

## OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/IB/TOPS/MACS HOMEWORK 24

NAME (FIRST AND LAST): \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

### Personal Essay Writing

Read the following personal statement and answer the questions that follow. In addition, pay attention to the words and phrases in bold print as they may come in handy in your personal essay writing.

A little boy in a rural town in Mozambique is competing with 100,000 patients for the attention of the only three doctors available to him. Meanwhile, in Nicaragua a mother is torn between spending money to put food on the table or tending to her son's illness as they survive on only one dollar a day. The struggle continues as a black mother mourns the loss of her infant daughter because the infant mortality rate amongst the African-American community is twice that of any other ethnic group in America. With the world becoming increasingly more connected, we cannot continue to detach ourselves from these issues.

**I have always felt attached to and compelled by** the problems of the world, therefore these stories of disparities and inequalities **have always distressed me**. In fact, it was **these stories that urged me to pursue** sociology as a major. Focusing on international social change, I have learned many of the extreme social issues affecting the world today. These issues **have inspired me** to want to be in the forefront of combating these problems with the best of my capabilities.

Those capabilities and opportunities for me lie in the field of medicine. **I have wanted to be a doctor from the time I was a child** and as I excelled in the sciences **throughout my education, that interest developed** even more. The University of Michigan **provided many outlets** for students to gain medical experience and **I took advantage of** many opportunities there, two of them being my job as a nurse assistant and my Distraction Osteogenesis research. Working as a nurse assistant in the hemodialysis unit for over a year, allowed me to develop health care professional-to-patient relationships and it allowed me to see the doctors and nurses in their working environment.

Whereas my research, which investigates the effects of radiation on bone healing, involves surgical procedures in which I assist in and require me to do post-operative rounds. The rounds are performed twice daily during which we give medications to the rats, feed them, identify and care for infections, take daily notes on their overall health, and distract their mandible. **This experience gives me a glimpse** of how medical student rotations are conducted on the wards. Opportunities like these and many others continue **to nurture the spark** for medicine **that was ignited when I was young**.

Growing up, my idea of medicine was confined to dealing with patients in a doctor's office. However, majoring in sociology has allowed me to see that I want to practice a kind of medicine that **extends beyond** the walls of an office and into the community where disparities in infant mortality have to be addressed through research and education. Furthermore, my travels to Nigeria in December 2004 and my recent trip to China in May 2007, **have shown me that** medicine can transcend the borders of the United States to places like Nicaragua where I can organize mission trips to provide free, quality health care for those that would never be able to afford it.

Achieving quality health is a product of both good physiological maintenance and a healthy living environment. My sociology background **has taught me that** people not only require their health needs to be addressed but also other life issues as well. **I have learned that** addressing both of these factors can positively impact a person's general health. **My application of this knowledge** is apparent through my work on campus in different organizations, especially as the health committee chair of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) - UM Chapter. As health committee chair, I partnered with several professional health school organizations to put together a health fair. There, we provided free screenings for students and people in the Ann Arbor community for cholesterol, blood pressure, body mass index, glaucoma, and diabetes as well as counseling regarding other barriers they felt were preventing them from attaining good health.

What I can do as a doctor in the future is build upon the efforts I demonstrated in college by merging the principles I will learn in medicine with those that I have learned in sociology. **My mission will be to** change lives. I am not a superhero, **I am but one person who believes that** the needs of the less fortunate should not be overlooked. **As long as I am equipped with** the armor of medicine, I can help see to the improvement of some of the disparities that prevent people from receiving optimum health care in the United States and abroad. **So I hope that I will be given the opportunity** to affect the life of that little boy in Mozambique, as well as many medically disadvantaged across the globe.

1. Write down eight words or phrases that may be useful in your personal essay writing for the IB/TOPS/MaCS applications. A few phrases have already been highlighted for you (in bold print) as suggestions. Briefly explain why they may be useful for your purposes.

Words or Phrases	Brief Explanation
i.	
ii.	
iii.	
iv.	
v.	
vi.	

vii.	
viii.	

1. How does the applicant show (rather than simply tell) that she has “always felt attached to and compelled by the problems of the world? Pay attention to the introductory paragraph.

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2. What kind of prior experience does the applicant have in the field of medicine?

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3. What opportunities “continue to nurture the spark for medicine that was ignited” when the applicant was young?

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4. How does the applicant show that her sociology background is an asset in the field of medicine?

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## Self-exploration and Writing

Respond to the following two writing prompts. Use the rubric on page 5 to guide your writing. Do not attach a separate sheet of paper. Do not exceed the lines provided.

**Prompt 1: Tell us about your interests and hobbies both inside and outside the school.**

[illegible]

*(Do not exceed the lines provided.)*

*Prompt 1*

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
The applicant did not make use of the question to present a positive account of her/his personality. The applicant relies largely on a “listing” approach.	The applicant lists interests and hobbies. More effort needs to be put into the writing to reflect personality.	The essay represents the applicant’s personality in a positive way.	The essay represents the applicant’s personality in a very positive way.
The writing feels unrelated to the prompt.	At least one aspect of the prompt is not addressed.	All aspects of the prompts are addressed.	All aspects of the prompt are addressed in a holistic way.
Grammar errors are severe.	A few grammar errors block comprehension.	Grammar errors are minor.	There are no grammar errors.

*Prompt 2: How will a math/science/technology-enriched program be of benefit to you?*


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*(Do not exceed the lines provided.)**Prompt 2*

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
The response is generic and flat.	More work needs to be put into the writing to show some personality.	The applicant makes use of the question to represent an interest/personality.	The applicant makes use of the question to represent a unique interest/personality.
Grammar errors are severe.	A few grammar errors block comprehension.	Grammar errors are minor.	There are no grammar errors.

**THE END**