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Princeton Admission Essay

October 28, 2019

Prompt 1: In your written response, you will need to describe the extracurricular activities you are involved in, the volunteering or job experience you've had, and any extraordinary events you have been engaged in during your last summer vacations.

The extracurricular activity I have been engaged in the last two summer breaks is helping seniors in our community center. It is a diverse and engaging activity. I visited the community center three times a week in the summer and two or three times during the school year. There were no standing orders in terms of what we had to do each visit. We got to know all the seniors in the center and became partners with one or two of them. Sometimes, it was helping my seniors to complete their everyday routines, such as walking or doing handiwork with them. The most important thing I learned from this activity is empathy. Sometimes, working there was heartbreaking and sometimes it was therapeutic: with all the pressure from the curriculum, it was soothing to have a conversation with a person who saw a lot in a place where time appeared to pass slower.

Prompt 2: Share your hobbies and tastes in books, arts, sports, etc.

My taste in books and love for literature was shaped in a peculiar way. Before finding an interest in classics for teenagers, such as the Harry Potter saga and Tolkien, I used to read something more obscure. The first book that deeply impressed me was Palahniuk's *Fight Club*, and because of that, I was mostly interested in edgy characters and dark stories. However, about two years ago, I found myself hooked by experimental narratives and heartwarming stories that are also heartbreaking at the same time. One of my favorite books is *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer. The combination of three narratives and such a perceptive on immense historical tragedies left me devastated, yet it made me fall in love with hybrid novels. Thus, now, I am working my way through a much more complicated one, *The House of Leaves* by Mark Z. Danielewski—a novel within a novel about a quasi-fictional war photographer. Naturally, the books I will recommend if asked are *The Land of Laughs* by Jonathan Carroll, *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath, and *Good Omens* by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett.

Essay prompt: The Event that Determined My Future

Overall, I am inclined to think that there are multiple events one encounters every day that eventually shapes one's personality, views, values, and aspirations. For that reason, it is challenging to pinpoint one. However, now that I reflect on my choices for the future and my interests, I can name an event: moving with my family to the United States. Although it

happened when I only was seven years old, it impacted my future and my personality, even though I did not notice it at that time.

First, it is important to note that a life-changing event can only be qualified as such in retrospect. As a child, I could not process the idea of moving to the US fully. It was something happening in the background and I lived through it one day at a time. My family and I are Dominican Americans, which is why what waited for me in my new home is learning a lot about friendship, my connection to heritage, and diversity issues. It was not a great tragedy to me, but it felt challenging regarding the school transfer and the acquisition of new friends. My whole life changed completely, but my parents were thoughtful enough to make this process as painless as possible.

This change in my environment and lifestyle eventually formed my interest in social issues, which is why I am applying for an A.B. in Sociology. I started feeling homesick and lonely, even though people who constituted my idea of home were here. I had to leave my early childhood friends forever. I started to wonder what makes a group and how one kind of person is included in it, while others are not. I faced different kinds of inequalities that did not always have to do with my appearance or heritage. I started to think about how there were bullies and victims, and whether these roles are initially prescribed to a person. Clearly, I did not use such vocabulary when I was nine or so, but I always wondered how it worked.

Eventually, I found myself interested in sociology and anthropology, and it took me quite some time to make up my mind. Ultimately, sociology won, as it much more of a suitable and diverse field of study for me. It turns out that social constructs are fluid, even though it may not seem this way in the first place. Sociology is a cross-disciplinary subject, so one can study how the personal penetrates politics and how psychology can become a public issue. In that regard, I believe that society is indeed transformable, which is why all the events and tendencies, whether they are positive or negative, must be studied, analyzed, reflected on, and used for society's improvement.



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