

Dear Aunt Lizzy,

You asked me earlier to tell you about my friend. I am taking the liberty to do just that. Her name is Madeline. I have known her for five years, but I have only recently come to be her closest friend. To tell you one thing, she is shy. She hardly said a word the first two years that I knew her. I remember watching her singing and smiling to herself. From that point on I decided that I would be her friend and in doing began an adventure of a lifetime. **Why Madeline? Well I plan to make that clear to you in the next few paragraphs.**

This relatively petite girl has turned my life upside down. **She has managed to turn chair lift rides into worship time, to change light conversations into sincere times of reflection, and serious moments into floods of laughter. Smiling is as common as breathing for Madeline, as is laughing.** Worship is always welcome. She sings in the car, while going up the ski **mountain**, while speeding down the mountain, while horse backing riding etc. - all are apparently **very** ideal times for worship! **When challenged by some girls around her that start to sing "heathenish gospel", as Madeline called it.** However, she meets their challenges by singing even louder!

She has a lot of energy that surprises people. She has jumped out from trees and bushes just to say, "**hi**" to show you she is thrilled to see you. Such greetings are always received with a bit of surprise, which Maddie does not seem to notice. Because she is, "jumpy", she told me that she often feels "like a bull in a china closet". I at once disagreed, since I have often been the recipient of her gentle manner. She seems to glow in the light of that wonderful energy. When she sees hurt mingled in someone's eye, she at once stops what she is doing and flies over to your side. She has always left her "patient" laughing. Call that what you will.

She challenges the very things you think normal. At youth group the leader was explaining that human nature desires "bigger, better, more..." As an object lesson she called on a few people to pick between three slips of paper that represented money. Those who were called upon picked the thousand dollar bill since it was the largest of the three. She then took the lesson a little farther by pulling out a fake million dollar bill, asking if they would like that instead. They all said "yes". Then Madeline was called. She at once chose the one-dollar bill (much to everyone's surprise.) She was offered the million dollar bill which she rejected. She was then accused of being "humble" making her blush a lot. I asked her why she chose the dollar a little later. She answered, "It was valuable to me because no one wanted it. I genuinely wanted the dollar bill." That is Madeline. She loves and values the small things in life that people reject. For some reason, this makes it more valuable in her sight.

This is a nice story - it illustrates character very well.

Love,

Katherine

P.S She still has that dollar bill!

I like the postscript a lot.

This is quite a good look at yourself as if someone else is writing it. You do a nice job with description, action, anecdote, and speech to develop your character. Your introduction is pretty good - definitely an improvement over your last paper's. I did delete the last two sentences of the first paragraph. The sentence before these is a much better lead to the body of the paper - it's stronger and more tantalizing. Who wouldn't want to read about the adventure of a lifetime? We already know (because you started your paper this way) that you're going to tell us about Madeline, so there's no need to repeat it at the close of that same paragraph.

I want to take a minute to discuss this sentence: *She has managed to turn chair lift rides into worship time, to change light conversations into sincere times of reflection, and serious moments into floods of laughter.* The content here is great, but this has a grammatical problem because it lacks "parallel construction." You have a list of things here, and they must be done in the same way. So, "She has managed **to turn**. . . **to change**. . . and **serious moments**. . ." Do you see that you need an infinitive form of a verb for the third thing as well? All three need to be the same. For example, this could work: "*She has managed **to turn** chair lift rides into worship time, **to change** light conversations into sincere times of reflections, and **to flood** serious moments with laughter.*"

The next sentence is not as serious an infraction: *Smiling is as common as breathing for Madeline, as is laughing.* Here it's more a question of lack of tightness and elegance. Because smiling and laughing go together here, it makes sense to put them together: *Smiling and laughing are as common as breathing for Madeline.* Otherwise, laughing seems like an afterthought.

Moving beyond that, the paper is quite strong. I especially like your conclusion. Your ending story demonstrates character very powerfully, and I really like the postscript. It gives a nice bang to the paper - I would love to read another letter from Katherine about Madeline. This is always my toughest criteria for a paper (would I want to read more in the same style, about the same topic). Overall, very nice job.