

a) What got you interested in your essay topic?

I got interested in my essay topic because of how I identified with Bao. I grew up in an Asian household myself, and I'm no stranger to an overprotective parent. Lots of kids who have immigrant parents seem to have the same or similar problems to me, where their parents are afraid to let them grow because the idea of their children leaving the nest is terrifying to them.

When I watched Bao for the first time, I was struck by how much the mother in that short film reminded me of my own mother. It also gave me a peek into how my mother might have felt toward me while I was growing up. I felt that this connection was worth exploring more, and I tried to do that for my essay. I still love my parents very much, and I wouldn't have had anywhere near the number of opportunities I've had without their help.

b) What's the best / most surprising discovery you made about this topic while working on your essay?

The best / most surprising discovery I made... in all honesty, nothing I found while researching was all that new to me. Everything I learned over the research was often an extension of what I already knew about the parenting techniques of Asian immigrants: the cultural differences that bled into how their children were raised, the concerns they had over moving to a new country that showed in the way they checked how their children learned...

It isn't very surprising to me that these parents exist because I've experienced it myself. If I did have to pick something interesting I learned, it was that Perinatal Depression, a form of depression that comes after childbirth, wasn't as well known among immigrant parents, and the combined stress of moving to a new country and giving birth to a child was very difficult for them to deal with.

To be fair to them, I didn't know that Perinatal Depression existed either. But the idea that new parents were facing all that stress without knowing what was happening to their mood was rather eye opening for me. Having a new child on top of settling in a new country is an extremely stressful event.

c) What's a tip you can give first-year Otis students to help them make their writing/their time in WITDA as successful as possible?

A tip I can give to first-year Otis students to make their time in WITDA successful is to try to find a topic that you can either speak from experience from or are extremely interested in. Writing an essay without actually being invested in the essay is difficult, and without the dedication you would be able to give something you actually enjoy, your essay will fall flat.

Do you want a secret tip? Change the font to Comic Sans. That's not a joke; Comic Sans makes writing shockingly easy. The new font refreshes your brain and lets you work easier. I wrote this Cultural Argument in Comic Sans and changed the font in the end.