

**Your Grade**  
18.0/25

Structure: 8.0 out of 10  
Grammar: 4.0 out of 5  
Content: 6.0 out of 10

	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Grammar</b> 5 points	<p>Completely free of grammatical errors. No typos.</p> <p>Entirely follows English idioms and conventions.</p>	<p>Free of easily noticeable grammatical errors, but may have a few subtle ones. Probably doesn't have any typos.</p> <p>Follows English idioms and conventions.</p>	<p>Many noticeable grammatical errors. Errors in usage may be prevalent. Probably has typos.</p> <p>Writing sounds like it needs improvement.</p>	<p>Grammar and usage errors detract from the overall message of your document.</p> <p>Fails to follow many English idioms and conventions.</p>	<p>Grammar errors cause your essay to be a hard-to-decipher train wreck.</p> <p>Requires serious help with grammar and usage from a native speaker.</p>
<b>Structure</b> 10 points	<p>The structure is extremely sensible: all ideas are presented in a reasonable order.</p> <p>Your reviewer had no problems following any part of the piece.</p>	<p>The structure is good. Most ideas are presented in a reasonable order.</p> <p>Your reviewer may have had trouble following a few parts, but nothing was terribly confusing.</p>	<p>The structure is okay. Some sentences, thoughts, or paragraphs seem out-of-order or incomprehensible.</p> <p>Structural problems cause the essay to be confusing or flow poorly in some places.</p>	<p>Numerous structural problems make the essay's main idea unclear.</p> <p>You should put serious thought into restructuring the essay with an outline.</p>	<p>Your essay is incomprehensibly structured and needs to be rewritten.</p>
<b>Content</b> 10 points	<p>Intriguing, insightful content that fully addresses the prompt (if applicable).</p> <p>Your reviewer cannot think of any non-trivial changes to the content, and can only think of a few trivial ones.</p>	<p>Good content that addresses the prompt (if applicable).</p> <p>There may be a few blemishes in content. Your reviewer was able to think of some changes to details or wording.</p>	<p>Adequate content that mostly addresses the prompt (if applicable).</p> <p>There are significant flaws in the content. Your reviewer is able to think of extensive changes to details and wording.</p>	<p>Poor content that fails to address the prompt (if applicable). Your essay's content needs a serious overhaul in ideas presented and/or the way those ideas are worded.</p>	<p>Very poor content. Much of the essay needs to be rewritten. The ideas presented, if they are left in the essay, must be thought out again.</p>

# Overall Comments

## Opening Remarks

Wow! You definitely have a unique story to tell. I see some great opportunities to develop this concept to include more introspection, and find a structure that will keep the reader hooked and make room for more development. Let's dive in!

## Overall Comments

•In this draft, I learn about your long-standing interest in and aptitude for building robots for competitions, and I learn that your first fight (and first loss) taught you the importance of perseverance. This is a great start with a lot of potential.

•While you have a lot of strong material here, I also see some opportunities to flesh out your content and make for a more compelling essay. Your main message about not letting failure hold you back is a familiar theme in admissions essays, so I think we can delve deeper to create a more unique narrative. We learn a lot about this one experience when you were nine, but the reader will also want to know more about how you have applied this interest and lesson to other aspects of your life. Below, I'm going to ask you some questions whose answers can help you develop some new material. A note: these questions are intended to help you brainstorm; you don't have to answer all of them in your next draft.

•Let's start with the logistics of your first fight. I'm interested to know a little more about the atmosphere. Where were you, and what was the arena like? How did your robot compare to your opponent's, besides the differing materials?

•Next, I'm curious about your motivation for building a robot. Why were you drawn to this competition? Was this the first time you built a robot? How did you learn how to build one? Readers will be interested to see your curiosity and proactive learning in action!

•Finally, and most importantly, I'm curious about what this experience has led you to do more recently. Have you pursued robotics or related fields in school or independently? Has this interest opened any other avenues of curiosity for you? What skills have you learned, and how have you applied them or developed them since you began building robots? You say that this early experience taught you about perseverance: how have you applied this lesson? Do you have any examples of a time, outside of the arena, where you were resilient in the face of defeat? How has this value changed how you approach different areas of your life?

## Structure

The bulk of your essay takes place in the past, and it doesn't flow as coherently as it could. Below, I'm going to provide you with an example outline to guide your revision. This outline will suggest how and where you could incorporate some of the answers to the questions I've asked, and will allow space for you to add more introspection about how you have grown since this experience.

## Example Outline

•Introduction: Currently, your introduction begins with statements about your love of robotics, which isn't as strong as an opening that will pique the reader's curiosity. I suggest crafting a first sentence that will immediately grab your reader's attention. For example, you might say something like, "I got into my first fight when I was nine years old." While you should craft your own sentence, this example can show you how a similar statement would definitely capture the reader's attention! Then, you could explain that you were at a competition where your robot would battle a robot belonging to an older and more experienced opponent. This context will help set up the second half of your introduction.

•First body paragraph: Now, you can heighten suspense by scaling back a little and providing some context for how you came to compete. Show us why you were drawn to this competition, and provide some details about your building process.

•Second body paragraph: Your current second paragraph is strong and puts us right in the action. Well done! I've suggested some in-text edits to improve the flow of this writing.

•Third body paragraph: Since I've suggested omitting your paragraph about the lesson you learned from defeat, here you can incorporate some of those ideas in the moment. What did this "losing look" mean to you back then, and what does it mean now that you are an experienced competitor? How has your reaction to failure changed since this first loss?

•Fourth body paragraph: Now, let's fast forward into the future. Building off the additions you'll make to the previous paragraph, show us how you have applied the lessons and skills from these competitions to other areas of your life. What new pursuits or skills have you been inspired to gain? How does your experience as a competitor feed into your present-day curiosity, and how has it affected how you approach challenges?

•Conclusion: You have the beginnings of a strong conclusion already, but I'm curious to learn more about what it means to be "the guy nobody wants to fight." In the context of the arena, does that mean you meticulously prepare and test your designs to be a strong competitor? What does it mean outside of the arena? Think about the traits you have developed as a result of this experience, and show us how you apply those traits.

## Next Steps

You are well on your way to a compelling essay! Next, reflect on the questions I have asked you, and begin jotting down some notes and specific details. Then, review the example outline to help you organize your content. Once you have answered and incorporated these questions, you will have a more compelling draft that paints a vivid picture of a thoughtful, ambitious, and creative person. Great effort so far, and good luck!

## The Intro Fight

I have always been interested in robots. Nine-year-old me couldn't get enough of shows like Discovery's Battlebots, competitions that combined mechanics with all the excitement of a real battle. I spent months building my first robot, and finally it was time to fight. My first opponent

was a handful of years older than me and far more experienced. Despite how favored he was, an air of anticipation hung over the crowd. The announcer called us up. My titanium-clad

opponent entered first, and I, clad with aluminum, followed. With shaky hands, I apprehensively

turned my robot on and it buzzed into electronic life.

This is great writing, but I'm not sure if it fits as the opening sentence. Instead, you could use this towards the end of the paragraph to transition back to the scene. Then, you could craft a new opening sentence that shows the reader how you will be providing some background about how you came to compete.

Our robots weren't simply line followers or basketball shooters. They were combat

robots smashing, crashing killing machines. I was at a competition with builders from all over the United States and Canada, and I was undoubtedly the youngest builder present. Still, I had spent painstaking hours of trial and error constructing my aluminum and polycarbonate machine

and learning how to radio control it in my family's living room. The robot's weapon was a flipper, which aimed to immobilize other robots by lifting their wheels off the ground. I dreamed of throwing robots into the four-foot ceiling of the combat arena.

With four beeps and some green lights, I exhausted my time for dreaming; it was time for battle. Our fight lasted two minutes. We pushed each other. We clobbered each other into the

Let's look for a more compelling "hook" that will immediately grab your reader's attention. I'll provide a sample in the Example Outline

This phrasing could be a bit confusing, and we can avoid repetition of 'clad.' What about "my aluminum robot followed"?

"Shaky hands" shows us more vividly that you were nervous, so you don't need the adverb here.

Great turn of phrase!

This could be a great second sentence in your introduction, and will help set up the scene early on.

I don't think we need this detail

I'm not sure I follow what you were dreaming about before the fight began. I think you can omit this and go straight to "it was time..."

walls. I even got a chance to attempt a few flips, but was never able to fully invert my opponent.

You've mentioned the length of the fight earlier in the paragraph, so we don't need it here

Nice cliffhanger ending for this paragraph!

After the two-minute battle ended, my robotic gladiator emerged almost unscathed, but it was up to a panel of three judges to decide my fate.

Great phrasing here!

"And the winner by judges' decision," said the announcer, was not me.

I looked up at my father in agonizing defeat. I had been convinced that my robot would

This is an interesting moment! Spend some time showing us in this paragraph how you interpreted that look back then, and what it means to you now.

win not just its first fight but the entire competition! My father gave me the "losing look" that I have now grown accustomed to over the years of fighting robots.

~~On the way home from that first battle, I reflected on the agony of defeat. I was disappointed by the loss, but I realized that I would never win unless I tried again. You can't have success without failure, and you can't let yourself feel too defeated to never try again. This early realization has shaped who I am today. Now, whenever I face an obstacle, I just imagine myself as one of my robots: resilient, indestructible, and with years of experience in the arena behind me.~~

I still attend competitions to this day all over the northeast, but I spend far more time designing and building my now-more-complex machines. I find myself in the winners' circle a lot more, too. My first loss provided me with the motivation to become the guy nobody wants to

how so?

fight not just in robotics, but in life as well. I realized that although one will never win every time, it's always worth getting in the arena.

This language feels a little generic, and doesn't show us how you have applied this lesson. Instead, spend this paragraph showing us how you have grown since then.

This is an interesting concept!

Nice! I'm curious to learn more about what you've been up to since your first competition.