Writing With Emily: College Admission Essay Sample

In my naïve middle schools days, I did not think highly of English class. My love was math, with its logical equations, universal numbers, and challenging problems. English was my second language, something that surrounded and engulfed me the second I left the sanctuary of my Chinese-speaking home. English terrified me. I didn't understand the phrases that my friends used; my essays always seemed childish and simple; and spelling was a constant enigma with its irregular rules. So instead, I hid behind a façade and pretended that English was not important. I tried to convince myself that math awards were the only academic achievements that I needed.

My false fabrications crumbled as soon as I read the first ten pages of Emily of New Moon by L. M. Montgomery. All of sudden, I was mesmerized by the power of words. Montgomery's vivid descriptions, rich images, and personal style made me feel like I had made a new friend. Soon, I was laughing with the protagonist, Emily Starr, as she made a lopsided pudding cake and crying with her when she was betrayed by a phony friend. Above all, as I read through the trilogy, I felt myself growing with Emily.

With my analytical side, I was, at first, surprised at my book choice. While Emily Starr and I did share the same passionate and determined personality, Emily's dream was to become a writer. I, on the other hand, was so disheartened by my lack of abilities in English that I was terrified of writing. However, Montgomery had such a way with her diction that she was able to convey her own love of writing through her characters. As a result, her characters were also able to convey that love to the readers. While reading through Emily's innumerate attempts at finding the perfect lines for her poems and the most articulate ways to write her stories, I found myself looking for those elusive words with her. For the first time in my life, I realized what a series of well-chosen words could accomplish. Words allowed Montgomery's ideas to travel across the decades; words allowed such lively and realistic people like Emily Starr to be created.

Suddenly, I loved English, and L. M. Montgomery via Emily Starr became my role-model. The trilogy also taught me a lesson: the power of perseverance. I realized that I was not alone in my struggle to write better essays, and my failures did not reflect my intelligence but, instead, my lack of experience and practice. Even though Emily loved words and grew up writing, she still faced years of hard work, constant revisions, and uncountable rejections before she finally tasted the fruit of success. Who was I to expect instant success when I had only been speaking English for a few years at school?

I began to emulate Emily's determination. I worked my way through thousand-paged English

workbooks; I channeled my over-imaginative ideas into stories; I even read under the bed-covers with a flashlight when my grandparents enforced a bedtime. I still received B's on some of my essays, and my grammar tests still took a dip once in awhile. However, I did not let the disappointments deter me from my goal. Just like Emily, I simply stored away the bad news and worked harder.

Then one day, my perseverance paid off. I could not believe it at first, but there it was, my little fictional piece, proudly claiming a whole page spread in our school's literary journal. After I jumped onto my bed with joy, I reached into my bedside drawer to pull out my faithful yet worn copy of Emily of New Moon. I reread the part where Emily had her first poem published. I wanted to celebrate my first success with Emily.