



The *Quality* Essay

And life is what we make it, always has been, always will be.
- Grandma Moses

Assignment: Write an expressive essay describing a “Quality” you would like to have.

PRE WRITING (Use your Writer’s Journal to record ideas.)

1. Select one quality you hope to integrate into your life. Examples —
 - A. Success (i.e. Henry Ford, Meryl Streep, Stephen King)
 - B. Innovative or a pioneer in a career. (i.e. Albert Einstein, Steven Spielberg)
 - C. Imaginative, creative. (i.e. Walt Disney, Jim Henson)
 - D. Enthusiastic. (i.e. Gold medal winner, Shawn Johnson)
 - E. Sense of humor that makes life easier for those around me. (i.e. Bill Cosby, Chris Rock, Tim Allen)
 - F. Adventurous or a risk-taker. (i.e. Donald Trump)
 - G. Courageous, to meet challenges. (i.e. Helen Keller, Mother Teresa)

2. After selecting your “quality,” define it in your own words.

Examples —

“Success is being able to set realistic goals and taking the steps necessary to achieve them.”

“A positive attitude is when you have faced many struggles and you continue to look for the best and make the best of what life gives you.”

3. Look for a specific example of the quality you are defining. Select two or three individuals, companies, or institutions that is representative of the quality you have selected.

Quality I Have Selected	Characteristics of the Quality	Someone I Admire with this Characteristics & WHY

DRAFTING

Using notes you have made in your Writer’s Journal, begin drafting an essay. Be sure your essay includes:

- Introduction:** (Thesis) State the quality you have chosen and why you have chosen it.
- Body Paragraphs:** Define the quality. Narrow the definition by providing examples. Example: describe people you know who have this quality. Tell why you admire the quality. Tell how you might go about developing the quality.
- Conclusion:** Restate the thesis and the value of this quality to you.

* Include any additional information you think is important to the essay.

REVISING AND EDITING

Use the Writer's Check List below to help you edit and correct the rough draft.

- The essay has an introductory paragraph, supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.
- The essay describes a quality I admire and the reason I have chosen it.
- I have provided specific information to support the selection of this quality.
- I have described how I might achieve this quality.
- All of the information I have provided in the essay is important to the topic.
- When I read the paper out loud, it reads smoothly and clearly.
- All of my sentences make sense and flow easily.
- I have used descriptive words and concrete ideas in this essay.
- I have used correct spelling, capitalization, and punctuation in my essay.

PUBLISHING

Write or type the final copy of your essay. Use a word processing program on the computer OR write legibly in ink. Score your own paper using the attached Rubric/Scoring Guide. Revise and rewrite if necessary. Submit the essay to your teacher for evaluation.

Confidence

Introduction With the remains of a prosperous Yugoslavian village beside them, SS soldiers prepared their rifles. Fifty men, women and children stood against a piercing barbed wire fence. The cold German commander ordered the soldiers into their firing lines. “Ready!” the commander shouted. “Aim!” By this time all were ready, but one soldier. The commander glared down the line. Joseph Schultz stood there with his rifle at his side and his helmet lying next to him. To the shock of the commander, Schultz began to march toward the Jewish people. Reaching the fence, he grasped a young boy’s hand and together they faced death. The commander howled, “Fire.”

Motivator

The German soldier, Joseph Schultz was a part of the “perfect race.” People other than the Aryan race were “dirty” and deserved to die. Schultz realized that Hitler’s prejudice was killing innocent people. Schultz could no longer join with these moral injustices. He exhibited a quality I admire in a person.

Thesis He had enough confidence in himself and his beliefs to stand up against something far more powerful than himself. Confidence, to me, is having enough security in yourself to state your beliefs even in the face of rejection. When I see my beliefs and values challenged, I want to fight for my opinion. As Cicero said, “Confidence is that feeling by which the mind embarks in a great and honorable course with a sure hope and trust in itself.” **Definition**

Support One person who exhibits confidence is Elie Wiesel. Wiesel is the writer of *Night and Fog*, the story of the survivors of Nazi concentration camps. In 1986, President Ronald Reagan honored Wiesel with the United States’ highest civilian award, the “Congressional Gold Medal of Achievement.” At the time of the awards presentation, President Reagan had plans to visit the Bitburg Cemetery where many SS soldiers were buried. This plan stirred much criticism among Jewish politicians. While giving his acceptance speech, Wiesel took the chance to confront Reagan about his trip to West Germany. Wiesel said, “I wouldn’t be the person I am... if I were not to tell you also of the sadness that is in my heart for what happened during the last week... Your place is not with the SS graves, but their victims. They are my friends. They were my parents.” Wiesel, with eloquence and sincerity and in front of thousands of people, told the president of the world’s most powerful nation that he was wrong. Wiesel disagreed and was not afraid to speak up. Confidence, both in himself and in his beliefs, gave him the courage to stand up for his values.

Support Another man who believed in his values was Gandhi. After completing law school, Gandhi found himself in South Africa working as a legal advisor. There he and other Indian immigrants were denied civil rights. Gandhi began to fight against the African government. He was appalled to see his family and others treated as members of a “dirty” race. After moving back to India, Gandhi began yet another adventure. He campaigned for home rule from Great Britain. Gandhi encouraged the people to refuse to pay taxes and to boycott British goods with passive resistance. Gandhi became a symbol of a free India. In the

face of danger, Gandhi's confidence stood against the powerful British Empire.

Joseph Schultz stood against the Nazi firing squad. Gandhi faced up to the British Empire. Wiesel confronted the President of the United States. All of them exhibited confidence. Though I do not expect to be in similar dramatic situations, I want the same type of confidence. It is a quality, which is strengthened by one's beliefs. Even these great men did not just suddenly become confident. Confidence grows with small victories. The opportunity to stand up to the President will not be mind, but small victories can be.

Conclusion Confidence is a quality that I can build on. Confidence is never questioning what I said, but believing in it. Schultz, Wiesel and Gandhi are powerful demonstrations of that characteristic. It is that kind of confidence that I want to attain. As the poet Edgar A. Guest said, "I don't want to stand with the setting sun and hate myself for the things I've done." I want to be able to watch the sunrise and be proud to say that I believe in myself and my actions.

Clincher

Author's Name _____

Read the essay carefully and answer the following questions.
Provide specific explanations when necessary.

1. What "quality" did the writer select? _____

2. Write the thesis sentence on the line below:

3. What two people or institutions were used to support the "quality." _____

4. Does the conclusion contain both the reworded thesis and a clincher? Yes _____ No _____
5. What information seems to be missing from the paper? Any questions left unanswered?

6. Did the writer use concrete detail and active voice? Write an example from the paper on the lines below.

7. What did you like best about the paper?

8. List what needs to be corrected for this paper to be a polished piece of writing suitable for publication.

Student Name: _____

Scoring Guide and Rubric
The Quality Essay

Performance Outcome: TSWD synthesis of expressive writing by composing a multi-paragraph essay.

Writing Trait	Criteria	Score			
		F 1-2	A 3	M 4	E 5-6
Ideas and Content	1. Addresses a “quality” and clearly tells why the quality was selected.				
	2. Interesting details and specific information effectively support main idea throughout the essay.				
	3. Provides effective support through details and examples.				
Organization	4. Focus is maintained throughout the paper.				
	5. Provides an effective and strong introduction.				
	6. Ideas are organized into supporting paragraphs.				
	7. The end brings closure to the essay.				
	8. Effective transitions words and phrases are used (ex. while, after that, etc.).				
Voice	9. There is a logical and sequential organization of ideas.				
	10. Uses a personal, individual voice that expresses thoughts/ feelings.				
	11. Writer is aware of the audience.				
Word Choice	12. Includes liveliness, sincerity, or humor when appropriate.				
	13. Words effectively and accurately convey intended message.				
	14. Uses a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to the topic, purpose, and audience.				
Sentence Fluency	15. Attempts colorful language to make writing more interesting.				
	16. Avoids repeated patterns of sentence structure.				
	17. Shows strong control over simple sentences.				
Conventions	18. Fragments, if present, are usually effective.				
	19. Has solid control over subject/verb agreement.				
	20. Correct punctuation and capitalization.				
	21. Spelling is usually correct, especially on common words.				

FINAL SCORE: _____/6_____