

Explanatory Quote Essay:

Outline & Sample

Pre-writing:

Before you start writing, remember to:

1. Carefully READ the quote (and the directions)
2. UNDERLINE any important information/directions!
3. BRAINSTORM by putting the quote in your own words and thinking about one or more experiences you can write about.

I. Opening Paragraph:

1. Rewrite the quote (make sure that the quote is in "quotes"). After the quote, write:

- ...is a valuable quote to me for numerous reasons.
- ...is an important quote to follow.
- ...is worth following.
- ...is a valuable saying because it imparts great wisdom.
- ...is important because it has great meaning.
- ...is a meaningful quote.

2. Next restate the quote in your own words.

Write: This quote means...

3. Add another sentence that elaborates your interpretation (I usually start with: In other words, ...)

4. End with: When I think about this quote, it reminds me of a time in my life when I....

II. Paragraph 2 (Body Paragraph 1):

In this paragraph you want to set the scene!

1. Introduce the example or situation that you are using to support your explanation of the quote. For example, you can write:

The experience that comes to mind occurred when...

2. This means that you are writing about what happened BEFORE the situation occurred.

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3. Explain what LED UP TO the scenario.
4. Leave them with a teaser that doesn't give away too much!!

III. Paragraph 3 (Body Paragraph 2)

In this paragraph, you describe the example or situation that you are using to support your explanation of the quote.

1. This is DURING the example or situation. Describe the actual situation. What actually happened? For example, you can write:
It all started when...
2. Try to include sensory details and an example of figurative language.
3. Try not to give away the ending result yet!

IV. Paragraph 4 (Body Paragraph 3):

In this paragraph you explain the result of the example or situation that you are using to support your explanation of the quote.

1. Explain the end result.
2. Briefly explain what happened directly AFTER the situation.
3. You may include a closing that hints at the lesson/moral that you LEARNED from the situation.

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V. Conclusion Paragraph:

In this paragraph, it is critically important that you relate your experience back to the quote. You must **CONNECT** your experience to the quote.

1. Open your closing paragraph by restating the meaning of the quote and speaker. For example, you can say:

(Dr. King's) quote means that (state the meaning)

(Dr. King's) quote contains an important moral, and that moral is...

2. Explain how the quote RELATES to your example or situation. **CLEARLY STATE WHAT YOU LEARNED!** For example, you can write:

I learned this valuable lesson when I,...

By (state your experience), I learned that...

Looking back on my experience, I now realize that....

My experience taught me...

3. Briefly explain how your experience will impact your future. For example, you can write:

Looking ahead, I will...

In the future, I will...

Going forward...

4. BE SURE TO USE WORDS FROM THE ACTUAL QUOTE IN YOUR CLOSING SENTENCE!!

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Writing Prompt:

As part of a language arts class assignment, you have been asked to consider the following quotation:

"The function of education is to teach one to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education."

-Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929 - 1968)

Write an essay in which you explain whether you agree or disagree with this quotation. You may use one or more examples from your experiences. Be sure to use details, reasons, and examples in your explanation.

Sample:

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a man of great character who dedicated his life to making the world a better place. His quote: "The function of education is to teach one to think critically. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education" contains a moral that I completely agree with. Dr. King meant that the purpose of gaining an education is not just to learn new information; what is most important is what one chooses to do with that knowledge. This quote reminds me of a time when I, like Dr. King, applied my knowledge in order to make a positive effect on my community; little did I realize just what a huge effect my actions would have on me!

The experience that comes to mind when I read Dr. King's famous words occurred when I was searching for a topic for my science project. In science class, we had been learning about pollution and its impact on the world. The topic interested me, but I found myself wanting to do something more than simply complete a report on the problem of pollution; I wanted my project to also help solve the problem as well. In researching my topic, I realized something shocking about my school. My school did not have a recycling program! Needless to say, I decided to do something about it!

I started by writing a letter to the principal explaining my dissatisfaction with the fact that our school had no recycling bins for paper or plastic. A meeting with the principal followed, and he agreed that something should be done. He even mentioned that I would be the student representative who would help get a recycling program started in our school. Soon I was organizing fund-raisers for recycling bins and sifting through garbage cans for recyclables. I even accompanied the principal for a meeting with the local DPW. I was learning a great deal; more importantly, however, I was strengthening my character by making a difference.

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It would take three more months of hard work, several more letters, and two more meetings with the DPW before our hard work paid off. Finally, on June 2, the Valley Middle School recycling program was officially launched! Twenty brand-new, blue recycling bins were distributed throughout the school, and our DPW would begin picking up the recyclables twice a week. Valley Middle School would no longer be part of the problem; it would now be part of the solution.

Dr. King was a man of great character who made countless sacrifices to make the world a better place. His famous words reveal an important truth that education is important, but what one does with his/her education is even more critical. By helping to create a recycling program in my school, I learned a great deal about the impact of pollution and how recycling can help. However, I learned an even more valuable lesson. I learned that strong character combined with a great education can help make the world a better place. I am reminded of the truth of Dr. King's words every day when I see a student throw a recyclable in one of our school's twenty bins!