

# Informative/Explanatory Example Essays

## Grades 9-10

Essay scores are produced for the following grade ranges: 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, and 11-12. Thus a ninth grade essay is compared to models for both ninth and tenth grades.

**Prompt for Essays 1-3:** *What are your career aspirations? What inspired you to follow this particular career path? Write an essay in which you answer these questions, while informing your audience of how your career will enable you to contribute to the world at large.\**

### Informative/Explanatory Essay 1: My Career Aspirations

I'd like to be a dietitian and nutritional consultant. I got interested in nutrition in middle school. I learned about people's relationship with food in my health class. Each week, we looked at a different kind of relationship – food and history, food and eating disorders, food and disease, and food and weather, etc. That class made me learn about food issues and food topics. I knew that no matter what else I did, I would get a degree in nutrition.

I want to get my Masters degree in Nutrition. This would help me get more clients and be more successful and would give me a great understanding of the childhood obesity problem, the how obesity and various health problems relate, and the research done on the topic.

I have had some experience in working in nutrition, so I know what to expect. With this goal I can make a difference.

*Annotation: This essay lacks development. In the first paragraph, the author could explain the food issues she studied and how these inspired her to continue in her studies. In the second paragraph, explaining why she is interested in childhood obesity and how she expects to work in that area would also improve the essay. In paragraph three, the author should expand upon the idea of making a difference with her work, explaining how she plans to go about this. A strong introduction and conclusion are also needed.*

### Informative/Explanatory Essay 2: My Career Aspirations

Throughout my childhood and adolescence, I've had the opportunity to volunteer with many organizations and events that have opened my eyes to the number of kids in this world who are not as fortunate as I am. One area where that is particularly true is children's health. Hundreds of thousands of children in the United States are battling obesity and obesity-related health conditions. I aspire to work as a dietitian and nutritional consultant in a program focused on combating childhood obesity through diet and exercise.

The effects of poor nutrition can be seen in populations across the country. For example, the Food Research and Action Center released findings in 2011 that highlighted Winston-Salem, NC as the city in the United States with the highest rate of childhood insecurity, with 34.8% of households with children in the metropolitan area experiencing food hardship (FRAC, 2014). These research findings prompted the organization of a community forum by the Translational Science Institute's Program in Community Engagement and Implementation at Wake Forest Baptist Health.

I became interested in nutrition in middle school - health class to be exact. It was here where we learned about human beings' relationship with food. Each week, we examined a different type of relationship that people have with food - food and history, food and eating disorders, food and disease and food and weather, etc. This class opened my eyes to a number of food issues and topics. Whatever the path I choose, whatever specific topics I decide to focus on, my fate in nutrition was sealed.

Eventually, I would like to get a Masters degree in Nutrition. An advanced knowledge of nutrition would not only enhance my dietetics practice, more importantly to me, it would serve to give me a great understanding of the childhood obesity epidemic, the relationship between obesity and various health problems and current research done on the topic. In addition, the background provided in earning this graduate degree is expected to put me in a position within the public health arena that would give me leverage to really make a difference in a community, large or small.

*Annotation: This essay includes interesting support from the sources and helps the reader better understand the aspirations of the writer. Still, a less abrupt introduction and more elaboration in the middle section of the essay (What does food have to do with weather? What food issue and topics opened the author's eyes?) would improve it further.*

### Informative/Explanatory Essay 3: My Career Aspirations

My career aspiration is to become a nutritionist and work with younger populations to reverse and prevent the spread of childhood obesity and other related health issues.

I discovered this passion at a young age. As a small child, the perfect breakfast was a few pieces of warm fudge carefully smuggled from my grandmother's kitchen. My mother was never thrilled with this, so she made a concerted effort to provide a well-rounded nutritious diet that included more than smuggled fudge.

Other fond memories of my youth aren't so food-focused but still contributed to my career goals as I've grown. Throughout my childhood and adolescence, I volunteered with many organizations and events that opened my eyes to the number of children in this world who are not as fortunate as I am. One area where that is particularly true is children's health. In 2012, 18% of children in the United States who were 6-11 years old were overweight or obese.<sup>1</sup> In fact, compared to thirty years ago, more than twice as many children and four times as many adolescents are obese.<sup>2</sup> In addition to suffering from the social and psychological problems that accompany obesity, children and adolescents who are obese are at increased risk for many health problems, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, pre-diabetes, bone and joint problems, and sleep apnea. In adulthood, the problems only grow to include many forms of cancer, osteoarthritis, diabetes, stroke, and heart disease.<sup>3</sup> Preventing obesity in children can go a long way in making sure they enjoy healthy adult lives. I aspire to work as a dietitian and nutritional consultant in a program focused on combating childhood obesity through diet and exercise.

My interest in nutrition was also fostered in middle school. In my health class, we learned about humans' relationship with food. Each week, we examined a different type of relationship - food and history, food and eating disorders, food and disease, food and weather, etc. This course opened my eyes to a number of food issues and topics, instilling a passion in me that eventually led to my decision to pursue a degree in nutrition.

As I've gotten older, I've had more opportunity to engage in community efforts revolving around food and community health, particularly at Wake Forest Baptist Health. In 2011, the Food Research and Action Center released their "Food Hardship in America" report, stating that 18 percent of households in the United States did not have enough money to provide needed food. The findings highlighted Winston-Salem, N.C. as the city in the United States with the highest rate of child food insecurity. According to the center's report, 34.8% of households with children in Winston-Salem fell into this category.<sup>4</sup> These research findings prompted the Translational Science Institute Program in Community Engagement and Implementation at Wake Forest Baptist Health to organize a community forum on the issue. I was a member of the organizing committee for this forum and participated in the event itself, which further solidified my desire to work in an organization focusing on promoting health and solving community food desert problems.

As a result of my personal experiences, I hope to eventually, earn a Master's degree in Nutrition. An advanced degree and nutrition would not only enhance my dietetics practice, but more importantly, it would give me a greater understanding of the childhood obesity epidemic, the relationship between obesity and various health problems, and current research on the topic. In addition, the knowledge I would gain in earning this degree would enable me to really make a difference, large or small, in the community in which I live and work. I look forward to a career in nutrition and health because I believe I can make a difference by working with young children and helping them develop habits that will last a lifetime. By participating in the movement to decrease the incidence of childhood obesity, I hope to help reverse some of the dangerous effects of childhood obesity.

*Annotation: The author has added much more detail and elaboration to the essay, which results in a more interesting and informative one. The questions a reader might have had after reading essay one have been answered, and the essay feels complete.*

*\*The Modern Language Association (MLA) style for formatting and citations was used for this essay. See the End Notes (not included in the drafts submitted for scoring). Since all sources were listed in the End Notes, a separate Works Cited page was not included.*

#### End Notes

- 1 Ogden Cynthia L., Margaret D. Carroll, Brian K. Kit, and Katherine M. Flegal. "Prevalence of Childhood and Adult Obesity in the United States, 2011-2012." *Journal of the American Medical Association* 311.8 (2014) :806-14. Web. October 2014.
- 2 Childhood Obesity Facts." *Overweight and Obesity*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014. Web. October 1, 2014.
- 3 Childhood Obesity Facts." *Overweight and Obesity*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014. Web. October 1, 2014.
- 4 "Hunger and Poverty." *FRAC*. Food Research and Action Center, 2011. Web. October 1, 2014.

*For more examples of student essays, see the Common Core State Standards Initiative site, which includes samples of actual student essays for all three writing genres and for all grades. Each essay includes helpful notes and explanations. The first set of essays is from an on-demand writing assignment. The second set shows a range of writing, usually with one or more short essays and one or more longer ones.  
Link: <http://achievethecore.org/page/505/common-core-narrative-writing>*