

BWS Education Consulting Women's Colleges Sample Essays

Bryn Mawr College

Prompt: Common Application – Describe a character in fiction, a historical figure, or a creative work (as in art, music, science, etc.) that has had an influence on you, and explain that influence

By the time they graduate, nearly every student will have read and analyzed Robert Frost's "The Road Not Taken". It is a wonderful poem, and it is very inspiring to some students. Robert Frost has been a very significant influence on my life, but through a different piece, "Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening". I was introduced to this poem in an unconventional setting and learned much more than I could have through reading a PowerPoint explaining each stanza's importance. This poem came to me through song, and has greatly influenced my life.

In my junior year, my choir director chose a very difficult song titled "Sleep" by Eric Whitacre. On the inside cover, Whitacre wrote a message to any performers of his piece. When he originally wrote the song, it was to the words of Frost's poem, but due to an onslaught of lawsuits, he was unable to use the piece with those words for another 30 years. The song has since been given new wording, but the "Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening" still fits perfectly in the music. As an outside project, eight of us students decided to learn the song to Frost's words, as it was intended to be.

Seconds into the song it was evident that the piece was intended for Frost. Though the new wording was still incredible, nothing could overpower the raw emotion emanating from the music I held. I watched as marks on a page became tangible feelings. I felt Frost's poem come to life, and each line was suddenly clear to me. I could see Frost as he wrote the poem, begging those around him to stop the rush of the world we inhabit and just watch the woods fill up with snow. I began to relax and enjoy the vivid images he painted of the peace and calm that came from watching the quiet snowfall. I could feel his sorrow as he forced out the last stanza, the weight of his burdens bearing down on his attempts to relish the mere seconds of peace. I heard the screams of exasperation when he realized that nothing would change, and gave in to the inevitable motion of the world we live in. I did not learn or analyze the poetry; I became it.

Robert Frost's poem greatly influenced me from that point on. The piece made clear to me the reasons I push forward, ignoring the beauty that surrounds me. In a society where free time is the equivalent of laziness, not many people stop by the woods on a snowy evening. Life is fleeting, and Frost inspired me to step back and reconsider what I define as living. A moment of transcendentalism is something that keeps me from being swept away by the pressures of society. I will always have promises to keep, but one of those will always be to stop and admire the snowy woods.

Cedar Crest College

Prompt: Topic of Choice

My career goals are to attend an institution of higher learning that will allow me to become knowledgeable in my desired field of study, Business Administration with a

concentration in Marketing. I would like to achieve an advanced degree, and hold a position where my ideas and thoughts help to bring forth new and creative marketing strategies. I look forward to working with innovative marketing teams, brainstorming and creating new ideas that will produce groundbreaking projects in multi-media and advertising that will be seen all over the world.

Attending a college/university that has a strong Business program where I can challenge myself, will be my first course of action. I plan to utilize my time learning the methodologies and philosophical practices used to become a great businesswoman. My high school educational experience afforded me the opportunity of having advanced placement courses, which have helped to prepare me for the rigor of the coursework I will endure while at college. I look forward to also obtaining an internship while a student, with a company where I can combine my course study with the experiential application resulting in a well balanced knowledge of the business model.

As a high school student I participated in the Girls Inc. Leadership Workshop, the YMCA Youth & Government Program, the Junior Achievement Program, Varsity Volleyball and basketball teams, and several volunteer projects. All of which, I believe help to strengthen my character and provide me the framework for a successful educational experience. As part of my goal, I will continue to provide a positive contribution to my community by supporting projects and programs that help to foster financial independence among minorities and women. I will use my educational achievements, networking contacts and personal experiences in an effort to encourage and inspire others to live out their goals and dreams.

I am enthusiastic about the new challenges I will face and the experiences I will have as a college student.

Mount Holyoke

Prompt: Common Application – Topic of Choice

Such is the Game of Solitaire

Red on black. Black on red. Aces in the corners and stack up. Draw three. If you can, play the first. If you're lucky, play the second. If the gods smile upon you, if they wrap you in good fortune and kiss you with karma, play the third. Such is the game of solitaire.

It would be easy to surrender my future to a never ending loop of numerical chains, alternating in a unique pattern of Hearts and Spades, Diamonds and Clubs. To beguile the mischievous Jack, to outwit the sagacious Queen, to defeat the omnipotent King – this is the goal of a solitaire junkie.

In my quest for the perfect play, I am a knight striving to defend my princess, my paragon of victory, from the perils of mismatching suits. Sometimes I fail. The coveted Clubs and Spades

remain hidden, and my princess falls victim to an army of red. Rest assured; I refuse to lose. Armed with the most powerful ability I could possibly possess, I pick up the cards, shuffle, and deal again. A new enemy leers at me, and in this moment I grasp the essence of solitaire. It is not merely a game of 52 cards, but a fight to organize a chaotic and random mess of numbers and colors and faces.

So the battle begins. A farrago of red and black stares blankly at me, waiting to be manipulated into structured sets. To be successful is to complete four perfect piles – from Ace to King – beautiful in a delightfully symmetrical way. But the enticement of solitaire is discovering which of the numerous paths will lead me to a harmonic and patterned victory. The mystery of the journey always keeps me intrigued with the game. The notion of controlling fate, of steering myself to the handsomely woven stacks, enralls.

However the key to unlocking a lengthy series of moves is elusive. That familiar wave of indecision washes over me. Although perceived as cautious, I find that snap decision electrifying. Ensnared between the right and wrong card, the fate of my princess and resulting elation hang precariously from my fingertips. The timer ticks and my brain whirls. I play for the thrill of this moment. Do I boldly select the card with just one other slumbering beneath it, or do I safely play the card perched atop a mountain of other possible moves? Which card will bring me to those flawless piles of red and black? Who will I be when I arrive?

Audaciously, I choose the card with only one beneath it and watch as chains are born from the movements of my hand: eight on nine, nine on ten, ten on Jack. Guided by the rudimentary principles of solitaire, the piles blossom into maturity. And standing before me is my radiant princess, my model of sheer excellence. Did I build her? Did I mold her, shape her, chisel her grace from the jumbled chaos of Hoyle's cards? Or was she there all along, gleefully waiting to validate my efforts?

Such is the game of solitaire.

It may suck me in, and it may eat my time, but I remain under its intoxicating charm. The Club, the Heart, the Spade, and the Diamond, whose contours are nostalgically imprinted upon my thoughts, capture my undivided attention and wholehearted devotion. The majestic red and cool black lure me, bewitching my mind with their delicate elegance. Each card, whether flimsy or stiff, crinkled or smooth, stained with age or fresh with youth, is an irresistible opportunity to explore.

Such is my game of solitaire.

Scripps College

Prompt: Why are you applying to Scripps College, and how do you think you might contribute to the Scripps community?

After years of hoping to attend a large university, I recently stepped back to evaluate whether that would be right for me. Unsure of what I wanted in a school, all I felt was confused. After my

mother told me about the Claremont Colleges, we took a day trip to the campuses and finally it clicked. The moment I walked through the archway of Scripps College, I knew that that was where I wanted to be. I am fascinated with the rich traditions that seep so obviously into student's everyday lives. From candlelit dinners to the weekly teas, I know the experience a Scripps student has is unlike any other. At Scripps a student can interact with her professors in small classes in a way that is incomparable, allowing her to ask more questions and receive extra support. I love how the Claremont Colleges come together for clubs and events, but every night we are able to return to our own oasis when we step through the Scripps gates to rest. As an active and spirited ASB and Yearbook member at my high school, I love to help organize school activities. I think that I might contribute to the Scripps community by helping the traditions continue on, which I personally think is the most important thing a student can offer a school. I believe that Scripps would take pride in letting me represent them because I truly encompass the ideals of a Scripps student—I am eager to learn and think critically, passionate about creativity and a strong young woman who wants to show the world what she can do.

Smith College

Prompt: What is an obstacle you have faced in your life and how did you deal with that obstacle?

A Game of Dress Up:

The 12"x24" bronze plaque remains unetched, no words, only her picture. There was no way to fit all of my sister's accomplishments and legacies on this plaque. Not even a billboard would do.

The epitaph informs that she was a loving sister. But by looking at her grave, nobody will know that she was my role model. Most little kids want to be a firefighter or the first female president, but when I grew up, I wanted to be my sister.

I was always so proud of her. I remember when she received her diploma from Bryn Mawr and the audience smiled when I shouted, "That's my sister!" It is pride like this that surpasses all that is left behind. That grave could be scratched by weathered by time, but a living legacy would last forever. I decided to become my sister.

It was foolproof: if I did everything like her, then she wasn't really gone and my parents wouldn't miss her so much. I started to do things like play violin and piano because she did. I joined intramural debate because I was preparing to fill her shoes.

Later, I realized that I didn't like taking piano lessons and that I had no desire to debate in high school. My plan was not foolproof, it was proof that I was a fool. I've learned that people are irreplaceable and I am no substitute for my sister, or anybody else. I wanted to follow in her footsteps and to fill her shoes. Yes, her shoes were pretty but if you wear a pair of shoes that are too big, you will fall flat on your face.

My game of dress up was over. I was never going to be president of drama club, varsity cross country runner or state champion debater. And that was ok! I set high standards for myself,

many of which I met but I learned that being Jennifer didn't make me happy. My "failure" at being Jennifer encouraged me to find what I, Loren, was good at and more importantly, what made me happy. I began to play soccer, ride horses, ski and ballroom dance. I started to volunteer at the Tarrytown Music Hall and took courses for scuba diving certification. There are passions we still share like writing, singing and helping others. We've both raised money for charitable causes, I raise money for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention in her memory. The point is that I am not living my life for her anymore, I'm living it for myself. I don't have to fulfill my sister's aspirations at Baker and McKenzie Law Firm, nor do I have to graduate from Northwestern School of Law to feel successful, but I could if I wanted to.

I had to find my own sense of style and come into my own. I didn't want to be a clone. In high school, I avoided cliques and conforming to mindless standards of behavior and fashion in order to fit in. I went out of my way to stand out; for example, I wore turquoise tights with a black skirt and converse. I didn't sing along to the newest music, I preferred classics like The Kinks and Chuck Berry. I wanted to be unique and I sought friends who let me be myself. I even broke off with my last boyfriend solely because he tried to change me into something I didn't want to be. I'm glad that I discovered myself earlier than most of my peers. Since my discovery, I've committed to staying true to myself. I'm often asked, "If you could be anybody in the world for a day, who would you be?" I would be me and I wouldn't change for anything. No amount of money, charismatic person or high status position can rob me of being who I am. I'm the only person who could be Loren Alexander and I have the rest of my life to do her proud.

Sweet Briar College

Prompt: Tell us about a personal quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution or experience that is important to you. What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are?

Throughout high school, I have possessed a desire to make a positive impact on the world by working to advance green energy. After watching Al Gore's movie, *An Inconvenient Truth*, I knew this was the field I wanted to study. I had the opportunity to enroll in an Alternative Energy Engineering class over one summer at Brown University, and I was excited to experience life in another part of the country with people of various backgrounds. My time at Brown University helped me develop into a more responsible person while exposing me to a university student's lifestyle.

Arriving in Rhode Island was intimidating because it was new to me. I navigated through the airport and took a taxi to Brown University. Once there, I enjoyed planning my schedule and organizing trips with my dorm floor. I set my own limits for studying, as well as recreation, and I loved the freedom that these weeks gave me. Stepping out of the protection of my parents' home, I developed a sense of independence.

The Alternative Energy Engineering class was intriguing. Green transportation and the relationship between humans and their environment fascinate me, and they have led me to choose environmental studies as my major. While learning about environmental issues, I became emotionally involved and wanted to make a difference in the alternative energy field. At

the end of the course, I chose to present a research project about air cars, cars that simply run off of air. Although they are not currently practical, it was interesting to understand how they worked and the people behind the invention. Speaking in front of the class scared me, but it also forced me to face my fears. My time at Brown challenged my previous beliefs, giving me new perspective on many issues.

Bringing this knowledge home with me, I began to pursue my interests in the environment by both volunteering and altering my lifestyle. I participated in cleaning up the American River Parkway, helping to maintain this beautiful, local, natural resource. In addition, I became vegan after learning that the environmental pollution given off by factory farms is greater than that produced by transportation. Recently, I helped convince my father to purchase an electric vehicle; he now uses no gasoline for his daily commute to work. Education is a very important factor in introducing new ideas to people and has convinced me to make changes in my world. I learned a great deal about myself in two weeks. I was able to become engrossed in the alternative energy field and apply my knowledge to better my community. I felt that I was able to grow up as an individual during my short stay in an unfamiliar state. Ever since my experience at Brown, I have been more outgoing and less intimidated by public speaking. I improved my interpersonal skills, became more independent and disciplined, and gained a passion for alternative energy.