

Young Students Challenge Me!

Shirley Jefferson

I always wanted to come back to school. I started having my children at a young age. My wise mom always told me that she would get me a baby sitter, but I chose not to go back to school. I didn't get along with the principal of the high school, and I kept getting into fights with the kids on my school bus. I also think it was peer pressure that was leading up to my departure.

Once I quit school, I always regretted it. I had been an astute student. I remember my teachers telling me I had a good head on my shoulders and that I shouldn't quit school. But I had started getting interested in boys and there was no stopping me! My mom was angry and our relationship deteriorated. At the same time, I didn't want to be like my mom and be a high school dropout. However, I ended up repeating the same cycle and pattern!

It took me more than 30 years to get the courage to come back to school. I found other GED programs but I didn't like them. I didn't learn anything or I didn't fit in. I always wondered how I would adjust to being around younger women who were the same as my daughter! It has been fantastic to be in the multi-generational program at Project Hope. Being with younger students makes me challenge myself more because I don't want to be the slowest or the dumbest in my classes.



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Your Turn!

Write about how older or younger students make you feel. Start by clustering your ideas using a diagram like the one shown on the next page.

Before you start, review these building blocks for writing:

Every sentence must have a subject, a verb, and a period (or ? or !), and every sentence must be a complete thought.

Every paragraph should have a topic sentence followed by several sentences that back it up. Finally, write a concluding sentence that provides a transition to the next paragraph.

A 5-paragraph essay needs a thesis statement (which is often the very first sentence of the essay), three body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph.