

## TEP Application Essay Example

The College of Education at University of Houston – Clear Lake requires an essay to accompany application into its Teacher Education Program (TEP). The following is a sample TEP essay. The first example of the essay shows color-coded annotations; the second example offers tips at the end explaining how the essay was not done well.

TEP applicants should write their essay specifically about the area(s)/subject(s) in which they plan to pursue certification. For more information about the TEP, please contact the College of Education at 281-283-3600 or [education@uhcl.edu](mailto:education@uhcl.edu).

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### **Example 1**

As a child I recall learning about different species local to Texas while my grandfather called off the scientific names of the animals in his backyard from our perch on his porch. It wasn't until seven years later that I realized how much science had become a part of my personality, and I began my journey to become a scientist like him.

I began my informal work with children as a camp counselor at the Houston Museum of Natural History in 2012 and have continued annually every year since then. As I developed and taught biological curriculum to groups ranging from 6-14 years old, I developed my teaching skills daily. Of all the children that I have taught, however, I found the 10-12 year old students the most challenging and rewarding. At that age, students are developing their own identities and learning what subjects interest them; as a result, they need encouragement to ensure that they feel comfortable exploring their interests in a non-judgmental yet challenging atmosphere. This allows intellectual growth and maturity with regard to subject matter.

As an educator working with early middle school-aged students, I plan to focus on the person rather than just the learner. I understand that emphasizing a student's strongest areas allows him to broaden his mind and open up to the curriculum. To effectively teach this group, I believe that I will need to apply the curriculum to their everyday lives and ask them to do the same. However, if a student does not plan to pursue science in the future, he can still learn how it operates in his life in a way that supports his future learning through hands-on activities such as dissecting a frog to grasp how tendons work in our bodies.

Despite not initially planning to enter the education field and beginning as a strictly science major, I have come to appreciate the "A-ha!" moments that occur in science classrooms, and I intend to work toward my education degree in a way that encourages others to love science as much as I do.

#### Parts of the TEP essay and explanation

- Personal qualifications/experiences working with children in age group noted on degree plan
- Understands the needs of children in age groups represented by degree plan
- Describes characteristics of children (might be very similar to previous item)
- Several ideas on how to effectively teach the children
- Personal information to connect the reader to your purpose or inspiration to be a teacher

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#### **Example 2**

As a child I recall learning about different species local to Texas while my grandfather called off the scientific names of the animals in his backyard from our perch on his porch. It wasn't until seven years later that I realized how much science had become a part of my personality in high school, and I began my journey to become a scientist like him. It has long been my ambition to become a science teacher to help others come to understand the world

around them in a way that encourages learning and a preservation/conservation attitude toward our environment.

I began my informal work with children as a camp counselor at the Houston Museum of Natural History in 2012 and have continued annually every year since then. The position allowed me to be in a leadership role that directed how curriculum was taught, the activities that were utilized during the lessons, and the evaluation of children's progress. As I developed and taught biological curriculum, I developed my teaching skills daily. Despite the material being difficult to explain, I find science both challenging and rewarding. Furthermore, although the position was my first teaching position, I was given a recognition award for my efforts to make the environment more hands-on and approachable for all ages, something that I treasure to this day as recognition of my teaching abilities when faced with something I love. During this position, I learned that middle school-aged children often need support that translates into character-building and an understanding of their learning process. As a teacher, I intend to communicate such an understanding in my classroom by supporting individual student's needs. Therefore, I plan to work carefully with my students.

Despite not initially planning to enter the education field and beginning as a strictly science major, I have come to appreciate the "A-ha!" moments that occur in science classrooms, and I intend to work toward my education degree in a way that encourages others to love science as much as I do.

#### Problems with this essay

- Too long
- Didn't list specific age group
- Didn't qualify the students' characteristics
- No suggestions on how to effectively teach