

In Class Essay Prompt

Choose one of the following prompts to write an in class essay. This is due on the day it is assigned.

Requirements:

- 2-4 sentence introduction including a thesis statement (the main claim of your essay, what you are arguing/proving)
- Body which supports your claim providing evidence and details, and tells the “story”.
- Conclusion that provides closure to your discussion, restates your thesis and summarizes your main points of evidence

OPTION 1 “Want to Get Into College? Learn to Fail”

In the article, “Want to Get Into College? Learn to Fail,” dean of admissions, Angel B. Pérez, suggests that students should not focus on perfection in their college essays. He goes on to say that “perfection doesn't exist,” and it is suspicious when students present themselves as such. Instead, stories of failure are not about weakness, but about “growth, learning, overcoming, and moving on,” and that how you respond to an error in high school “could shape you forever.”

Your Task

Drawing on Pérez’s article, write an essay describing a time during high school when you experienced a challenge, setback, or failure. Reflect on how the defeat affected you and what you learned from the triumph. The thesis for this paper should answer the question “**How has a failure in your life contributed to later success?**”

OPTION 2 “Hidden Intellectualism”

In his article, “Hidden Intellectualism,” Gerald Graff suggests that academic skills can be developed through traditionally non-intellectual pursuits such as sports, comic books, video games, television, music, fashion, dance, shopping, cooking, and so on. It’s not enough, however, to simply write about topics that interest them, student-scholars need to see their hobbies or interests through “academic eyes,” or in “a reflective, analytical way, one that sees [their hobbies] as microcosms of what is going on in the wider culture.”

Your Task

Drawing on Graff’s article, write an essay describing a hobby or interest through which you develop academic skills, such as persuading others, making arguments, supporting an opinion with evidence, responding to the views of others, challenging one’s mind, preparing for college or career, developing important life skills, building morality, strengthening community, and so on. The thesis for this paper should answer the question “**How does the hobby develop a specific academic, career, or life skill?**”