

Olivia Vitale

AP Literature

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If you had told me at the beginning of high school that I would be where I am, I would have never believed you—the cheesiest of sayings yet the best that applies to the circumstances in my life. I can reflect and look back to see how I have overcome and grown from my hardships. Seeing where I have come from and where I have ended up, I applaud myself for creating the future ahead of me. Struggling with adjusting to moving seven hours from a former place I called home freshman year, I have persevered through the most complex parts of my life thus far. I have continuously been able to pick myself up and keep pursuing myself. I cannot say I have come all this way quickly and gracefully. Struggling with the most significant change I have had to take on, I move towards the end of my senior year of high school, approaching the opportunity to mold my future, such as my career and well-being, and look into my past accomplishments. I believe change is the most crucial part of life yet the most difficult. Throughout my high school career, which was constantly changing, I have been able to take on initiative and accountability and count on teamwork. Without the difficulty of change, I would not have been able to learn and master these skills as well as I would have initially.

For the majority of my life, I have taken the initiative in pushing myself forward both academically and in my personal life. When I approached high school, my family decided to move into Barren County. At first, this felt like the most impossible challenge I could have faced. I wanted to see the greater good and look at it to have a new start. With this fresh start, I chose to enroll in the honors program. This led me to advance my education and push myself to new and more significant heights. I have taken the initiative in my personal life by applying to jobs as soon as possible. Since then, I have been employed and hardworking. Being able to balance both school and work was a difficult change at first, but it was always important to prioritize my

education. Taking on the responsibility of a job led to achievements such as gaining more independence. This achievement enabled me to afford what I wanted and give back to my parents. While keeping a busy schedule and working constantly, I make sure always to keep up academically, having the responsibility of prioritizing assignments, studying, and turning in work on time.

Throughout my life, I have taken accountability through taking responsibility and prioritizing the essential things in life. I provide myself with goals to strive for and a plan to set them into action. For as long as I can remember, I have set my life based on goals of where I wanted to be academically and where I wanted to be mentally. This has helped a lot of my life by staying organized and well put together. Through long-term and short-term goals, I push to achieve them no matter what to keep myself on track. The goals that I have created and achieved range from keeping up in school, fixing my sleeping habits, creating a healthier lifestyle, applying to colleges, opening a savings account, and learning to be mindful every day. Not everyone is perfect, so I have made mistakes and have had to own up to them. Through an open line of communication, I have reached out to teachers whenever an assignment is late and taken accountability for not making enough time for it. Through holding a job, I have made myself accountable for any mess-ups I make and prioritized improving my customer service. Customer service is vital to working in the entertainment and fast-food industries. I am responsible for ensuring that customers are satisfied and well cared for, so I take accountability for any mistake. I am reliable by showing up to every shift on time and ensuring an open communication line is set in scheduling. Working with others in my education and career, I have learned to take accountability for my actions and own up to any mistakes made on my behalf.

Working as a team is one of the most critical aspects in and out of school. Teamwork has helped me excel and learn more from others than I could have from myself. Working as a team on projects has shown me how to be a team player. It is essential because others involved rely on you to do your part. When working alongside my fellow peers, I can learn much from them

and adapt to their work. I always keep an open mind when working with others to ensure constructive criticism is portrayed correctly and respectfully. I can also focus on teamwork while at my job, relying heavily on my crew members. Working as a team makes the job so much faster and easier. We can make shorter times and have a better work environment. Working with others has allowed me to expand my knowledge and put others first.

I have grown from these traits and learned much from others. A rollercoaster of events has led me to the final months of high school, creating a solid independence in my academic and personal life. I can't wait to pursue these characteristics and extend my education in the near future. I have come a long way through my journey, crossing paths that have led to my success. Life constantly changes, but I can walk forward with these skills to guide me. Becoming a Trojan at Barren County has led me to think about my future in a way I never have before and develop knowledge to help me face challenges. I am thankful, to say the least, that I have been prepped and ready to excel. I have nothing but gratitude for my high school experience and am happy to move on to the next chapter of my life well-prepared.