Stanford Questions

Yellow=confident

Green=probable

***Short Questions:***

**Name your favorite books, authors, films, and/or artists. (50 word limit):**

*\*\*Ready Player One, The Hunger Games, Divergent, Kristin Cashore, Ally Condie, JOHN GREEN!, An Abundance of Katherines, Jennifer Lawrence, Kristin Chenoweth, Josh Gad, Rainbow Rowell, Bellwether, 13 Going on 30, Rent, Dreamgirls, Dale Chihuly, All About Eve, Double Indemnity, Legally Blonde, 50 First Dates\*\**

Ready Player One, An Abundance of Katherines, John Green, Jennifer Lawrence, Rainbow Rowell, Bellwether, 13 Going on 30, Double Indemnity, Legally Blonde, The Hunger Games books, Ally Condie, Matched, Rent, Kristin Cashore, Divergent books, Josh Gad, A Tale for the Time Being, Dale Chihuly

**What newspapers, magazines, and/or websites do you enjoy? (50 word limit)**

*\*\*I enjoy Goodreads, and the USA Volleyball magazine, Mashable, Upworthy,\*\**

I enjoy the website Upworthy because the articles are uplifting and there are great quotes from there, such as the amazing quote from John Green about nerds. I also like the website Goodreads as a resource to research and keep track of my books.

**What is the most significant challenge that society faces today? (50 word limit)**

*\*\*Selfishness, media portrayal\*\**

1. Selfishness is the most significant challenge that society faces. People do not take the time to care about others, even those who are close to them. We need to take the time to find out what is going on with our classmates, or lend a hand to the stranger who is struggling with opening the door under a heavy load. Or on a global perspective, people do not do anything to help with global crises unless it affects them.
2. Selfishness is the most significant challenge that society faces. From a global perspective, people do not do anything to help with a crisis unless it affects them, which is illustrated in the story “And of Clay Are We Created” by Isabel Allende. Helping a little girl stuck in the mud is making engaged and connected in the world we live in, caring about other humans, problems and longevity.
3. Selfishness is the most significant challenge that society faces. People do not take the time to care about others. As my volleyball coach advises, focusing on helping others rather than oneself makes one feel and do better. The world would be filled with stronger, more understanding people if we all focused outwardly.
4. Selfishness is the most significant challenge that society faces. We need to care about other humans on an individual basis and have empathy for those we know, and those who may live a world away. If we see the humanity in everyone, we can respect all human lives and work together as a team in this world. (and all be treated fairly/ have peace)
5. Selfishness is society’s greatest challenge. We need to care about other humans on an individual basis and have empathy for those we know, and those who may live a world away. If we see the humanity in everyone, we can respect the potential in all human lives.
6. Selfishness is society’s greatest challenge. We need to care about other humans on an individual basis and have empathy for those we know, and those who may live a world away. If we see the humanity in all people, we will be motivated to improve the world for everyone.

**How did you spend your last two summers? (50 word limit)**

*\*\*Maccabi Games Volleyball-Boca Raton Florida*

*Academic Connections Cognitive Science-UC San Diego\*\**

I spent three weeks last summer at the Academic Connections program at UC San Diego learning about Cognitive Science from amazing graduate students. The previous summer I went to the Maccabi Games in Boca Raton, Florida and played volleyball on a team of Jewish teens from Texas, Milwaukee and California.

**What were your favorite events (e.g., performances, exhibits, competitions, conferences, etc.) in recent years? (50 word limit)**

*\*\*She’s Geeky; Volleyball tournament-Colorado Crossroads or NCVA Regional Championship; Volleyball Tournament San Luis Obispo; Merry Christmas, Strega Nona; Legally Blonde\*\**

1. Some of my favorite events were attending the She’s Geeky un-conference with my mom, where I met self-defined geeky women and led my own session about books, attending the NCVA Regional Championship with my club volleyball team and helping to beat a tough team and move up to the silver division by consistently blocking a powerful middle. I enjoyed being the main character in the short play Merry Christmas, Strega Nona, getting to play a very motherly role in the play and with my castmates and portray such a wonderful character for the children in the audience.
2. Attending the She’s Geeky un-conference with my mom, where I led my own session about books; playing in the NCVA Regional Championship with my club volleyball team and helping to move up to the silver division; playing the motherly lead role in the short play Merry Christmas, Strega Nona.
3. My favorite events were attending the She’s Geeky un-conference with my mom, where I led my own session about books, and playing in the NCVA Regional Championship, helping to beat a tough team and move up to the silver division by consistently blocking a powerful middle.
4. My favorite events were attending the She’s Geeky un-conference with my mom, where I met self-defined geeky women and led my own session about books, and playing the motherly lead role in the short play Merry Christmas, Strega Nona, portraying a wonderful character for the children in the audience.

**What historical moment or event do you wish you could have witnessed? (50 word limit)**

*\*\*Mary Tyler Moore show, Descartes,\*\**

1. I wish I could have witnessed the taping of the first episode of the Mary Tyler Moore Show. I read a biography of Mary Tyler Moore and it recounted how the first taping did not go over very well, but the show later went on to be very popular and influential. Mary represented an independent working woman who did not need a man to function, which was a revolutionary concept in a TV show in the 70s. I would have been proud to witness this movement in the making starting in such an innocuous way.
2. The first taping of the Mary Tyler Moore Show was a catastrophe. However the show went on to be influential. Mary represented an independent woman who did not need a man, a revolutionary concept in the 70s. I would have been proud to witness this seemingly inconsequential moment.

**What five words best describe you?**

*\*\*Positive/Optimistic, Enthusiastic/Excited, Nerdy, Athletic, Nice/Kind, Awkward, Loquacious, Intelligent, Inquisitive/Interested\*\**

1. Positive, Excited, Nerdy, Athletic, Nice
2. Positive, Enthusiastic, Nerdy, Kind, Inquisitive
3. Positive, Enthusiastic, Nerdy, Athletic, Inquisitive
4. Positive, Enthusiastic, Nerdy, Athletic, Kind
5. Positive, Enthusiastic, Athletic, Kind, Inquisitive

***Short Essays:***

**Stanford students possess an intellectual vitality. Reflect on an idea or experience that has been important to your intellectual development. (250 word limit)**

*\*\*Academic Connections?*

***AP Physics-connecting to life and discussing with father ;)****\*\**

1. Attending the Academic Connections program to learn about Cognitive Science at UC San Diego was important to my intellectual and individual development. I was enthralled by the topics and found myself passionate about many of them. …
2. AP Physics was a roller coaster ride for me. It has certainly been a big part of my intellectual development. Ever since the Physics writing assignments we had in 8th grade at the Girls’ Middle School, I have had a complicated relationship with Physics. I love it, but I spent excessive time and energy on it even then. When I finally got to AP Physics junior year, I was very excited. After taking Physics Honors I felt prepared and excited. However, at the beginning of the year after our first quiz, I was shocked. I was used to doing well in Physics, but I had gotten 2/5 on the first quiz. It was then that I realized that AP Physics was a completely different beast from Physics Honors. The complexity of the problems, the skill level of solving them, the attention to detail required was immense. It took me a while to understand how to handle this new situation. I panicked before quizzes or tests and made silly mistakes. I ran out of time because I spent so long verifying my answers. After an assignment in my American Literature Honors class about practicing tranquility, I reached equilibrium in Physics. I breathed before my quiz and kept calm. I slowed down my mind to reflect on what I knew and how to express it. I began to succeed, not only on the timing and problem solving of quizzes and tests, but also in my ability to take things in stride, focus on helping others instead of being completely concerned about myself, and to confidently work hard to improve in a class. These were all skills that I had at some level, but applying them to my stress in AP Physics amplified and honed them. I learned to have test-taking skills, to be efficient and accurate as much as possible to reflect my knowledge. I learned to not panic when I received unfortunate news, and instead learn from it and move on. I could take my bad test grade, be upset, and then turn to help my friend and tablemate understand the topic and cheer her up. I took all these skills and applied them to my life, such as taking the SAT and working in volleyball practice-helping my teammates after losses. Best of all, the topics in Physics were fascinating, more than ever! I loved solving the problems, learning about the new topics, such as torque and rotation, and applying it to life. I went to see Cirque du Soleil with my family, and all I could think about was physics. I went on to do a project about it, explaining to the class about the amazing physics behind it all. I would sit in the car and explain about relative motion with the birds moving behind us. I talked about how to open doors far from the hinge to get a bigger radius and more torque so it takes less force. This class was a stimulating intellectual experience and I reveled in every moment of it, even the ones that tested my personal strength. It was tough to get through, and I put in a lot of time and effort to understand, but the end result was amazing. I take all the new skills I learned on to my other classes and keep the added perspective and love of physics on with me in life.
3. AP Physics was a roller coaster ride for me. After taking Physics Honors I felt prepared and excited. However, I soon realized that AP Physics was a completely different beast. The complexity of the problems and the attention to detail required was immense, but the topics were more fascinating than ever! The harder the problems were, the more exciting and satisfying it was to work through them. I loved learning about the new topics, such as torque and rotation, and applying it to life. I went to see Cirque du Soleil with my family, and all I could think about was physics. I went on to do a project about it, explaining to the class about the amazing mechanics behind it all. I would sit in the car and discuss the rolling of the wheels with my dad, or I would explain why opening a door far from the hinge creates a bigger radius so it takes less force. This class was a stimulating intellectual experience and I reveled in every moment of it, even the ones that tested my personal strength. It was a daunting task, but pushing through it yielded an amazing end result. It gave me perspective and a renewed fervor. I bring all the lessons I learned in my experience to my other classes, especially the passion for physics and educational challenges.
4. AP Physics was a roller coaster ride for me. After taking Physics Honors I felt prepared and excited. However, I soon realized that AP Physics was completely different. The complexity of the problems and the attention to detail required was overwhelming, but the topics were more fascinating than ever! The harder the problems were, the more exciting and satisfying it was to work through them. I loved learning about new concepts, such as torque and rotation, and applying them to everyday life. I went to see Cirque du Soleil with my family, and all I could think about was physics. I went on to do a project about it, explaining to the class the amazing mechanics behind the performance. I would sit in the car and discuss the rolling of the wheels with my dad, or I would explain why opening a door far from the hinge creates a bigger radius so it takes less force. This class was a stimulating intellectual experience and I reveled in every moment of it, even the ones that tested my personal strength. It was a daunting undertaking, but pushing through it yielded a rewarding end result. It gave me perspective and a renewed fervor. Now, I bring all the lessons I learned from that experience to my other classes, especially the passion for physics and intellectual challenges.

**Virtually all of Stanford's undergraduates live on campus. Write a note to your future roommate that reveals something about you or that will help your roommate -- and us -- know you better. (250 word limit)**

*\*\*Big bookshelf*

*Juggling*

*Cursive*

*Making cards with scrapbooking paper*

*Hear about where you’re from and if you got to ski*

*Volleyball all the time-I’ll teach you!*

*Go to the pool together*

*Rock out to Pandora-hear new songs-hope you don’t mind some Spanish songs*

*Photos-scrapbooks-reminiscing-family-connections-happiness-familiarity*

*Miss cats*

*Airports and traveling*

*MOVIES*

*EVERY SIMPSONS EVER-cultural references-the Raven, the Lion King, horror movies\*\**

1. Dear New Roommate,

I’m so excited to meet you! I’m Ashley and I’m from close by in the neighborhood, Sunnyvale. I am a very happy and positive person and I get really excited about a lot of things!

When I get there I hope we will have a big bookshelf because I love to read and reread books! I keep books I’ve read before with me because I find it comforting to have them with me and read them in moments like comfort food.

I am interested to hear about where you are from, and what kind of activities you like to do. Like do you get to ski a lot? I used to go to Angel’s Camp with my family all the time and it’s really fun to be there in the snow!

Don’t be surprised if you see me writing notes to myself in cursive, or making other people cards using scrapbooking supplies! Those are my personal ways to express my artistic side, along with photography. I started writing in cursive a lot after reading the book Matched, where the characters are trying to save the art of writing in cursive. I always hand-make my cards to people because I think it is really fun to do the decorations and drawing, and it’s nice to give people something unique with that effort in it. I’m happy if it will brighten their day a little.

When I do work I love to listen to music, and I’ll rock out and sing along with you if you like that kind of thing. I hope you don’t mind listening to some songs in Spanish. When my Spanish teachers in high school started playing Spanish songs for us in class, I loved them and I had to buy some of them on iTunes so I could listen to them all the time!

I also love watching movies and TV shows, especially the Simpsons, which I will watch with you 24-7! I can rewatch episodes of the Simpsons endlessly.

I’m worried that I’ll miss my cats a lot, but I love traveling, especially in airports, and I’m used to it since I played club volleyball, so I’ll hopefully get through it.

If you are ever interested in learning how to juggle, play volleyball or anything I would be happy to teach you! I like to juggle sometimes to blow off a little steam. Volleyball is something I will do all the time also! So if you ever want to play with me I would love that! Or we could go swimming together at the pool.

I look forward to meeting you and hearing about your favorite things and getting to know you (2 musical references there ☺).

Sincerely,

Ashley Helfinstein

1. Dear New Roommate,

I am a happy and positive person. I am also a nerd, at least as described by John Green in my favorite quote ever: “Nerds are allowed to love stuff, like jump-up-and-down-in-the-chair-can’t-control-yourself love it. When people call people nerds, mostly what they’re saying is ‘you like stuff,’ which is just not a good insult at all. Like, ‘you are too enthusiastic about the miracle of human consciousness.’”

I hope we will have a big bookshelf because I love to read and reread books! I will also watch (and rewatch) The Simpsons with you any time!

Don’t be surprised if you see me writing notes to myself in cursive for fun. I started after reading the book Matched, where the characters try to save that art. I will probably hand-make you cards using scrapbooking supplies because I think it is fun, and it’s nice to give people something unique that shows effort.

I love singing along to music. Some of my favorite songs are in Spanish, ever since my high school Spanish teachers introduced me to them. And my older brother’s influence encouraged me to love listening to musicals as well.

I absolutely love to juggle, swim and play volleyball! They always calm me and put me in a good mood. Maybe we could play together to de-stress.

I look forward to hearing about your favorite things and getting to know you (note 2 musical theatre references there ☺).

Sincerely,

Ashley Helfinstein

1. Dear New Roommate,

I am a happy, positive person! I also consider myself a nerd, because I become engrossed in a variety of topics, and find myself referencing them in all situations. I do this with books a lot, because I tend to reread my favorites incessantly. I will also watch (and rewatch) The Simpsons with you any time.

If you want to take a trip, maybe we can go to the beach together. I love swimming and going in the ocean. When I was in middle school (The Girls’ Middle School) I got to learn how to surf and stand-up paddleboard in an intersession, and it was fun! I’ll probably ask you to play volleyball with me sometime, as well. It is one of my favorite activities, and I want to play all the time! What activities are you interested in?

Don’t be shocked if you see me randomly writing notes to myself in cursive. It’s my kind of doodling. I started after reading the book Matched, where the characters try to save the art. I use that and juggling as ways to de-stress.

If you ever need scrapbooking supplies for anything, I’ll definitely bring some along with me, because I like making people cards with them! It’s a good excuse to use fancy materials, and it makes a unique card.

I look forward to hearing about your favorite things and getting to know you (note 2 musical theatre references there ☺).

Sincerely,

Ashley Helfinstein

1. Dear New Roommate,

I am a happy, positive person! I also consider myself a nerd, because I become engrossed in a variety of topics, and find myself referencing them in all situations. I do this with books a lot, because I tend to reread my favorites incessantly. I will also watch (and rewatch) The Simpsons with you any time.

If you want to take a trip, we can go to the beach together. I love swimming and going in the ocean. When I went to The Girls’ Middle School I learned how to surf and stand-up paddleboard, and it was fun! Another one of my favorite activities is volleyball, and I would love to share it with you! Maybe we could play intramural or club volleyball together during the year. What activities are you interested in?

Don’t be shocked if you see me randomly writing notes to myself in cursive. It’s my kind of doodling. I started after reading the book Matched, where the characters try to save the art. I use that and juggling as ways to de-stress.

If you ever need scrapbooking supplies for anything, I’ll definitely bring some along with me, because I like making people cards with them! It’s nice to give people something unique.

I look forward to hearing about your favorite things and getting to know you (note 2 musical theatre references there ☺).

Sincerely,

Ashley Helfinstein

**What matters to you, and why? (100 to 250 words)**

*\*\*Volleyball—IMPROVEMENT\*\**

1. Volleyball is my passion. I never get tired of playing volleyball, watching volleyball, and talking about volleyball. Every day I look forward to volleyball practice or a game after school. Being such an integral part of my life for so many years, it has shaped me as a person in various ways. I love seeing myself grow my volleyball skills. Throughout my life, I have discovered that improvement is very important to me as a person. If I realize that I have improved at something, it makes me extremely happy. That is why my favorite classes have been the hardest ones that I worked on. That is why volleyball speaks so much to me. Not only have I improved my volleyball skills over the many years that I have spent working on it, but I have also improved my social skills and connections with other people. I also have learned to be confident and express my needs and emotions to a group of people. I have taken these skills to use in the rest of my life. Being tranquil in a stressful moment, staying calm in the midst of fear. Helping others over myself, to improve my own performance and mood. Communicating and being confident in what I say and myself. These skills have helped my personal development and made me a better student, person and citizen of the world. Seeing this improvement makes my life complete.
2. Volleyball is my passion. I never get tired of playing, watching, and talking about volleyball. Every day I look forward to volleyball practice or games after school. Volleyball has been an integral part of my life that has shaped me greatly as a person. It led me to discover the importance I place on improvement. Seeing myself improve is the utmost goal. That is why my favorite classes have been the hardest ones that I took. That is why volleyball speaks so greatly to me. Not only have I improved my volleyball skills over the years that I have spent striving, but I have also improved my social skills and connections with other people. By learning to connect with my teammates throughout the years individually and understand their strengths and weaknesses on and off the court, I have grasped how to work with people in the world. I have learned to be confident and express my needs and emotions to a group. I have learned to be articulate and tranquil in the heat of the moment, to stay calm in the midst of fear. I have practiced helping others over myself, to improve my mental state as well as the performance of the team as a whole. These skills have helped my personal development and made me a better student, person and citizen of the world. Seeing these incremental improvements makes me prouder than anything else. I attribute how far I have come as a person greatly to volleyball.
3. Volleyball is my passion. If it were possible, I would play constantly. My connection with volleyball seems innate and inexplicable to me, but there are profound reasons that I connect so genuinely with this sport. From middle school onward, I have been shy and agreeable with most people, making limited deep connections. Volleyball has forced me to break through this timidity to articulate what I need, and be confident in myself. Working with such varied groups of girls, I learned how to be a good, supportive teammate to each of them. To be part of the team, I had to find my role in the group, do my part, and communicate what support I needed from my teammates to be successful. I learned to rely on them, and allow them to rely on me. I built a habit of hard work. I learned not to be fazed by anything, to keep things in perspective. I gained a form of simultaneous tranquility and enthusiasm. Volleyball matters to me because these lessons I learned resonate deep within me as I see myself becoming a better person, and a better volleyball player. Volleyball has allowed me to become who I am today, which is a more confident and engaged person, student and member of society than I ever could have been without it. I am so grateful for the development, and the true connection that I have shared with the sport for so many years.
4. Volleyball is my passion. If it were possible, I would play constantly. My connection with volleyball seems innate and inexplicable to me, but there are profound reasons that I connect so genuinely with this sport. From middle school onward, I have been shy and agreeable with most people, making limited deep connections. Volleyball has forced me to break through this timidity to articulate what I need, and be confident in myself. Working with such varied groups of girls, I learned how to be a good, supportive teammate to each of them. To be part of the team, I had to find my role in the group, do my part, and communicate what support I needed from my teammates to be successful. I learned to rely on them, and allow them to rely on me. I built a habit of hard work. I learned not to be fazed by anything, to keep things in perspective. I gained a form of simultaneous tranquility and enthusiasm. Volleyball matters to me because these lessons I learned resonate deep within me as I see myself becoming a better person, and a better volleyball player. Volleyball has allowed me to become who I am today, which is a more confident and engaged person, student and member of society than I ever could have been without it. I am grateful for the development, and the true connection that I have shared with the sport for so many years.

**Briefly elaborate on one of your extracurricular activities or work experiences.**

*\*\*volleyball, swimming, book club\*\**

1. Swimming has been one of my favorite extracurricular activities. I did summer swim team until the end of middle school, then joined the high school ranks. Over the first two years I improved my times so much that I received the most improved swimmer award on the JV team.
2. Sophomore year I was talking to my friend Hannah about books, and our voices rose as we got enthusiastic and invested in the discussion. I loved the discussion and wondered why there wasn’t an opportunity to have this kind of excited discussion with other avid readers at Homestead. Thus began the idea for the Homestead Book Club. Proposing the club and getting it started over the next year was a hard and busy process at times, but very rewarding. Once the club began, I did find some of those wonderful discussions that I wanted. It has been a great experience to get book recommendations of books that I might never choose for myself from other club members, get to talk about books and what excites me about them, and to get to know some of the reading community of Homestead. I think the other club members feel the same way about being able to read more because of having structured books that are suggested, and getting to express their love for books!
3. Sophomore year I was talking to my friend Hannah about books, and our voices rose as we became enthusiastic and invested. I loved the conversation and wondered why there wasn’t an opportunity to have this kind of excited discussion with other avid readers at Homestead. Thus began my idea for the Homestead Book Club. Getting the club approved and started over the next year was a challenging process at times, but rewarding. Once the club began, I did get some of those moments that I wanted. It has been a great experience to get recommendations for books that I might never have chosen for myself from other club members. We are able to make time to read more by having suggested books, we talk about what excites us about them, and we get to know some of the reading community at Homestead. Our common experience of being book lovers in high school connects us.