

Essay Examples

Common Application Essays

Option #1: Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

"Identity" is at the heart of this prompt. What is it that makes you you? The prompt gives you a lot of latitude for answering the question since you can write a story about your "background, identity, interest, or talent." Your "background" can be a broad environmental factor that contributed to your development such as growing up in a military family, living in an interesting place, or dealing with an unusual family situation.

You could write about an event or series of events that had a profound impact on your identity. Your "interest" or "talent" could be a passion that has driven you to become the person you are today. However you approach the prompt, make sure you are inward looking and explain how and why the story you tell is so meaningful.

If you choose this option, spend some time thinking about what the prompt is really asking. On a certain level, the prompt is giving you permission to write about anything. The words "background," "identity," "interest," and "talent" are wonderfully (horribly?) broad and vague, so you have a lot of freedom to approach this question however you want.

That said, don't make the mistake of thinking that anything goes with option #1. The story you tell needs to be "so meaningful" that your application "would be incomplete without it." If you focus on something that isn't central to what it is that makes you uniquely you, then you haven't yet found the right focus for this essay option.

As you explore possible ways to approach this first essay option, keep these points in mind:

- Think hard about what it is that makes you, you. If you end up telling a story that hundreds of other applicants could also tell, then you haven't fully succeeded in tackling the question of identity that stands at the heart of this prompt.
- Your "story" most likely isn't a single event. Being voted Prom Queen and scoring that winning goal may be impressive accomplishments, but by themselves they are not stories about the formation of your identity.
- Your "story" can take a variety of forms. Did you grow up in a difficult domestic situation? Did you live in an unusual place that had a significant impact on your childhood? Did you or someone in your family have significant challenges to overcome? Were you surrounded by people who had a major influence on your development? Did you move frequently? Did you have to hold a job from a young age? Do you have a particular obsession or passion that has been a driving force in your life for years?
- Make sure your essay is adding a rich dimension to your application. You have 650 words to present yourself as an interesting and passionate individual who will be a positive addition to the campus community. If your essay is repeating information that can be found elsewhere in your application, then you're wasting this opportunity.

- Because of the focus on "identity" in the prompt, keep "diversity" in mind as you write your essay. By diversity I'm not referring to the color of your skin or your ethnic background (although these can certainly be a part of your essay). Rather, if a college admits 2,000 students, the school wants to see 2,000 individuals who each has a unique story and background to bring to the campus environment. The strongest colleges and universities do not have homogenous student populations. These tips for an essay on diversity can help you think about this issue.
- If you don't think you have a story to tell, you are wrong (at least I've never met a student who didn't have an interesting background). You don't need to have grown up in a yurt in the Himalayas to have a background that is worth narrating.

Sample Essay for # Option 1

Handiwork

I made slipcovers for my doll house furniture when I was ten.

I had a nice matching set for the living room—a sofa, an arm chair, and an ottoman—all in a gray and pink floral pattern. I didn't dislike the furniture, but on a rainy Saturday, I decided it was time to switch things up a little bit, so I dug out some scrap material—navy blue—along with some thread, a needle, and a pair of scissors from my mother's sewing desk.

A few days later, my doll house family had a nice, newly reupholstered living room set.

I've always been a crafter. From the early days of Kindergarten macaroni ornaments, to making my own prom dress last year, I've had a knack for creating things. For drafting sketches, drawing plans, making calculations, gathering supplies, adding finishing touches. There is something so satisfying about holding something you, and you alone, have made—something that was just an image in your mind until you set about to bring it into existence, to create something new, something different. I'm sure there are hundreds of doll furniture sets out there in that same gray and pink, but there is only one with fitted (albeit with sloppy stitching) navy blue covers.

There's a sense of pride there, however small.

I've been lucky to have the time, the energy, and the resources to be artistic, to craft things. My family has always encouraged my efforts whether I be sewing a Christmas gift or building a bookcase. As my projects have evolved, I've come to realize that making things, useful or otherwise, is very much an important part of who I am.

It allows me to make use of my imagination, creativity, logic, and technical skills.

And it's not just about making something for the sake of making something. I feel a connection to my mother's family, from a rural village in Sweden, when I make candles. I feel a connection to my grandmother, who passed away last year, when I use the thimble she gave me when I was thirteen. I feel resourceful when I use leftover wood scraps from our new barn to make coasters for the coffee table. Crafting for me is not just a hobby, not something I do when I'm bored. It's a way to use my environment, to discover tools, and shortcuts, and new ways of looking at things. It's a chance for me to use my head and my hands to make something pretty, or practical, or fun.

I don't plan on majoring in art, architecture, design, or anything remotely craft-based. I don't want it to be my career. I think a part of me is worried that I'll lose my love of making things if there's homework involved, or if I have to rely on it for a paycheck. I want it to stay a pastime, to stay a way for me to relax, enjoy myself, and cultivate a sense of independence. I'll never stop being a crafty person—I'll always have a box of colored pencils, or a sewing kit, or a cordless drill on hand. I don't know where I'll be in twenty years, or even ten. But I know wherever I am, whatever I'm doing, I will be the person I am because of that little girl, patiently sewing together tiny pieces of fabric on her bedroom floor: creating something great, something new, something entirely her own.

Option #2: The lessons we take from failure can be fundamental to later success. Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?

This prompt may seem to go against everything that you've learned on your path to college. It's far more comfortable in an application to celebrate successes and accomplishments than it is to discuss failure. At the same time, you'll impress the college admissions folks greatly if you can show your ability to learn from your failures and mistakes. Be sure to devote significant space to the second half of the question—what was your response to failure, and how did you learn and grow from the experience? Introspection and honesty is key with this prompt.

Sample Essay for # Option 2

Striking Out

I've played baseball ever since I could remember, but somehow, at fourteen, I still wasn't very good at it.

You'd think that ten years of summer leagues and two older brothers who'd been the stars of their teams would have rubbed off on me, but you'd be wrong. I mean, I wasn't completely hopeless. I was pretty fast, and I could hit my oldest brother's fastball maybe three or four times out of ten, but I wasn't about to be scouted for college teams.

*My team that summer, the Bengals, wasn't anything special, either. We had one or two pretty talented guys, but most, like me, were just barely what you could call decent. But somehow we'd almost scraped through the first round of playoffs, with only one game standing between us and semifinals. Predictably, the game had come down to the last inning, the Bengals had two outs and players on second and third base, and it was my turn at bat. It was like one of those moments you see in movies. The scrawny kid who no one really believed in hits a miraculous home run, winning the big game for his underdog team and becoming a local legend. Except my life wasn't *The Sandlot*, and any hopes my teammates or coach might've had for a last-minute rally to victory were crushed with my third swing-and-miss when the umpire sent me back to the dugout with a "strike three - you're out!"*

I was inconsolably angry with myself. I spent the entire car ride home tuning out my parents' words of consolation, replaying my strike-out over and over in my head. For the next few days I was miserable thinking about how, if it hadn't been for me, the Bengals might have been on their way to a league victory, and nothing anyone said could convince me that the loss wasn't on my shoulders.

About a week later, some of my friends from the team got together at the park to hang out. When I arrived, I was a little surprised that no one seemed to be mad at me - after all, I'd lost us the game, and they had to be disappointed about not making it to the semifinals. It wasn't until we split into teams for an impromptu pickup game that I started to realize why no one was upset. Maybe it was the excitement of reaching the playoffs or the pressure of living up to my brothers' examples, but sometime during that game, I'd lost sight of why most of us played summer league baseball. It wasn't to win the championship, as cool as that would have been. It was because we all loved to play. I didn't need a trophy or a Hollywood come-from-behind win to have fun playing baseball with my friends, but maybe I needed to strike out to remember that.

Option #3: Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?

Keep in mind how open-ended this prompt truly is. The "belief or idea" you explore could be your own, someone else's, or that of a group. The best essays will be honest as they explore the difficulty of working against the status quo or a firmly held belief, and the answer to the final question--would you make the same decision again--need not be "yes." Sometimes in retrospection we discover that the cost of an action was perhaps too great. However you approach this prompt, your essay needs to reveal one of your core personal values. If the belief you challenged doesn't give the admissions folks a window into your personality, then you haven't succeeded with this prompt.

Sample Essay for # Option 3

Gym Class Hero

I'm not really an athlete. I'm all for a rousing game of badminton or tennis, and I enjoy cross-country skiing and hiking, but I enjoy these activities as recreation.

I don't find enjoyment in testing my physical limits to the point of pain. I'm not competitive by nature; I rarely challenge others, or find myself face-to-face with an opponent. Except, to my surprise, if that competitor, that challenger, is simply myself. "Ok, I need some folks to run a mile," Mr. Fox, the PE Teacher, bellowed over the 40-odd preteens loitering around the playing fields behind Lafayette Middle School.

We were working through a unit on track and field events. Up to this point, I had managed to avoid participation. "It's four times around the track. Any takers?" A couple people raised their hands and began assembling at the make-shift starting line. "Well, let's get a few more out there," he continued. Looking over the rest of us, he made a quick assessment and called out, "Johnson. Patterson.

VanHouten. And, uh, Baxter." I froze. Were there any other Baxters in my class? No. Only me. And, to my dismay, I heard myself saying "Ok!" as I made my way to the track, my heart already pounding, my stomach in knots, with zero confidence in myself. I couldn't do this.

Where did my doubt come from? No one ever said to me, "Oh, you can't run a mile." I don't even remember any askance looks, any raised eyebrows implying I was out of my depth.

Middle-schoolers can be a cruel bunch, but not that day. There was just that voice in my head, as clear as a bell: "You'll never be able to run a mile. You can't even climb stairs without getting winded. It's going to hurt. You'll probably pass out. You could never run a mile." A whole mile? That voice was right.

It was, in my mind, impossibly long. What was I going to do?

I ran a mile. There was nothing else to do; I didn't have time to question it, or come up with an excuse. Sometimes challenging a belief is as easy as just doing something. It wasn't a conscious "I'm going to challenge this doubt and insecurity I have." I just started running. Four laps around the track—it took me thirteen minutes. Which, as I research it now, is not particularly impressive. But at the time, I was pretty proud. For someone who never ran, I was just happy I finished. I didn't feel great; my legs were shaky and there was something rattling around in my chest, but I had proven myself wrong. I could run a mile. Of course, I ended up throwing up about five minutes later. Even if I had new-found confidence and a sense of accomplishment, my body wasn't quite ready for it yet.

I'm sure there's some lesson to be learned there—something about not pushing ourselves too far, too fast. About knowing and assessing our limitations. But that's not the important moral of the story. I discovered I wasn't always right. I learned that I was too critical of myself, too cruel, too unforgiving. Yes, I'm not going to the Olympics anytime soon. Yes, I'm not going to set any records for track. But—once I stopped telling myself no, and just got on with the task at hand, I surprised myself. And that's something I'm carrying with me into my future: the ability to shut off those doubting voices, and sometimes just going for it. I may surprise myself by discovering I can do much more than I thought possible.

Option #4: Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, and an ethical dilemma--anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.

Here again the Common Application gives you a lot of options for approaching the question. With the ability to write about an "intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma," you can essentially write about any issue that you find important. Note that you do not have to have solved the problem, and some of the best essays will explore problems that need to be solved in the future. Be careful with that opening word "describe"—you'll want to spend much more time analyzing the problem than describing it. This essay prompt, like all of the options, is asking you to be introspective and share with the admissions folks what it is that you value.

Sample Essay for # Option 4

Grandpa's Rubik's Cube

My grandfather was a puzzle junkie. All kinds of puzzles—jigsaw, Sudoku, crossword, riddles, logic puzzles, word jumbles, those small twisted pieces of metal that you try and separate. He'd always say he was "trying to stay sharp," and these puzzles occupied a lot of his time, especially after he retired.

And for him, it often turned into a group activity; my brothers and I would help him sort out the edge pieces for his jigsaws, or flip through the heavy dictionary he kept in his office, looking for synonyms for "bastion". After he passed away, we were sorting through his possessions—pile to keep, pile to donate, pile to sell—and found a box in an upstairs closet with nothing in it save an assortment of Rubik's Cubes.

Some of the cubes were solved (or had never been started), while some of them were mid-solve. Large ones, small ones, 3x3s, 4x4s, and even a 6x6. I never saw my grandfather working on one of them, but I wasn't surprised to find them; puzzles were his life. Before we donated the cubes to the thrift store, I took one; grandpa had managed to get one side—yellow—completed, and I wanted to finish it for him.

I've never had the knack he had for solving puzzles. It wasn't just games he could solve; he worked as a plumber for forty years, and was good at getting to the bottom of all sorts of problems at work. His workshop was full of projects he had started fixing, from broken radios and clocks to cracked picture frames and lamps with faulty wiring.

He liked investigating these things, discovering how they worked, so he could fix them in his own way. That's not something I inherited. I keep every owner's manual, every installation and user guide; I can't look at something and know how it works, how to fix it, how to rig up a solution.

But I'm determined to solve this Rubik's cube. I have no idea how long that will take, or how I'll do it. I know there are books and websites dedicated to the math behind it, to coming up with a logical solution. But I'm not going to read any of their advice. I'll give it a shot, working slowly, with plenty of mistakes (and probably some frustration). And, as I'm trying to solve it, I'll be sharing a connection with my grandfather. It's a small and simple way of remembering him, and honoring one of his favorite pastimes.

I don't think I'm going to take up puzzling as seriously as he did—although, down the road, who knows? Maybe it's in my genes after all. But this one puzzle, this one problem to solve, is my way of keeping him with me. It's something I can take to college, to my first apartment, to pretty much any place I could go. And, with time, I hope it will help me understand more about my grandfather as a person. By taking up this puzzle, maybe I'll learn to see the world the way he did—how anything can be worked through, can be improved. He was the most stubborn, tenacious, dedicated person I've ever known; if being able to eventually solve this Rubik's cube gives me a quarter of his resolve and patience, I'll be happy. I may not be able to solve it. I may continue to twist those plastic squares for years without getting any closer to a solution. Even if I can't solve it, if I just don't have it in me, I will have tried. And for that, I think my grandfather would be very proud.

Option #5: Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.

I'm not a fan of the way this prompt is worded for it suggests that a single event or accomplishment can be so transformative that one becomes an adult overnight. Maturity comes as the result of a long train of events and accomplishments (and failures). That said, this prompt is an excellent choice if you want to explore a single event or achievement that marked a clear milestone in your personal development. Be careful to avoid the "hero" essay - admissions offices are often overrun with essays about the season-winning touchdown or brilliant performance in the school play. These can certainly be fine topics for an essay, but make sure your essay is analyzing your personal growth process, not bragging about an accomplishment.

Sample Essay for # Option 5

Buck Up

Susan Lewis is a woman that very few people would consider a role model for anything. A fifty-something high-school dropout, she has little more to her name than a beat-up truck, a Jack Russell Terrier and a ragtag herd of aging and/or neurotic horses with which she's run a largely unsuccessful riding lesson program for twenty years with no business plan to speak of and little hope of ever turning a profit.

She curses like a sailor, is perpetually un-punctual, and has an erratic and often terrifying temper.

I've taken weekly riding lessons with Sue since middle school, often against my own better judgment. Because for all her seemingly unredeemable qualities, she inspires me - not necessarily as a person I'd strive to emulate, but simply for her unwavering perseverance. In the five years I've known her, I've never once seen her give up on anything. She would sooner go hungry (and sometimes does) than give up on her horses and her business. She sticks to her guns on every issue, from political views to hay prices to her (frankly terrible) business model. Sue has never once given up on herself or her horses or her business, and she never gives up on her students.

My dad lost his job not long after I started high school, and horseback riding quickly became a luxury we couldn't afford. So I called Sue to tell her that I wouldn't be riding for a while, at least until my father was back on his feet.

I hadn't expected an outpouring of sympathy (Sue, as you may have guessed, isn't an overwhelmingly sympathetic person), but I certainly wasn't expecting her to yell at me, either.

Which was exactly what happened. She told me in no uncertain terms that I was ridiculous for thinking that money should stop me from doing something I loved, and she would see me bright and early Saturday morning regardless, and if she had to drive me to the barn herself that she would, and I'd better be wearing a good pair of boots because I'd be working off my lessons until further notice.

Her refusal to give up on me said more than I could ever put into words. It would have been easy for her to just let me leave. But Sue was never a person to take the easy way out, and she showed me how to do the same. I worked harder in Sue's barn that year than I'd ever worked before, earning every minute of my riding time, and I'd never felt more proud of myself. In her own stubborn way, Sue had shared with me an invaluable lesson in perseverance. She may not be much of a role model in any other respect, but Susan Lewis does not give up, and I strive every day to live by her example.

Other College Essay Examples

#Essay 1

Michigan State University Example of an excellent personal Statement (Used with permission of applicant with minor editorial changes) I could feel the renewed power of the red-tail hawk pulsing through my leather gloves; it was as if she knew what was about to happen. After months of feeding, medication, and rehabilitation for a wing injury, I was both excited and nervous to release my first raptor for the Wildlife Recovery Association (WRA). I turned away from our group of spectators, took a deep breath, and counted aloud, One...two...THREE! With an explosion of feathers the red-tail soared from my opened hands, and I smiled with satisfaction as she circled high overhead in full health and wild glory. That, I thought, is the best feeling in the world. Through many such influential experiences, I have gained great appreciation for the challenges, responsibilities, and personal rewards found in veterinary medicine. Ultimately, they have helped guide my preparation to become a capable and dedicated member of the veterinary community. My enthusiasm for the veterinary profession has been fostered since my childhood by a deep fascination with animals and their health. From this foundation I developed an enduring sense of responsibility and pride in providing care for all creatures, even as my perspectives and aspirations matured. For instance, my understanding of the community role of veterinarians expanded rapidly when I became a WRA volunteer. I participated first-hand in the surgery, medication, rehabilitation and release of hawks, owls, eagles, and falcons. I also eagerly took part in statewide educational programs employing our resident birds and quickly discovered that I was in my element when sharing my enthusiasm and knowledge of raptors with the public. Over several years I began to realize that combining my concern for wildlife with my commitment to community service was an extremely fulfilling endeavor. My experiences with the WRA sparked my first consideration of a career in veterinary teaching and encouraged me to further explore this interest. During the last two summers of high school I was employed as an assistant technician at _____ Clinic outside of Houston, Texas. There I observed modern veterinary practice and the application of complex procedures such as endoscopic, orthopedic, and laser surgeries. Assisting in these operations was both highly educational and maturing, as I encountered success, failure, and ethical challenges under the guidance of _____. Interestingly, I now consider one of the unsuccessful struggles I witnessed there to be amongst my most valuable lessons. One morning, an aging bulldog named Daisy came in for an exploratory laparoscopy, and the entire staff was eager to employ the new camera equipment. I was intrigued by the sharp screen images of the bulldog's viscera and the ability to obtain biopsies without a major incision. But excitement quickly changed to alarm when Daisy's heart and breathing suddenly stopped. Despite direct epinephrine shots and manual palpation, Dr.____ was unable to revive Daisy before her life slipped away. When removing the

body, I was disheartened, not only for the dog and her owners, but also for the disappointed veterinarian. However, I came to realize that for me the experience was as important as the numerous successes achieved through the same technology; Dr. ____ continued to employ innovative techniques and never allowed a setback to interfere with his commitment to improving his practice. With that same determination, I am prepared for the responsibilities of continuous self-education in this constantly advancing profession. As a result of my experience, I wanted to learn more about the modern procedures, equipment, and medicines in veterinary practice. Consequently I also shadowed Dr. ____ at Equine Veterinary Associates in Texas and was introduced to equine rhinoscopies, arthroscopies, and ultrasound (and also quickly learned that equine practice has come a long way from the writings of James Herriot). During my stay I was also able to visit the Texas A & M College of Veterinary Medicine and gained an encouraging first impression of university animal research and development. Through these collective experiences in modern animal practice, I soon decided to pursue a DVM/PhD so that I too could be a part of advancing animal medical knowledge, developing medicines and procedures, and educating others. I believe a career that combines my passion for animal health with a dedication to academics and love of interpersonal interaction will be highly gratifying. Thus my time in Texas encouraged me to continue achieving scholastically in preparation for future opportunities in veterinary academia. By setting and achieving educational goals, such as earning top Advanced Placement scores, I have been able to take advantage of challenging academic opportunities at MSU and explore my various interests in the field. As part of my undergraduate planning, I am focusing on a major in biochemistry, a degree that satisfies my desire to understand disease and medicinal interaction with living matter at the molecular level. Concurrently, I have enjoyed employment under the guidance of Dr. ____ in the MSU CVM Aquatic Animal Health Lab (AAHL) and the diagnostic challenges of performing clinical examinations on aquatic species, such as muskellunge and sea lamprey. I have found the research aspects of symptoms of the fish is fascinating work and highly rewarding. I have come to appreciate the problem-solving and critical-thinking nature of veterinary medicine, much like assembling the pieces of a biochemical jigsaw puzzle. With an inquisitive mind and a natural love for learning, I look forward to making a significant contribution to the understanding of animal health. Without a doubt, my combined veterinary experiences have reaffirmed that animal medicine is a highly diverse and rewarding career. Although I have considered wildlife toxicology, lab animal research, medicinal development, and specializing in avian medicine or orthopedics as future possibilities, I am still finding opportunities every day that intrigue me. After thirteen plus years of preparation, I have learned that the fulfillment to be gained from advancing our knowledge of animals, developing progressive veterinary techniques, or simply releasing a rehabilitated red-tail hawk can foster a challenging and satisfying vocation. With a passion for animal welfare, a high interest in the natural sciences, a desire to be involved in education, and a dedication to life-long learning, my goal is to be a competent and contributing member of the veterinary profession.

Essay 2

We are looking for an essay that will help us know you better as a person and as a student. Please write an essay on a topic of your choice (no word limit).

I'm one of those kids who can never read enough. I sit here, pen in hand, at my friendly, comfortable, oak desk and survey the books piled high on the shelves, the dresser, the bed, the chair, even the window ledge. Growing up without TV, I turned to the beckoning world of literature for both entertainment and inspiration. As I run my eye over the nearest titles, I notice... only three written in the last 50 years. Ahh, here's Homer – by far my favorite ancient author – alongside Tolkien, my favorite modern. Incongruous? I think not. Tolkien loved Homer and honored him constantly within his own work. How could I fully appreciate the exchange between Bilbo and Gollum without seeing the parallel story of Odysseus and Polyphemus in the back of my mind? In the innocent characters of Bilbo and Frodo, Tolkien gives a quiet refutation to Plato's philosophical dialog of Gyges' Ring. Only a classicist would notice. Donne would, over there on the shelf, encased contentedly in his quiet brown binding. Aristotle wouldn't. He's too busy analyzing the Dickens on either side of him.

The deeper I dig, the richer ground I find. I accidentally discovered the source of Feste's comedic dialog in Twelfth Night while translating the Latin plays of Plautus. I met the traitor Brutus as a fictional character in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, renewed my acquaintance with the actual man in Classical History, and hope never to meet his soul in the deepest circle of Dante's Inferno. In all of this, I can sense a bond, transcending time and linking me to Homer, to Tennyson, to Virgil, Byron, and Nietzsche. In my mind's eye, all the great works I've read lie spread out on a gigantic blackboard, and that mystic bond takes shape in a vast connecting network, branching from history to myth and from myth to fantasy.

I've been unconsciously collecting this mental catalog all my life. I was 12 the first time I read the unabridged Odyssey, but I've known the story for as long as I can remember. Growing up, I read authors like E. Nesbit, C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Robert Louis Stevenson. As a child, I didn't try to analyze the conflicts of Long John Silver's character or document Kipling's literary devices – I just loved the stories, and I picked up the techniques of great authors subconsciously. Good writing is contagious. Now as a senior beginning to analyze literature and philosophy more closely, I already have a huge pool to draw from. In British Literature this year, my paper on the monsters of Beowulf won praise from my teacher because, having already read Beowulf several times over the years, I was able to analyze on a deeper level and recognize themes I hadn't noticed before.

In college, I will continue to study great stories and contribute in my own way: literature on the big screen rather than on paper. Film is the way that our modern culture experiences narrative. Cinema has always fascinated me as a medium for storytelling, and my passion has only grown as I've studied every aspect of film-making. The vast scope of Peter Jackson's Lord of the Rings trilogy draws me in, but I want to write my own epic. One day, I will create my masterpiece, rich with the wisdom and artistry of three millennia, and offer it humbly to the classicists of the future.