

## Scholarship Essay

### The Impact of English Studies on My Education

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I sincerely believe that life without English would be a harsh and desolate existence, full of horrid misfortune and the utmost despair. And I'm not just saying this because my English teacher told me to, but rather because I understand the need to have good language skills. As a Norwegian-born Vietnamese who came to the States when I was eight years old, I found myself a rebel, a red-eyed demon, a howling lunatic when it came to adjusting. . . . However, I did finally come to accept the new culture, the new language, and French fries (which later convinced me of my good fortune). I absorbed everything with the gusto of the most dehydrated little sponge one could hope to find until I was quite fat and squishy, and voilà! I spoketh English! From illiterate heathen to master of words, I triumphed in a flaming blaze of glory. Of course, it is understandable why I now love this language as a mother must love her babe, or a zealot his god, or an addict his hookah. The deprivation of this delight surely would have cast my soul into darkness.

The influence of English studies has been an extreme benefit to my education, because understanding English has let me learn, whether it be history, science, literature, art, or mathematics (which I am convinced is a creation of the devil). Not only that, but knowing how to write better and express myself inevitably leads to an expansion of thought and ideas. I have grown intellectually because of these words I caress, and I would never give up even one of them, with the exception of "diphthong," a word I consider a perversion of the English language. Getting acquainted with the ins and outs of

English, and also of literature and poetry, has granted me a broader view of the world that surrounds me. I continue to comprehend things outside of my immediate sight, to see things I could not have seen before. Just knowing that prior to all this mind-enlargement I was a naïve, ignorant child is enough to make me slap myself silly and fling myself off a bridge in shame and horror. Well, I suppose I won't go that far, since I am not a dramatic person in the least, but the idea is still there. The bottom line is that English studies have been absolutely essential to my education and growth as a unique individual.

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I feel compelled to add that English has been a true joy. I love her as my mistress, adore her as a lover. I take her words and embrace them, all the bad ones and the good ones (except diphthong); I surround myself in their power and I let them use me, just as I use them. I hope to continue writing, and to show others the power of this art.