

## ESSAY TOPIC:

### Please write a short essay on the chosen topic: Why I swim...

To me swimming is the greatest sport ever created. Whenever I jump in the pool, no matter what time it is, there is always a magical feeling I get like no other. For me, swimming isn't just a sport - it's a life style. I started seven years ago and seems I have grown up in the water; I have made many friends, I have set goals, overcome obstacles, learned to win, and learned to lose in the pool.

I swim year around, and believe it or not, I look forward to practice each day – I always have. In fact, more than once, I've hurried back from dental appointments so I wouldn't miss practice. It doesn't bother me to get up at 5:30am; or to swim two-a-days; or to go to practice after a long day at school; or to go to practice during my vacation. I just enjoy the sport. I have been blessed with great coaches, but I have also tried to take it a step further, to be "a student of the game." I enjoy the challenge of the sport. I read and watch many videos on swimming. I have tried to learn and understand the science behind the sport to be better in the water. I guess I approach the sport with the mindset of a coach.

I enjoy the exercise of swimming, as I know I am working cardio as well as every muscle in my body. After my swim, I feel accomplished and successful. During team practices, I always have friends there to push me and give me support. We constantly push each other so that we can all become our best. I enjoy being with my friends and swimming allows that to happen. Between intervals, we talk about our day and about swimming. It's just a great social atmosphere. Swimmers are a close-knit group. If a teammate is down or upset, they can count on a boost from their teammates. By the end of practice we are all tired but feel good, because we worked hard.

Swimming allows me to take my mind off things. If I had a stressful day or a bad test, or whatever it may have been, I can always count on swimming to be there for me. As soon as I hit the water, no matter what time it is, I immediately forget everything. I see my goals, I see where I want to be in life, and swimming helps me to achieve them. It also works on the opposite end of that statement, because when I have a good day, I can always look forward to sharing it with my friends.

The hard work and disciplined mindset of a competitive swimmer has built my confidence and brought me success. I have been named "Matsu Northern Lights Swimmer of the Year" three times; I am the Colony High School team captain and "2014 Most Valuable Swimmer of the Year;" I have been the "Matsu Valley Student Athlete of the Week" twice; and I recently earned honors as a "2015 National Interscholastic Coaches Association (NISCA) Academic All-American" (only male swimmer from Alaska selected). Outside the pool, I have spent eleven years in Scouting. I am an Eagle Scout 15<sup>th</sup> Palm with 137 merit badges (Alaska state record) and one of only 253 Scouts out of 110 million boys in the 105-year history of the Boy Scouts of America, to ever earn every merit badge available – the sport of swimming was very instrumental in this achievement as many merit badges are water-based activities, including: Swimming, Life-saving; Waterskiing; Kayaking; Whitewater; Canoeing; Motor boating; Rowing; Small-boat sailing; and SCUBA.

Swimming will always be a big part of my life. I enjoy the many challenges swimming has to offer. As I leave high school, I am not leaving the sport. I am attending college and will swim at the next level. This is a long-time dream and I am looking forward to that opportunity very much. Swimming has made me who I am today. I have been transformed physically and mentally. I see what I want and I work hard to accomplish it. I owe much of my success in and out of the water to swimming – it helped me push through bad times, built my confidence, and has created many incredible life-long memories. This is why I swim...

Zachary Bloom  
Matsu NLSC Swimmer  
Class of 2015, Colony High School

4 Attachments

1. Resume
2. Letters of Recommendation (2)
3. Current Report Card
4. Scouting Article (verification of service)