

2. Writing the Essay

Now it's time to write your own essay. Don't worry about how long this one will take. It's best to start slowly and go step by step. For now, focus on writing a good essay. You will pick up speed later as you practice. Read the following essay prompt.

Writing Prompt: What is a Hero?

Directions: Think carefully about the issue presented in the following quotations and the assignment that follows.

A hero is bigger than life, achieves greatness in some extraordinary task, faces and defeats trials and enemies, completes a journey, and eventually becomes a leader of his people.

– Adapted from the Homeric epics

A hero is someone who does something for the general good of others without concerning himself with personal interests or safety. A hero is often a great thinker, politician, or spiritual leader. A hero is brave, generous, charitable, modest, honorable, and a role model for people to imitate.

– Adapted from the writings of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Assignment: What do you think constitutes a hero? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, studies, experience, or observations.

The Outline

Read the two sample outlines from students A and B; then write an outline of what you will include in *your* essay. Don't worry about creating a conclusion at this point. You'll do better to compose a conclusion after the other paragraphs are completed. You do not need to write the outline in complete sentences. Parts of these outlines may not make sense to you. They are not supposed to. They are supposed to make sense only to the writer.

When you take the SAT, you will compose this outline in your head to save time. For now, go slowly and take time to think.

Student A

Viewpoint: *I believe that Martin Luther King, Jr.'s definition of a hero is more accurate.*

Example #1 (Reason #1): *My father who told me about his mistakes*
Details, facts, evidence: *selfless and modest, admits mistake in not attending college, spent money, lost chance for education, became role model*

Example #2 (Reason #2): *My soccer coach who never thought about himself*
Details, facts, evidence: *Coach demonstrates honor*
Anecdotes as evidence: star player being abusive, tone of voice caustic, coach didn't let him play, coach explains reasons to players