

## National English Honor Society College Scholarship Essay

### The Impact of English Studies on My Education

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Reading has always been my favorite activity. While many children entertain themselves with computer games or watching TV, sitting down and reading stories was how I found amusement. As I grew older, reading and writing became important parts of my formal education, while continuing to serve as conduits for my imagination.

However, during these past four years, the study of English through my own reading and writing has taught me even more than I learned in the classroom. The most important role reading and writing can ever play is to teach people about other people, their experiences, and their heritage. Such is the role they have played in my life. Together, they have made me a more understanding person.

While my teachers taught me through lectures about the importance of self-discovery in *The Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison and about the role of stream-of-consciousness technique in *As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner, the real lessons in those works I learned through a close and careful reading. I learned that Morrison's work reveals how slavery weakened African American heritage, and that Faulkner shows how tragic family life can be when seen through individual perspectives.

Without my study of English both in and out of school, I would be confined to my own community. I would not have been able to learn about and understand the social

customs of Jane Austen's England or discover the intrigue American politicians face as displayed by Joan Didion's essays in her book, *Political Fictions*.

Reading allows me to travel to places I might never go, meet and understand people I may never encounter, and confront tragic and comic situations which may never have otherwise involved me.