

10 Successful Harvard Application Essays 2021

The Crimson Brand Studio

What's This

Life became easier to juggle, but for the first time, I didn't add another ball. I found my rhythm, and I embraced it. I stopped running away from a single "S" and began chasing a double "S": passion. Passion has given me purpose. I was shackled to "S" as I tried to escape the confines of the traditional familial structure. No matter how far I ran, "S" stayed behind me because I kept looking back. I've finally learned to move forward instead of away, and it is liberating. "S" got me moving, but it hasn't kept me going.

I wish I could end here, triumphant and basking in my new inspiration, but life is more convoluted. Motivation is a double edged sword; it keeps me facing forward, but it also keeps me from having to look back. I want to claim that I showed courage in being able to turn from "S", but I cannot. Motivation is what keeps "S" at bay. I am not perfectly healed, but I am perfect at navigating the best way to heal me. I don't seek out sadness, so "S" must stay on the sidelines, and until I am completely ready, motivation is more than enough for me.

Professional Review by HS2 Academy

Abigail's essay navigates one of the most delicate sorts of topics in college applications: dealing with personal or family tragedy. Perhaps the most common pitfall is to take a tragic event and effuse it with too much pathos and sense of loss that the narrative fails to reveal much about the author's own personality other than the loss itself. In short, a "sob story." However, Abigail's essay adeptly skirts this by utilizing wit and a framing device using the letter "S" to share a profoundly personal journey in a manner that is engaging and thought-provoking.

Rather than focus purely on the loss of one of her parents to cancer, Abigail reflects on her life and the adjustments she has had to make. It is particularly poignant how she expresses the sense that her life with only one remaining parent seems somehow anomalous, that the constant reminders of the completeness in the familial structures of others haunts her.

What also makes this essay all the more intriguing is how we get a glimpse into her internal life as she learns to cope with the loss. There's an honesty here as she reveals to the reader her attempts at filling this void in her life by constantly keeping busy. It's further satisfying to see these attempts at committing to various activities evolve into what she terms a "double S," or "passion," as she discovers things that she has become passionate about. Perhaps this essay could have been strengthened further by giving the reader a sense of what those passions might be, as we're left to speculate based on the activities she had mentioned.

Lastly, we see a sense of realism and maturity in Abigail's closing reflection. It's easy to end an essay like this with a sense of narrative perfection, but she wisely concedes that "life is more convoluted." This poignant revelation gives us a window into her continuing struggles, but we are nonetheless left impressed by her growth and candor in this essay.

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10 successful Harvard application essays 2021 offer a glimpse into the personal stories and unique perspectives that captured the attention of the admissions committee. As one of the most prestigious universities in the world, Harvard receives thousands of applications each year, making the essay a critical component of the application process. In this article, we will explore what made these essays stand out, the themes they encompassed, and how aspiring students can learn from them to craft their own compelling narratives.

Understanding the Harvard Application Essay

Before diving into the successful essays, it's essential to understand the purpose of the Harvard application essay. This essay allows applicants to share their individuality, experiences, and aspirations, giving the admissions committee insights into who they are beyond academic achievements and test scores.

Key Elements of a Successful Essay

When analyzing the successful Harvard application essays from 2021, several key elements emerged:

1. **Authenticity:** The best essays felt genuine and heartfelt, reflecting the true personality of the writer.
2. **Narrative Structure:** A compelling story with a clear beginning, middle, and end helped engage readers.
3. **Vivid Imagery:** Descriptive language painted a picture, allowing readers to visualize the experiences being shared.
4. **Reflection:** Successful essays often included a thoughtful reflection on how experiences shaped the writer's identity and goals.
5. **Connection to Harvard:** Many essays articulated why Harvard was the right fit for the applicant, showing research and alignment with the university's values.

10 Successful Harvard Application Essays from 2021

Here, we will highlight ten successful essays, discussing the themes and strategies that contributed to their success.

1. The Language of Music

This essay revolved around the applicant's passion for music and how it served as a universal language that transcended barriers. The essay detailed personal experiences in a multicultural band, illustrating how collaboration and communication through music taught valuable life lessons. The narrative emphasized resilience and adaptability, qualities that would make the applicant a great fit for Harvard's diverse community.

2. A Journey Across Borders

In this essay, the applicant shared their experience of immigrating to the United States at a young age. The

essay was rich with descriptive anecdotes about the challenges faced, such as learning a new language and adapting to a different culture. The author reflected on the importance of perseverance and how these early experiences shaped their desire to advocate for other immigrants, aligning with Harvard's emphasis on social justice.

3. The Science of Cooking

This unique essay combined the applicant's love for culinary arts with a passion for science. The writer described cooking as an experimental process, drawing parallels to scientific principles. By sharing personal stories of family gatherings centered around cooking, the essay highlighted the importance of tradition and community. The applicant concluded by expressing a desire to explore the intersection of science and food at Harvard.

4. Building Bridges Through Technology

Focusing on the theme of innovation, this essay presented the applicant's journey in creating a tech startup aimed at addressing educational disparities. The narrative included specific challenges faced when developing the product and the impact it had on the community. The essay effectively showcased the applicant's entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to making a difference, resonating with Harvard's focus on leadership.

5. The Power of Words

This essay delved into the applicant's love for literature and how it has been a source of solace and strength. The writer shared personal anecdotes about discovering different voices in literature and how these shaped their worldview. The essay demonstrated introspection and a deep appreciation for the written word, connecting this passion to Harvard's rich literary culture.

6. A Lesson in Failure

The applicant in this essay candidly discussed a significant failure—a failed sports season—and what they learned from it. This narrative highlighted themes of humility, resilience, and the importance of teamwork. By reflecting on how this experience motivated them to improve and support others, the applicant illustrated personal growth, a quality highly valued by Harvard.

7. The Art of Advocacy

In this essay, the applicant described their involvement in environmental activism. The narrative included vivid descriptions of participating in protests and community clean-up events, emphasizing the urgency of environmental issues. The essay concluded with a call to action, expressing a desire to further their advocacy efforts at Harvard, demonstrating alignment with the university's commitment to sustainability.

8. Finding My Voice

This essay focused on the applicant's journey to self-acceptance in a world that often emphasizes conformity. Through personal stories of struggles with identity and belonging, the applicant illustrated their growth and the importance of embracing one's uniqueness. The essay resonated with themes of diversity and inclusion, key aspects of Harvard's mission.

9. The Intersection of Cultures

This essay explored the applicant's bicultural identity and how navigating between two cultures enriched their life experiences. Through storytelling, the writer shared moments of celebration and conflict, illustrating the beauty of diversity. The essay emphasized how this dual perspective would contribute to the vibrant tapestry of Harvard's community.

10. From the Shadows to the Spotlight

In this essay, the applicant reflected on their journey from being an introverted child to becoming a confident public speaker. The narrative included specific instances of overcoming fears and the drive to inspire others through storytelling. By showcasing this transformation, the applicant highlighted their potential to contribute to Harvard's dynamic environment.

Lessons Learned from Successful Essays

After examining these ten successful Harvard application essays, several lessons can be drawn for future applicants:

1. **Be Authentic:** Share your true self and experiences; authenticity resonates with readers.
2. **Tell a Story:** A well-structured narrative keeps the reader engaged and makes your essay memorable.
3. **Reflect Deeply:** Go beyond surface-level experiences; reflect on how they have shaped your identity and

aspirations.

4. Showcase Growth: Highlight personal growth and resilience; admissions committees appreciate candidates who learn from their experiences.

5. Connect to Harvard: Clearly articulate why Harvard is the right fit for you and how you plan to contribute to its community.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the **10 successful Harvard application essays 2021** illustrate the diverse experiences and unique perspectives of applicants. By analyzing these essays, prospective students can gain insights into what makes an application stand out. Ultimately, the key is to share authentic stories that reflect personal growth and align with Harvard's values, ensuring a compelling and memorable application.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are common themes found in the 10 successful Harvard application essays of 2021?

Common themes include personal growth, resilience in the face of challenges, and a strong sense of community involvement. Many essays also reflect on unique life experiences that shaped the applicants' perspectives.

How important is storytelling in the successful Harvard application essays of 2021?

Storytelling is crucial; the most successful essays often weave personal narratives that engage the reader emotionally, making the applicant's experiences memorable and impactful.

What writing styles are prevalent in the 2021 successful Harvard application essays?

The essays typically feature a conversational yet polished tone, with a blend of introspection and clarity. Many applicants use vivid imagery and specific anecdotes to illustrate their points.

What role do extracurricular activities play in the 2021 Harvard application essays?

Extracurricular activities play a significant role as they provide context for the applicant's interests and passions. Successful essays often highlight how these activities contributed to personal development and

What mistakes should applicants avoid when writing their Harvard application essays?

How can applicants effectively showcase their individuality in their essays?

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Discover 10 successful Harvard application essays from 2021 that stand out. Learn how these essays captivated admissions officers and can inspire your own writing!

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