



# One Day, I Want To

## A PERSONAL ESSAY

Writing about your ambitions is a great way to keep yourself inspired and motivated whether it be a dream you had since childhood or something that you thought about just recently. Write three paragraphs about something that you want to do in your life and what steps you might need to take to get there.

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## Firefighting: Past Present and Future **Informational Text**

### **A HAIRY SITUATION**

In the 1800s, firefighters would fight fires with little protection. They would breathe a lot of smoke. The smoke was poisonous. They made inhaling the smoke look easy. They earned the nickname, "Smoke Eaters."

Smoke eaters found a way to breathe easier. They took their long beards and dipped them in water. Then they tucked their beards into their mouths. They used the wet beards as filters.

Firefighters wouldn't think of breathing through their beards these days. Today they have a clean source of air when they fight a fire. They wear a device called a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). It has three main parts. There is an air tank, an air pressure gauge and a face mask.

If a firefighter is in trouble and not moving, the SCBA can help. An alarm will sound. Other firefighters can find their way to the alarm to help.

Every firefighter has a SCBA mask.

In the future, SCBA will be easier to use. A hose from an air tank will attach to the helmet. It will be lighter and easier for the firefighter to carry. The mask will include a special camera. The camera will help firefighters see through smoke.

SCBA is one of the most important tools for firefighters. It helps to keep them safer.



### **MAN, WOMAN, AND HORSEPOWER**

Very early "fire engines" were water pumps on wheels. Men dragged these cart-like fire engines to the fire. Firefighters attached the hose to the hydrant. They would pump water through the hose. They would spray water on the fire. In 1818, Molly Williams, a slave, joined in and dragged an engine to a fire. She became the first female firefighter.

Fire engines grew larger and heavier. Horses replaced people as cart draggers. Horses could gallop to the fire much more quickly. With a quick harness, a fire horse could be ready to go in less than one minute.

The modern-day fire truck gets firefighters to the fire quickly. They can travel up to 68 miles an hour. Getting to the fire is much safer than it used to be. Firefighters no longer ride on the back of the truck. They ride inside. They are strapped in seats using safety belts.

Modern fire trucks have a recorder. It is there to make sure the truck is being driven safely. It records the truck speed. It also records whether or not safety belts are used.

In the future, firefighters will get help from hi-tech tools. Drones will be important. Drones can fly. They can take pictures in the dark and in thick smoke. They can go to places unsafe for firefighters. They can see through smoke with a special camera. They can move through smoke. Robots will use gear designed for people like cutting tools and a fire hose. Robots will climb stairs while drones will fly up them. These hi-tech drones and robots will help keep firefighters safer.



### **GREAT BELLS OF FIRE**

Firefighting has always been noisy. Patrols used to carry wooden rattles. Firefighters clanged bells. They rang church bells. The sound warned people about fires. Fire chiefs used trumpets at the fire. They shouted orders with them.

Now, fires are reported using 9-1-1. This is the emergency number. Calls go to a dispatcher. The dispatcher gets information about the fire. The closest fire truck is sent to the fire.

Rattles and bells don't tell us about fires anymore. Now we hear the siren of the fire truck. We see the flashing lights on the truck. Cars must move over to the side of the road to let fire trucks get to a fire quickly.



## Firefighting: Past Present and Future **Informational Text**

### **GREAT BELLS OF FIRE** (cont.)

In the future, firefighters will have radios in their helmets. This will make it easier for them to do their job. It will make it easier to get information. They will be able to talk to each other.

New tools will send out pictures of the fire. Firefighters will get information on the fire before they arrive. They will know where the fire is located in a building. They will know fire hydrant locations. They will know what other fire companies are responding. This will help them decide how to fight the fire.

### **HELMET TAILS**

Many years ago, firefighters wore helmets that did not keep them safe. The name of the fire department was painted on the helmet. In the 1800s, a fire helmet was made to keep them safe. It was leather. It had a front shield. It has a brim from the front to the back. The back of the brim was like a long tail. It helped funnel water away from the firefighter's face. They also used the helmet to protect themselves from fire. They would wear the helmet backwards. They would tuck their chin. The helmet would protect their face from fire.

Firefighters wore wool coats. These protected them from fire. They wore rubber raincoats over the wool coats to keep them dry.

Today, firefighters wear jackets and pants to keep them safe. They keep them dry. They will not catch fire. They protect them from heat. Boots keep their feet dry. Boots protect their feet if they step on something sharp. Gloves are worn. These protect their hands if they touch something hot. A helmet protects them from heat. It also protects them from falling objects. Every firefighter has his or her own gear. It can cost more than \$2,500. A fire chief uses a hand radio to talk to firefighters.

In the future, firefighters will wear special gear. It will keep track of their breathing and temperature. The gear will weigh less and keep them cool. The fire chief will keep track of the firefighters. The chief will be able to talk to the firefighter through a radio inside the helmet. The chief will know if a firefighter is lost in a building. The chief will be able to tell the firefighter how to get out of the building.

### **GAME ON**

Firefighters competed to fight a fire. Each fire team would send their fastest and biggest member to the fire. The first to arrive would sit on the fire hydrant. The winning team had control of the water from the hydrant. They would put out the fire. The other teams would go home. Some teams would sit and watch the fire.

Today, firefighters work together as a team. A team is assigned to a fire truck. They work together to put out fires. They work together to help people. The team eats together when they are working. Training and education are important. They practice putting out fires. They practice rescuing people. They learn about fire and how to put it out. Fire departments help each other. They reach out to other departments when they need help fighting a fire. They can share firefighters. They can share trucks. They can share tools.

Fire departments use computers. They can use a special camera. This can help them know the temperature of the fire.

In a few years, firefighters will use personal hand computers. They will use computer tablets and cell phones to talk to each other. They will know the temperature of a fire. They will know if there is damage to the building. They will know where people are trapped in a building. They will know if a team member needs help. They will know if a firefighter is lost in a building. They will know where the firefighter is located. They will be able to send a path out of the building to the firefighter's computer. The firefighter will follow the path out of the building to safety.

