

Summer Writing Assignment – All incoming 12AP students must have this completed by the first day of class.

Introduction

The main purpose of this assignment is for students to introduce themselves to their classmates. All students will write this paper, and then one or two students will read their papers at the beginning of class each day. In this essay students will present one incident, event, or experience which has changed their lives or made them into the people they have become. To get ideas and for a better understanding of the topic, please read the model student papers presented at the bottom of this page.

Assignment

Choose an event, situation, or experience that has had a tremendous impact on your life. Describe the event and then tell how the event has changed you. The event / incident / experience which you describe may be a huge event such as the death of a loved one, or it may be a simple event such as a childhood play experience. The only requirement is that the event must have changed you or changed your view of life in some way. For obvious reasons, this paper must be written in first-person point of view. The paper should be 4-5 pages (double-spaced with 12-point font).

The tone of your paper may be serious, poignant, humorous, angry, etc. Obviously, the event or experience and what you learned from the event or experience should dictate the tone of your paper.

Examples of Topics

- * the first day of school (elementary, middle, or high school)
- * a divorce or change in the family structure
- * a transfer to a new town, school, neighborhood
- * a memorable vacation
- * an award or achievement which impacted your life greatly
- * an important relationship which has changed you
- * a religious experience
- * a physical challenge
- * an illness or accident
- * an embarrassing event
- * an ambition or goal which you struggled to achieve (may be ongoing)

Please note that the event / incident / experience may have happened in one hour, or it may be an experience which took place over several years. Don't worry about whether or not the topic you have selected is acceptable for this paper. If the event or experience is important to you and impacted your life, it is a good topic for this assignment.

Organization and Questions

Think about your topic and make a jot list or outline of what you remember about this event or experience. Although students may organize this paper in many ways, all papers will answer these fundamental questions:

- 1) What is the event / incident / or experience.
- 2) How did the experience take place?
- 3) Who was with you at the time, and what did these people add to your experience?
- 4) What were your initial feelings, emotions, beliefs?
- 5) How did you react or change immediately because of this experience?
- 6) Looking back on the experience now, how did the event change you fundamentally? Have your feelings changed over time?
- 7) Why is this experience / incident / event so memorable today?

Remember to use sensory (Sounds, sights, tastes, odors, feelings, etc.) and concrete details to describe your experience. Use descriptive language and dialogue which will allow your reader to feel as though he or she was there with you.