

Example of Rough Draft

Essay Topic:

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

Fitness is what defines me the best. Weight lifting, training, and trying to get better than the day before is what i love. In November 14th of 2015 as a puny 5' 6" Sophomore that weighed 145 pounds, and I made it routine to go to the gym 5 to 6 times a week. I strived to break new goals, smash my records, and become more physically and mentally stronger. Over the near 2 years, my body has drastically changed physically as well as mentally. I became more fit and athletic, and my mindset improved to where I don't give up on activities and opportunities. Working out has helped me with football by running harder, being stronger, and being quicker with my feet. Last year I broke my leg very badly during football. A complete Tibia Fibula fracture stopped my fitness career dead in its tracks. I wouldn't let this stop me from doing what I love, so I was going to the gym on crutches and doing as much as I could. I would walk on my foot to get it better as fast as possible even if it hurt because I wasn't giving up on the thing that described me. I was fully healed from my fracture 4 months after getting a titanium rod placed in my leg. The doctors said it'd be at least 8 months to fully heal, but i didn't take that and give up. 5 months after my operation, I lifted the most I have ever lifted on the parallel squat by over 70+ pounds. The mentality of not giving up and getting better is what made my recovery so amazing. If there is one quality of me that you would know it's that lifting and going to the gym is my favorite thing to do during time I have to myself. Testing my body's limits and pushing new goals are the thrills of it. I feel I must put this in my application because this is who I am and the lifestyle I chose. I will continue going to the gym and bettering myself for as long as I am physically able to.

Example of Final Draft

Essay Topic:

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5'5 inches. 136 pounds. These were my freshman stats. My goal: to make the freshman football team. My mom's reaction, "Are you nuts?". Maybe I was. Not only did I not have the "right" physique, but I had also never played football before on an organized team. Lucky for me, my high school football program needed numbers, even if those numbers came in pint size, scrawny form. That's when I discovered my high school's weight room.

Fitness and weightlifting became paramount as I worked hard to earn a starting position. In addition to weight room hours at school, I also begged my parents for a gym membership. I am not sure if they agreed because they were relieved that I was finally off of my Xbox or if my parents would sleep a little better knowing that I wouldn't get pulverized on the playing field. Whatever their rationales, I am glad they agreed. Over the last few years, going to the gym has become routine as I am there five or six times a week. In that time, my body has drastically changed physically. But beside the physical benefit, my mindset has also improved. Tasks that may have seemed impervious freshman year are no longer roadblocks. I embrace every challenge as a new opportunity to better myself.

This change in mindset was crucial when last year I was dealt a devastating blow. During pre-season my junior year, I was making significant strides in earning a starting position. My coaches and teammates recognized how much stronger and focused I had become. As I lined up for an offense versus defense drill, a drill I had done countless times, I was determined to show my coaches my ability. Then snap! Much like Emerson's *Concord Hymn*, it was the snap heard around the world. My coach immediately called for an ambulance and ran onto the field. I was rushed to Cooper Trauma Center where I learned that I had a complete tibia fibula fracture that would require surgery. Due to the severity of the break, a permanent titanium rod and four screws were placed in my leg. My hopes of playing football junior year were as shattered as my leg. However, this setback did not stop me from doing what I love. I began going to the gym on my crutches, doing as much as my body would allow. I would walk on my foot, ignoring the pain, because I was determined to heal.

Five months after my operation, I lifted the most I have ever lifted on the parallel squat by over 70+ pounds. I credit my recovery with my mental fortitude. It would have been easy for me to sulk in my room and play my Xbox like I would have done before I found weightlifting. Weightlifting has strengthened my mental resolve as well as my body. I love testing my body's limits and striving for new goals just for the thrill of it. Weightlifting and fitness have become a part of me and will continue to be a crucial part of my life. Now as a senior, I am a ½ inch shy of 6 foot and 183 pounds. My goal: keep my starting positions of Wide Receiver, Defensive End and Punter.