

English 96

Essay #2: Angelou's "Graduation"

Essay Length: 500-750 words (2-4 handwritten pages)

Choose one of the topics below and write an essay that responds to it.

Choice One: Write an essay in which you answer the following question: Do you think Marguerite Johnson looks upon her graduation as a positive or a negative experience? In responding to this question, be sure to describe those experiences to us, and be sure to explain why you think she would characterize graduation as positive or negative.

Choice Two: All of us have experienced a time, like Marguerite's graduation, when we have been disappointed by events that we were greatly anticipating. Write an essay in which you compare your experience of greatly anticipating an event with Marguerite's experience. Be sure to explain why you (and Marguerite) were looking forward to these events, why the event was disappointing, and what you learned from the experience (or what you now, in looking back, understand about the experience).

General Hints

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.