

## Echoes in the Mirror

Parents and guardians are extremely important forces in our lives. Their influence lingers long after we've left home.

What we would like you to do in *Essay Two* is take a close look at your parents or guardians. We'd like you to study these "creatures" and attempt to determine how they have shaped you. (Keep in mind that acting deliberately to avoid their influence is an influence.) What physical and personality traits do you share with them? How have their attitudes, words and example worked to form you? (Try to be balanced in your assessment; don't overlook the "good" stuff, too.) Somewhere in your essay we would like you to tell a short story about a parent/guardian that serves as an example, a revelation, of some aspect of their influence.

What follows is a list of questions and suggestions you might want to consider while you're building your essay. Whatever you do, don't try to take on everything on this list. A well-developed essay can be built around any Q&A of these things. And don't hesitate to build your own questions, too. Use the clustering process to help you find a reasonable focus for your essay, and don't forget to ask us for help if you are confused, or "blocked."

- Which parent/guardian do you see most when you look in the mirror?
- What single trait did you inherit that you treasure above all others?
- What single trait would you most like to avoid or change?
- In what ways do you look like/unlike your parents?
- In what ways are your attitudes like/unlike those of your parents?
- Have you "inherited" any of your parents' habits, quirks or tics?
- When you are a parent, or as you parent, what would you do, or do you do, differently?
- As a parent, what would you do, or what are you trying to do, that mirrors your parents.
- If you were building the perfect parents, what qualities would you want them to have? Why?
- If this assignment is emotionally difficult for you, ask for an alternative assignment titled *Reflections in the Mirror*.