

SAMPLE LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This letter is intended to serve as a college recommendation for Ezra Edlarruti. I have been acquainted with Ezra for four years but came to know him well last year, as he was in the one class that I taught, a thirteen-student junior English class.

Last spring, while he was singing the lead in "The Marriage of Figaro," Ezra became especially interested in a short story that we read as a class, Albert Camus's "The Guest." It is a challenging story for any reader, and Ezra became interested in the subtleties of interpreting it, especially in the difficulties inherent in the translation of such a story. What did Camus really mean to say and how might his intentions have been compromised by its English translation? Ezra read the original, French, version of the story and then wrote a superb analysis of the compromises inherent in its English translation. His essay was flawless -- his wording apt, and his analysis insightful, logical and comprehensive. Some of our English faculty can't write so well.

Students and faculty often remark that Ezra is blessed with considerable talent. What many of them overlook is how hard Ezra works to cultivate his talent, whether it be the development of his beautiful voice for an operatic performance or of his writing skills as he works through an essay. I know of the effort that he put into book reviews of *1984* and *Animal Farm* because he shared early drafts with me. I also appreciate the time that he put into his analysis of "The Guest" because he stopped by periodically to share his enthusiasm for the project and his progress with it.

In over twenty-five years of teaching, I have known other students with talent equivalent to Ezra's. Many of them lacked his good nature and humility, and few demonstrated the genuine intellectual curiosity that Ezra has exhibited over and over -- a curiosity that is often accompanied by his excitement or enthusiasm for an idea, an author, a literary work or the lead role in a challenging operatic performance.

When I decided to set up a debate on Henry David Thoreau's "Civil Disobedience," regarding the role of government in our lives today, in an effort to have the class appreciate more fully the contemporary implications of Thoreau's sophisticated essay, it was Ezra who was most helpful in creating a resolution that would lead to that appreciation. Ezra, to no one's surprise, then agreed to argue on any side of the debate.

Ezra is a motivated young man of numerous talents and considerable self-discipline. He is fun-loving, likable, enthusiastic, trusting and trustworthy.

Gary Youstis

