Quest Bridge Early College Match Application Essays

***Limit 225 Characters for each answer***

**What are your favorite books, movies and/or types of music?**

 *The Lord of the Rings, The Book Thief, Unbroken, A Long Way Gone, Brave New World, Without Conscience, The Hot Zone, Animal Farm, The Breakfast Club, The Princess Bride, The Godfather, The Boys of Baraka,* indie, instrumentals

**What is your favorite source of inspiration?**

 The cancer consumed his health for three arduous years, but never once touched his spirit. Austin Sprayberry inspires me, even in his death, because of the love, empathy, courage and faithfulness in his short nineteen years.

**How do you spend a typical weekday evening?**

First, "marching band", or more accurately described as"slowly-torturing-yourself-for-three-hours-in-fear-of-a-heat-stroke." Then, I spend the evening with my boyfriend, "Homework." We're in a very committed relationship.

**How do you spend a typical weekend?**

I time travel throughout history, transport into Huxley's dystopia, enter the microscopic world of Ebola and solve mathematical mysteries. I escape reality through the words within a textbook and enter a world of knowledge.

**What compliment have you been paid that meant the most to you? Who gave it to you?**

 The memories of his harsh childhood and Vietnam training were hidden behind his insensitive, aged eyes. His critical gaze faded as he looked down at me. "Daughter, I am so proud of you." For the first time, I was good enough.

**How do you rejuvenate yourself?**

I felt the burden of worry and exhaustion as I glanced around my room and noticed the small imperfections. I quickly reorganized the minor upheavals. I sat down, focused and relaxed. For an OCD mind, organizing is therapy.

**What do you consider your most significant achievement?**

I stared at the website, “Georgia Governor’s Honors Program”, my heart racing. Refresh. Refresh. Refresh. Finally, the list was posted. I scrolled through the plethora of names, holding my breath. I smiled. It had mine.

**If you could change one thing about your high school, what would it be and why?**

We’re more than our labels, more than a “jock”, “nerd”, “goth”, or “outcast”. I would make people see beneath appearances and beyond stereotypes. It would begin by spending lunch learning the story of someone different.

**What historical event do you wish you could have participated in and why?**

 I stood in the shadow of the twin-engine plane, watching in amazement as Amelia Earnhardt hovered above, unaware that Death served as her copilot on this last voyage. I was in awe at her ability to risk her life for history.

**What about college excites you?**

 I craned my neck, expecting to a see a glass ceiling confining me. However, the clear blue sky was left unrestricted. I finally had the opportunity to reach my full potential, no limitation, no barriers. I had control.

**Savannah Mabrey, Emory University**

**Option 2: What is something you have taught yourself in the last year? How did you teach yourself this new skill or concept and what was the result? (500 word limit)**

 The laptop slid across the floor, emitting a soft glow from the blank word document. I flung my arms over my head in a cry of anguish as I urgently surfed several social media sites to proclaim my aggravation. I stomped to the corner and began the therapeutic activity of banging my head against the wall until the pain from the piercing migraine allowed me to forget that initial cause of disturbance. Thump. Thump. Thump. My incessant thumping echoed down the small hallway, interrupting my grandparent’s favorite show, thus prompting my grandfather to storm into my room and demand to know why I was being a “gump”. After kindly explaining to him for the millionth time that “gump” is not a real word,

I confessed my horrific dilemma that I was destroyed and that when I graduated, I would have no future. I would be forced to live on the streets and all my friends would disown me in shame. I would be reduced to making a rat with one ear my best friend, and I would have to live in the woods, hunting for my food. The stark reality, my only plausible future, at best, is being a life-long cook at McDonalds. I stopped, catching my breath and my emotions from the repulsive reality I had finally embraced. He laughed. He actually laughed at me, as if I was dramatic or unrealistic. As I stared in disbelief, the infuriating black line on the word document reappeared up on my computer blinked beneath the words, “College Essay: Who are you? (250-300 words)”.

 As the season for scholarships and college applications \_\_\_\_\_\_, I became abruptly and abundantly aware at how unprepared I was for the essay prompts I was to encounter, as well as the necessity of therapy to get me through the traumatic experience. Applications demanded such torturous insight as, “Describe yourself in-depth in 140 characters;” each carries with it the intention of answering the underlying question, “Who are you?”. Under the assumption that responding with “a poor teenager who desperately wants to go to a good college, even if means eating Ramen for four years” would not suffice, I began the complex, yet illuminating, process of discerning who I am. I forced myself to see past the nerdy stereotype I defined myself as throughout high school, and instead delved into every conceivable aspect that formed my personality, goals, insecurities, fortes, passions, perspective, weaknesses and aspirations. I was humbled as I became increasingly aware of my own limitations, as well as accepting that although I strive for perfection, blemishes are inevitable. I became conscious, and competent, that I am more than a “nerdy” façade and more than a product of unfavorable circumstances. Through the surfeit amount of college essays and the tedious process of discovering who I am, I was required to learn what only I could teach; introspection. (484)

**Kimberly McCarthy, Brown University**

“Here she comes again, the same as always--running in, breathless, a stack of books in her arms. She throws the books on top of me and glides onto my bench, screeching to a stop at its center. Then she gently lays her hands in position on my keys, and sighs. ‘I really shouldn't be here,’ she tells me. ‘I have chem to study, and a creative writing paper, and eighty lines of Latin, and a watercolor, and....’ She begins to play. It's my favorite, ‘The Moonlight Sonata.’ It always reminds me of her gentle and loving yet deeply passionate. Her fingers press tenderly at first as if my keys were ivory eggshells and ebony velvet. Then she is swept up in the tide of her own emotions and begins to play louder, stronger, faster, her fingers working furiously, faster and faster and then over. She caresses my keyboard, eyes closed, then gasps. ‘It’s 3:15! I'm going to be late to karate!’ She jumps up and runs out the door without so much as a glance over shoulder, but that's all right. She'll be here tomorrow--maybe not at the same time, maybe with different books, but she'll be here. She told me--no matter how hard the courses get, no matter how smothering the work becomes, no matter how little time she has, she could never give me up. It's wonderful to be loved.”

**Hugh Gallagar, New York University**

 I am a dynamic figure, often seen scaling walls and crushing ice. I have been known to remodel train stations on my lunch breaks, making them more efficient in the area of heat retention. I translate ethnic slurs for Cuban refugees, I write award-winning operas, I manage time efficiently. Occasionally, I tread water for three days in a row.

 I woo women with my sensuous and godlike trombone playing, I can pilot bicycles up severe inclines with unflagging speed, and I cook Thirty-Minute Brownies in twenty minutes. I am an expert in stucco, a veteran in love, and an outlaw in Peru.

 Using only a hoe and a large glass of water, I once single-handedly defended a small village in the Amazon Basin from a horde of ferocious army ants. I play blue-grass cello, I was scouted by the Mets, I am the subject of numerous documentaries. When I am bored, I build large suspension bridges in my yard. I enjoy urban hang gliding. On Wednesdays, after school, I repair electrical appliances free of charge.

 I am an abstract artist, a concrete analyst, and a ruthless bookie. Critics worldwide swoon over my original line of corduroy evening were. I don't perspire. I am a private citizen, yet I receive fan mail. I have been caller number nine and have won the weekend passes. Last summer I toured New Jersey with a traveling, centrifual-force demonstration. I bat .400. My deft floral arrangements have earned me fame in international botany circles. Children trust me.

 I can hurl tennis rackets at small moving objects with deadly accuracy. I once read Paradise Lost, Moby Dick, and David Copperfield in one day and still had time to refurbish an entire dining room that evening. I know the exact location of every food item in the supermarket. I have performed several covert operations for the CIA. I sleep once a week; when I do sleep, I sleep in a chair. While on vacation in Canada, I successfully negotiated with a group of terrorists who had seized a small bakery. The laws of physics do not apply to me.

 I balance, I weave, I dodge, I frolic, and my bills are all paid. On weekends, to let off steam, I participate in full-contact origami. Years ago, I discovered the meaning of life but forgot to write it down. I have made extraordinary four-course meals using only a mouli and a toaster oven. I breed prizewinning clams. I have won bullfights in San Juan, cliff-diving competitions in Sri Lanka, and spelling bees at the Kremlin. I have played Hamlet, I have performed open-heart surgery, and I have spoken with Elvis.

But, I have not yet gone to college.