispered "Amanda, you will have a blast. Remember what I told you. Your mother would love to see you happy."

After hearing my dad's words, I felt reassured that the night would go wonderfully. I gave my last hugs and hopped out of the truck. I walked to the door slowly with my feet dragging along. It felt like a century before I made it to the front door. Everything was becoming a blur, but before I could knock on the door, Sarah and her mother came up behind me..

"Amanda, we are so excited you came!" her mother said excitedly.

"I can't wait to listen to music and watch movies," Sarah added. "Let's go in," she added happily. I sighed a bit of relief and walked in with them. Everyone in the room came up to us and gave us a hug. I felt better already.

Ultimately, the night went amazingly. We watched movies, painted each other's nails and gave the mothers makeovers. I helped Sarah give her mother one. I was included in every way, and the other mothers made me feel so welcomed. Some of the other Girl Scout's mothers couldn't make it, so I wasn't even the only one there alone. I began to realize that my nervous worries had faded as soon as I entered the house.

In the beginning, I felt so nervous about going to the sleepover alone. I didn't know what to expect from everyone. I was so surprised to see that every girl included me in the activities. My dad was right about everything. I called him that night to let him know that everything was going so smoothly. "Thanks dad, you were right. Thank you for always encouraging me," I said.

"That's what I am here for Amanda. I love you, and I am so glad you are having a great night!" my dad replied.

In conclusion, there will be times that you will feel alone in life, but you don't have to. I encourage everyone who feels this way to talk to someone about it. Often you will surprisingly see that you are not alone. I encourage everyone who feels this way to talk to someone about it.