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## SW03. Exploring the Personal Statement

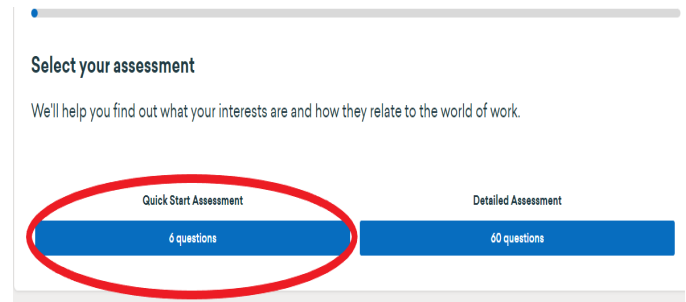
Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For media links in this activity, visit [the LLC ESL Tutoring website for Upper Level SDLAs](#). Find your SDLA number to see all the resources to finish your SDLA.

### Section 1: Introduction

When you write a personal statement, it is important to know who you are. For example, it is a good idea to know what trait describes you. A trait is a quality that makes one person or thing different from another. Some examples of traits are honest, considerate, and ambitious. Do you know what your most dominant character trait is? Take this [personality assessment](#) to find out. After you take the quiz, answer the questions below.



**1. What are your most dominant character traits according to the quiz?**

**2. What is an example of you or an experience you've had demonstrating that trait?** For example, if your dominant character trait is determined, you can use the example of never giving up on improving your English.

**3. Do you agree with the character traits from the quiz? Why or why not?**

### Section 2: Personal Statement Overview

A dominant personality trait is one of many topics that you can write about in your personal statement because it is your way to give colleges a sense of your personality, your perspective on the world, and some of the experiences that have made you into who you are. The idea is to share the kinds of things that aren't on your application, transcript, or resume. It's helpful to remember that you are not writing this for you. You're





writing to people who do not know you but are interested to learn about you. The essay is meant to be a revealing look inside your thoughts and feelings.

Though it's called an essay, the personal statement is different from the essays you write in school, which tend to focus on analyzing someone else's work. Really, the application essay is much closer to a short story. It relies heavily on a personal story of an event from your life, and on the description of people, places, and feelings.

Section 3: Breaking Down the Personal Statement

Step 1: The Prompt

A prompt tells you what you need to write about in an essay. This is the prompt you will address in your personal statement:

Tell us about a personal quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution, or experience that is important to you. What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are?



Step 2: Thinking of Ideas

For this SDLA, this is the question that you will use to guide your personal statement response:

- 1. What personal characteristics (for example, integrity, compassion, and/or persistence) do you possess that would improve your prospects for success in the field or profession? Is there a way to demonstrate or document that you have these characteristics?

Step 3: Narrowing Down your Focus

Read the list of dominant character traits below. Checkmark the 3 that describe you the best.

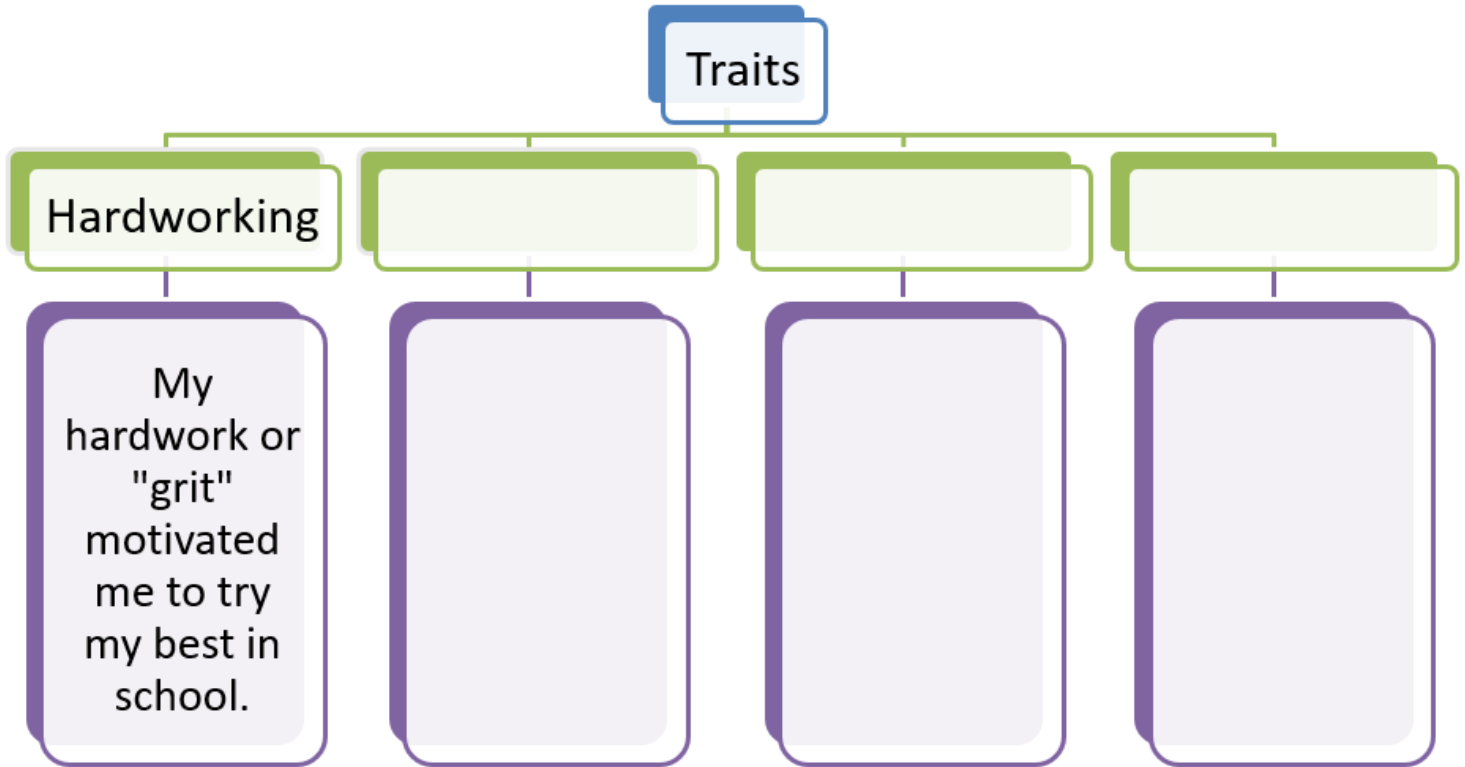
Table with 4 columns of character traits: Independent, Generous, Optimistic, Enthusiastic, Courageous, Dependable, Persistent, Loyal, Patient, Energetic, Clever, Imaginative, Hardworking, Adaptable, Caring, Responsible, Confident, Ambitious, Encouraging, Analytical, Observant, Helpful, Reliable, Passionate, Resourceful, Dynamic, Humorous, Inventive, Original, Compassionate, Accepting, Devoted.





**Step 4: Brainstorming**





Write the three traits that you check marked in the first row of boxes (green). Then, think of a time when you demonstrated (showed) that trait (purple). The first one is an example.





Section 4: Student Self-Assessment

Complete this table BEFORE meeting with a tutor.

Communication Skill	I can't do this YET. 	I can do this WITH help. 	I can do this WITHOUT help. 	I can TEACH this to a classmate. 
I can identify a trait that best describes me.				
I can think of ideas to guide my personal statement.				
I can narrow down the focus of my personal statement.				
I can brainstorm for a personal statement.				

Here are some words/phrases I need to practice.

*Good Job!*

Now make an appointment

with a tutor on the LLC ESL Tutoring Website

([www.mtsac.edu/llc/passportrewards/llctutoring](http://www.mtsac.edu/llc/passportrewards/llctutoring)).








**Section 5: Practice with a Tutor!**

After completing the self-assessment, meet with a tutor and give this completed SDLA to the tutor. The tutor will give you feedback.

**Grading Rubric**

Possible Points	Need Practice  (0-1 Point)	Good Job  (2-3 Points)	Excellent Work  (4-5 Points)
<b>Content</b>	Not enough information provided in responses and often does not use correct vocabulary.	Provides most important information in responses and some of the time uses correct vocabulary.	Provides all necessary information in responses and most of the time uses correct vocabulary.
<b>Skill: Speaking</b>	More than 6 mistakes saying words; needs guessing more than 3 times.	Not more than 5 mistakes saying words; needs guessing on 1-2 words or sentences.	Not more than 2 mistakes saying words; needs no guess about meaning.
<b>Oral Fluency</b>	Speaks mostly in phrases, individual words; many pauses.	Sometimes speaks in complete sentences; several pauses.	Speaks in complete sentences; a couple pauses okay.

**\*Students must receive at least 10 points to move on**

**Possible Points: \_\_\_\_\_ / 15**

**Tutor Comments:**

**Congratulations! Keep going.**

You have successfully completed this SDLA and are ready to continue to the next.

**Work on this more.**

You have not yet mastered this SDLA. It is recommended that you complete it again.

Tutor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

