I Wish You Nothing but the Best

Hello, my name is Sophie Marshall. I am a currently -- but soon won’t be -- a senior at Harper Creek High School, and instead of slacking off my final year, I decided go out with a bang. I enrolled in many advanced placement courses, including A.P. Literature and Composition -- the class that this speech is addressing. Now, before I begin, it is imperative that I mention one ideal that has been central to me over the course of this class, and was actually conveyed to me by my dear mother; knowledge, learning are comparative to nature. One may start as a bud -- striving to develop their skills -- but with a little love, determination, perseverance one may continue to blossom into a beautiful flower that is full of potential. Something that I now believe describes me, due to this class.

However, this has not always been the case. Believe it or not, I struggled with the subject of English for quite some time. It wasn’t that I was incapable of reading or scribing; I simply lacked the confidence in myself to affirm that I could be a great writer or a fantastic analyzer of certain masterpieces. Since I was missing the component of believing in myself, I loathed any time spent -- in school or at home -- relating to the subject of English. Nevertheless, this all changed for me during my middle school years, when I was fortunate enough to have a sixth grade teacher who altered my life forever. He -- Mr. Martin -- taught me to trust myself, and simply know that what I was engraving on paper was nothing short of fabulous. Once I gained a smidge of poise, I was able to truly see the beauty in English -- this meant, to my surprise, that not only had I gained some courage, but I had attained some adoration for the subject. All in all, this lead to my success in English for the next few years -- I mean, just look at where I am now.

Glancing back, I realize that none of the success that I’ve experienced with writing and reading could have taken place without the support of my family and the superhuman teachers that I was lucky enough to be placed with. Honestly, your support system makes a difference in the snippets of knowledge that you take away from a certain class. When I peep at all my accomplishments from this class, I am overwhelmed with the abundance of objectives that I soaked up, yet there are three things that I desire to highlight on:

1. A.P. Lit -- among all the things it has been -- is unbelievably cathartic.
2. There were many walls to punch through in this A.P. course -- like, Shakespeare -- but nothing is ever as difficult as it seems.
3. I will never cease growing.

An intriguing -- maybe even a tad annoying -- detail about taking A.P. Literature was the plethora of summer course work that was tied to it. This meant that like my peers, I spent part of my summer writing and reading college level pieces of literature. Now, this may seem like a hassle -- and it was -- but it was enormously beneficial. Most summers, I spend my time soaking up the sun’s rays with no thoughts towards school. It’s almost as if my mind misplaces all the wonderful lessons that I enveloped from the school year before, and this really puts a damper on any progress I try to make in the summer. Fortunately, this did not take place with A.P. Literature -- if it had, I probably would have been in a pickle. The ample amount of coursework whipped my butt in shape, and it also allowed me to release any emotions I had about the pesky summer work. As one might say, it was cathartic, and this dispel of my feelings didn’t cease once the summer ended. I was able to continuously release my emotions throughout the year -- a new experience for me -- and this permitted me to scribe a work that I believe to be my greatest piece of all time. It’s a personal narrative -- one of the most difficult genres for me -- and I would’ve never been able to procure this level of writing without the constant load of advanced placement work, and the elevating of my emotions. Frankly, I can’t express my gratitude enough. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Nowadays, one would have assumed that once the summer work was over -- and I’d procured my stupendous writing skills once more -- that I would’ve been out of the woods. Wrong. The glut of assignments stacked onto to me over the summer carried their weight into the school year, and it only became more challenging from there. This was solely due to one of my dearest acquaintances; Shakespeare. Ugh, one can only cringe at the name. Since A.P. Literature is a college level class, it was stuffed to the brim with Shakespeare works; such as, *Othello* and *Merchant of Venice*. Presently, I’d be lying if I told you I didn’t struggle a tad with Shakespeare’s boggled language or his run on thoughts; however, I learned to persevere, because something is only ever as challenging as you make it. Overtime -- in a quickened fashion, since the course is only a handful of months long -- I realized that I had a bundle of helpful resources at my fingertips to aid me in my moments of struggle. These included summaries found at the beginning of each passage of Shakespeare, experts’ notes, Sparknotes, and -- last but not least -- my professor, Mrs. Rutan. All in all, the multitude of support I welcomed made me recollect that I could overcome anything. I had all of the power of the universe at my grasp and inside me -- all I had to do was secure a little effort, and sprinkle the desire to succeed on there. And ta-da, I had slammed through my Shakespeare slump -- or any sort of roadblock for that matter.

And finally, the most vital lesson I learned this year was that I will never stop growing -- as a person, reader, analyzer, and writer. Never. Overall, I assimilated a surplus of information these past two semesters. I absorbed how to dissect any piece of literature by looking for specific decisions the author made; like, diction selections, literary devices, weather, and character choices. More importantly, I learned the importance of not only pinpointing specific segments the author incorporated in their scribing, but also answering the inquiry as to why they do what they do. Moreover, I’m able to not be shaken, if an individual asks me to read any sort of elderly masterpiece -- to be precise, I’m talking about Dante, Shakespeare, or even Sophocles -- and I’m still not disturbed if someone demands me to scrutinize that work in a few days. But, by far, the most superb part of having the epiphany that I will continue to bop to the top, is that I enjoyed getting where I am today. I enjoyed the numerous papers, the supple amount of literature, and the stressful bulk of assignments -- including this one. They made me who I am as I stand before you, and it feels pretty damn good to know that this feeling will never terminate. Ever.

So, as I mentioned before, I think it’s pretty clear as to why I stamped that lesson my mom drilled into me on this advanced placement class. Prior to the class, I hadn’t really found my footing -- or roots, as one might convey -- yet following all my dedication to the course, I finally started to sprout. With every new unit and every new wedge of information, a pedal formed on me. And now, as you can all hopefully, clearly espy, I am a gorgeous blossom of potential. With the approaching of fall -- something that will arrive sooner than you can or even yearn to believe -- comes the start of something new. College. But, I’m not concerned -- at least I think I’m not -- because I now know I have the skills to accomplish any of my goals. These possible goals being:

1. Expanding my knowledge of classical works and professionally picking them apart, as Jane Austen and Oscar Wilde are my favorite authors.
2. Appreciating films on a higher level, as much as pieces of literature, because everyone enjoys a pleasant tale.
3. Lastly, I hope to remember at least 75% of Mrs. Rutan’s teachings, because I’m confident, with the tools she has divulged to me, I will succeed.

So, in the future, as I’m perched in that fresh university classroom, I hope to be not the slightest bit unsteady with the next four years ahead of me. I now comprehend that I have the gadgets to succeed, and I can’t wait to continue to unfold into the gorgeous floweret of knowledge that I know that I am. With each modern experience comes new petals, and with motivation, hard work my success will never fade. Therefore, I wish nothing but the best for all of you -- Mrs. Rutan and my peers -- and I hope you all continue to thrive too. Thank you for your sweet time.