Purpose: Use this example assignment to explore important elements that make this an exemplary submission. Hover over the information symbol (ℹ️) or select the numbers within the text to read about what the student has done well in this assignment.

(1) Game Day

Sample Student

English 121

Instructor Champ

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EXAMPLE
Like many high school teenagers, I loved sports. I especially loved football and was thrilled to be chosen as a quarterback for my high school’s football team. Aside from the very first game day of the season being exciting and significant, it is memorable because of the support and love my father showed me that day when I needed it most. It was 6:30 AM on the first day of autumn of my freshman year of high school. As I lay in bed, the sun just beginning to seep through the closed blinds, I realized the day I had been waiting for all summer was here. The first football game of the season was today. I had spent the good part of my summer at practice for this very day, and the excitement and pressure were as heavy as the weights I had been lifting for months in training. The team and I had taken thousands of laps around the rubbery track turf, and doing a cycle of pushups and jumping jacks until we threw up in the locker room sinks. I was the quarterback for my freshman football team and all of that training didn’t stop the nervousness in my stomach, which felt like I had swallowed a flock of monarch butterflies.

Like a young child on Christmas morning, I hardly needed my alarm clock that began to chirp; I was already wide awake and ready to start my day. As I rolled over to turn off the alarm, I heard a familiar knock on the door. Most days, this knock was the first thing I heard in the morning, not the alarm clock. But not today. Not on game day. Even though the alarm was clearly waking me up, blaring out through the rest of the house, my father knocked on the door anyway. He knew what day it was, and wanted to see me before he went to work.
That morning, I must have set the record for any high school kid getting dressed for school. At my high school, it was tradition to wear jerseys on game day. I can still remember the fresh smell of a brand new football jersey, free of the impeding grass stains, blood, sweat and tears that would fill the jersey and fade the crimsons and gold at season’s end. My jersey was neatly folded on top of my favorite pair of Levis’ jeans, new cotton socks in the same school colors, boxer shorts with a pattern of little leather footballs, and gold Stan Smith adidas Originals with black laces. I quickly dressed and hurried to the kitchen to catch my dad before he left for the day.

“Good morning son, how are you feeling? Get any sleep last night” he said while smiling. There was something different about his smile though, as if he was hiding something.

“Yeah, I had a good night’s rest” I lied. He knew I was lying too, but no it was big deal. As he stood there I noticed that one of his hands was behind his back and I began to wonder what he was keeping from me. Was it bad news that he didn’t want to tell me because he didn’t want to ruin my game day? (4) [Or was it a present?] He saw my eyes wander to his hand hidden behind his back and said, “I have something for you”.

He pulled out small bag and handed it to me.

(5) [It wasn’t heavy or bulky. It was surprisingly light. I opened the small bag with anticipation and pulled out its content. It was small, white, Nike towel with Velcro designed to hang from my football belt. Stitched above the Nike symbol was the number 12. It was the number he wore as a high school quarterback and the number I had chosen to carry on the family tradition. I was overcome with gratitude and happiness. The gift meant that my father was proud of me, that he knew I was going to do great,
and he wanted to see me succeed. I will always remember what he said as I hugged him:

(6) \[Son, I know you're nervous. Today is a big day and something you have worked extremely hard for. A lot of people will go through life and never get to feel the feeling you have in your stomach right now. Those feelings you have are good; it means you are ready. If you weren't nervous, you wouldn't care. No matter how the game goes tonight, remember that I'll always love you and support you. Nothing can happen in this game that would make me feel otherwise. Do the best you can, have fun and compete as hard as you can. If you do that, I can promise you good things will happen!\]

At that moment, those monarch butterflies flew away. The sense of relief I felt was like the weight of 1000 pianos being lifted off my shoulders. Having my dad believe in me and be so sure that I was going to perform great replaced the nervousness I was feeling with confidence. His gift symbolized faith in me as a high school quarterback, but also faith in me to achieve my goals. (7) \[I didn't even want to wait or the game. I wanted to put it on right then and there, and run out to the field for everyone to see it. He held on to my shoulder and said, I'll see you tonight, go get em’!\]

As my older brother drove me to school that day, I felt like a king getting out of the beat-up hatch back he’d washed the day before just for me. It's amazing how a person can feel incredible nervousness, and then channel those emotions into confidence and readiness. My dad knew what I was feeling and how to fix it. His generosity came from a place of experience for having gone through the same thing as
a teenager and from a place of assurance in my athleticism. I'm sure he had that towel for weeks and was dying to give it to me, but he understood the nerves on game day are like hard to handle sometimes. I’m glad he waited. His timing, love and support were the greatest feeling I’ve ever known and are what made my first game day incredibly memorable and touching.

(8) [The team didn’t win the game that night, but in retrospect that is not what truly mattered. What mattered then and now is love, support, and the ability to understand the loved ones in your life and what they need at certain times. My father knew then what I needed more than anything, and that is what made that day significant.]
Comments (color and number coded):

1. This a properly formatted title page according to APA style. For help on APA formatting please visit https://awc.ashford.edu/cd-apa-checklist.html. Return

2. The student has revised his essay to have an introduction that states the purpose of his writing and the significance behind it. We as readers understand he is writing about the importance of his first high school football game but also the support his father gave him. We now know what to expect from his paper and what it will be about. Return

3. In your personal essay you must establish why your topic is important to you. Here, the student does this by creating a sense of importance, stress, and excitement over game day. We also know that his father does something supportive that day, so we as readers are now primed to look for that as we continue reading. Return

4. Again, the student emphasizes the excitement and nervousness he is feeling. He focuses his paper now on his father and the role he plays in this special day. Return

5. This section ties back to the introduction and purpose for writing this personal narrative. It is now revealed to us the gift that his father gave him and also the significance behind that gift. We understand how important this gift is to the student and it's role in enhancing this memorable day. Return
6. This is an example of a block quote. "Block" the quotation if it's more than 40 words long. Block the quotation by having it start on a new line and in the same position as a new paragraph. Return

7. The student takes time to clearly explain how he felt when he received the gift and how it affected his whole emotional attitude toward game day.

   Tying your support points back to your thesis is important when writing a strong, cohesive essay. Return

8. Every essay needs a conclusion, and the conclusion for this essay reiterates the significance of his first high school football game as well as the significance of the gift that his father gave him. A strong conclusion not only restates the thesis, but reminds readers of what the essay was about and how that meaning was presented to them. Return