

Essay A: Describe your personal goals, challenges, or commitments and how you can draw on what you've learned about Michael Rothberg's legacy to inspire your own.

Despite having never met him, it is as evident to me as it is to others that Michael Rothberg was a compassionate, generous man who saw the inherent good that exists in humanity. He saw the importance in helping and then went out and did it; he was a successful man, not just behind his desk but also in his heart. The driving factor leading to my decision to become a teacher was my desire to live in such a way that I was constantly working to the benefit of others and improving their lives. I want to teach so that I can share the knowledge I will have acquired, and so that I may help kids that are struggling and need support, even in aspects of life outside of the classroom. I want to repay the support I've received from my teachers when I wasn't getting enough at home. After graduate school and before I begin teaching, I want to join the Peace Corps and teach English. There are millions of people in the world who are suffering, and all I have ever wanted in life is to have the ability to give them an opportunity to open doors and improve their lives. When I told others about this plan, some of them told me I should focus more on my own future, health, and safety. I replied that a life without helping others is not a life worth living; the intrinsic benefits you experience and the benefits the person on the receiving end experiences completely outweigh any negligible inconvenience. I know as a teacher I won't make a lot of money, but walking into work every day aware that others are benefitting from my work will be unquestionably more valuable.

Essay B: What would you recommend to our government to prevent terrorism in our country or anywhere in the world?

Elie Wiesel said, “The opposite of love is not hate, it’s indifference.” I agree—I do not believe that terrorism is so much an act of hatred as it is an act based on ignorance or indifference. The fear that festers between cultures and groups of people is due to incomprehension of each other’s goals and a lack of communication. Therefore, I would propose that governments invest more in educating themselves and their citizens about other nations and ethnicities—their cultures, histories, traditions, religions, goals, and values. Governments should urge people, verbally and financially, to study abroad, explore, join the Peace Corps, travel, host exchange students—anything that can open their eyes and their minds. Through experiences like these, one not only learns how other people live, but he or she can see that all humans just want to love and be loved, and that issues can and should be settled in non-violent ways. I want to be a high school French teacher. As a language teacher, I’ll have a duty to not only teach my students grammar and vocabulary but also to expose them to the cultures of those who speak that language, because people, language, and culture are all intertwined. Achieving understanding and acceptance is the first step to ending terrorism around the world. Possessing a collective open mind and open heart, as a nation, will show those committing terrorist attacks that we are accepting and open to settling issues diplomatically and humanely, and vice versa. Terrorism is not caused directly by hate; it is caused by a lack in education and acceptance of others, from both ends.