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### Essay 1

I would not consider myself an adult. I am only 17 and I have so much left to learn about the world. However, I am going to have to be an adult soon whether or not I like it. Most of the time, I feel unprepared to live by myself and have responsibility. With that being said, there was one event in my life in which I felt that I could actually be a successful adult. It was during my championship swim meet.

The bus picked all seven of us up at the high school much earlier than I would have liked. I could tell that everyone mainly, tired, but also excited and nervous. We walked out onto the pool deck and I was shocked by how many swimmers were there. I had to swim against all of these kids who were taller and stronger? Feeling overwhelmed, I changed into my Garnet Valley swimsuit. "Get in the pool and warm up!" impatiently screamed coach Clark. As soon as I jumped in, I felt a bitter coldness and smelled the potent scent of chlorine. Within the first lap, I felt slick like a dolphin. Despite being nervous, I knew this would be a good meet.

It was finally time for my best event. I was not seeded in that well of a position, but I desperately wanted to get my goal time. I was excited to drop time because, after all of the hard work I had put in during the season, I knew I had it in me to do well. "Take your mark.....Go!" and I was in the pool. Sliding through the water, I completed the first lap of eight. My arms started to ache after my second lap, but I pushed on. I just put my head down and kicked the entire way through. Even though my arms and legs were screaming at me that they hurt, I knew they could go a little further. With a smooth stroke, I shoved my hand into the wall and hit the pad. I looked up and saw that I had dropped 3 seconds! Gingerly, I climbed out of the pool and walked over to my coaches. I could see the satisfaction on their faces and I knew it was mirrored on mine. I finished in seventh place! I got to go up onto a podium and I even got a certificate with my name on it. Everyone had done well, so the ride home was a celebration for all.

One big step towards becoming an adult is learning how to not give up. Adults can't just give up because they want to or don't think they can do it anymore. We have to be stronger than that. It felt nice to see hard work pay off. The reward is definitely worth the work because of the sense of accomplishment and pride. After seeing the impact of hard work, I feel like I am ready to become an adult and I can take on life after high school.