

Student Example Essay

Angela highlights her character and her priorities in her response to the 5th Common App prompt: *Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.*

What Matters More?

By Angela Cox

Intrigued by the JV field hockey game against our rival, Notre Dame High School, I patiently stand on the sideline waiting for coach to send me to my defensive position. I have been practicing my defensive skills all season with the hope that I will get more play time. I watch my younger sister as she aggressively runs toward the ball trying to score a goal. I can hear my parents, my Aunt Jacquie, and my 7-year-old autistic cousin Shay cheering from across the field. My coach finally waves me over to ask if I am ready. A spark of adrenaline rushes through my body. I nod confidently and run over to collect my gear. As I pick up my worn stick, I see, out of the corner of my eye, my Aunt Jacquie frantically chasing after Shay. He runs along the outside of the fence on the track in his own unique way — his shoulders arch forward, his arms stretch back, and his curls bounce with every stride. I know Shay will be in the woods before my aunt can catch up to him. Even wearing cleats, I think I can catch him first. “One second,” I say to my coach as I excuse myself, drop my stick, and run.

Since the day he was born, Shay has faced many different challenges. He visits Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia monthly, goes to countless specialists, and works with multiple therapists to find ways to adapt to his unique situation. Shay was born with a hole in his heart and a cleft palate, and at age three he was diagnosed with a separate issue: autism. Babysitting Shay is very challenging. Having to always keep him occupied, active, and out of trouble is exhausting.

I am amazed at how my Aunt Jacquie selflessly manages his emotions, maintains his routine, deals with doctor appointments, and is able to remain so extremely patient, all while never complaining. My aunt has even managed to properly teach him how to greet and interact with people daily despite his lack of awareness related to societal expectations. As a result of her endless dedication, Shay is also a very kind soul who exudes radiant energy in various ways and has impacted my life greatly. He has also shown me in so many ways how I can be more caring and compassionate and how to love immensely. So, whenever my Aunt Jacquie asks me to watch him, I agree without hesitation. Aunt Jacquie and Shay have helped me to be grateful and respectful to all people and to not judge others when I may not know the suffering they endure. Now, Shay has the mental capacity of a 5-year-old boy functioning in a 10-year-old autistic body, and he has already accomplished many things the doctors said he would never be able to. I give my aunt a tremendous amount of credit for Shay’s success, and I aspire to be more like her.

I intend to join the medical field as a professional, where I will be able to use what I have learned from both my aunt and Shay to understand the challenges of real-time problem-solving — even if it means giving up game time.

My Aunt Jacquie and I finally corner Shay at the fence. I lean against it to get his attention. He runs over to me and excitedly yells a version of my name, which comes out as “An-gu-waa,” and I have to smile. My aunt walks up toward him out of breath and places her hand on his shoulder. I wait to make sure he is settled and then I run back over to my sideline spot to wait eagerly for another opportunity to play in the game.

Easy Essay Basic Structure

Topic: _____

School: _____

Deadline: _____

Details: _____

Background/History: _____

Lessons: _____

Future: _____

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