

English 95

Essay #1: Influential Person

Essay Length: Complete, well-developed first draft

Background

Growing up, all of us are influenced by the people around us. These influences may be positive or negative, serious or unimportant, permanent or passing. For this essay, we want to look at something very significant: your own character, and one particular person who most helped to shape it.

Topic

Write an essay in which you identify the one person who has most significantly influenced your own character and tell why this person has been so influential in your life so far.

Getting Started

For this essay you will have to do several important things. First, you will have to choose this influential person. You will also have to identify which important character traits of your own that this person influenced. Then, you will want to illustrate with a story and/or examples how this person influenced you—perhaps by being a strong example of the character traits in action, or perhaps in a negative way by failing in some important way that made you decide to follow a different direction in your own life.

You may also wish to give us an illustration of how this important character trait has made a difference in your own life—either in your actions or in your beliefs.

Instructions

1. Read the topic a couple of times and note what it requires you to do. Complete all the tasks of the assignment.
2. Take time to plan and organize your essay before you begin to write. (Scratch outlines are often quite helpful.)
3. Be sure to start with a clear main idea. (In other words, make sure you can answer this question: “What is the main point I want my readers to understand?”)
4. Make sure that you support or illustrate general points with specific examples and vivid details from your own experience and from the text (when appropriate).
5. Allow yourself enough time after writing to go back over your essay, check for errors or omissions, and make any necessary corrections.