

Scholarship Essay

The impact of English studies on my education

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Over the last four years I have worked furiously in many subjects to prepare myself for the higher academic challenges that await, but it seems that my English classes have had the greatest impact on my growth as a student. As I entered high school, I was introduced to the analytical approach to English and literature, presenting the biggest challenge in my education. However, in my last two years of high school I have noticed a steady growth in my ability to explore literature and its subsequent effect on the quality of my writing. My writing will continue to see improvements, but the results of my education in the arena of writing and reading comprehension have already had tangible effects on my growth as a student.

Throughout my English class career, I often failed to follow my teacher's insights into the universal themes and symbols present within literature. The mere mention of archetypal roles or allegorical comparisons confused me, forcing a feigned look of comprehension across my face. However, as my exposure to literature grew in scope, I gradually evolved into a more mature English student. My first realization of this development came in an unlikely form, as I stood before my eleventh grade English class presenting my opinions in the form of a Socratic seminar. When I began to spew interpretations of Kate Chopin's intentions in her novel, *The Awakening*, I was making

connections that I did not recognize I was capable of making. I never would have imagined myself overcoming my inability to understand great writing, much less grasping the symbolic meaning behind the most famous piece of feminist literature. Nevertheless, this became my first introduction to the importance of literature, opening me to a greater enjoyment in reading.

As my taste for literature has matured, the changes in my writing have become obvious. Tasks as simple as note taking and as important as research papers have become dependent on my ability to read analytically and write effectively. Science, a study that seems far removed from the fantasies of English literature, depends on the ability to think in an innovative and critical fashion. These basic capabilities are ones that develop from constant reading and writing. As recently as my senior-year mid-term exams, I have seen my writing become a key to my success in other classes. With each exam I took, I found relief in the writing portions as they were my chance to demonstrate my knowledge in words. I am proud that my writing has evolved to be one of my strongest attributes. I understand finally that reading and writing are not solely a required facet of my education, but an integral part of my ability to learn.

The study of language and literature is more than a tool, it is a worthwhile endeavor. The English language is not just a skill I use in conversation and school papers, but it is a form of education. Next year, as I enter my college years and the importance of academics is nearing a peak in my life, reading and writing will be instrumental in my success, regardless of the path I choose for the future.