

SAMPLE B • DEEP EDIT

Deep edit — Common App personal statement (excerpt)

Grammar plus Topic, Logic, Evidence, Rewrite, and Critique. Voice stays the student's. We do not ghostwrite.

Red strike = original. Blue bold = rewrite. Italic notes = editor comments a student would see in the margin.

Prompt (paraphrased): a background, identity, or talent that is meaningful.

~~In my high school, I join a lot of activities because I think it can let me become a leader and also help other people. This experience make me know that leadership is not about speak loud, it is about listen and make plan.~~ **I packed the first two years of high school with clubs I could point to — debate, the service board, a robotics team I barely touched. I thought a dense list would prove I was a leader. What it proved, mostly, was that I was afraid of an empty line.**

Comment — Topic: “I joined activities to become a leader” is a claim every file makes. The interesting fact is the fear of an empty line. Stay there. Do not return to a generic definition of leadership.

~~One time, our community service club need to organize a donation but nobody want to take charge so I stand out. I make a form on WeChat and collect 200 coats. This show I have responsibility.~~ **In November the service board needed someone to run a coat drive. No one volunteered. I did not stand up because I felt ready; I stood up because the silence in the room was worse than the work. I put a form on WeChat, walked the lower-school hallway twice, and we took in two hundred coats. The number is not the point. The point is that I had to write the first message myself, and that I almost didn't.**

Comment — Evidence: 200 coats is a trophy statistic. Admissions already discounts it. Keep one concrete action (the first WeChat message, the hallway) and cut the moral (“this shows I have responsibility”).

~~In conclusion, I learned that leadership is listen and I will use this skill in college to help my classmates and make the world better.~~ **I still over-join. The difference is that I now notice the week I am performing the list, and I put one thing down. If a college is a place with too many rooms, I would rather be useful in two of them than decorative in ten.**

Comment — Critique: the last sentence was a slogan. End on a choice the student can actually keep making — dropping one thing — not on saving the world.