THE ESSAY

Goals:
1. Consider your essay as a part of the entire application, not a stand-alone piece
2. Not the whole story of your life, just a “snapshot.”
3. Brainstorm topics
4. Other writing pieces

Questions:
• Do my colleges require an essay for the application?
• Do they require any other writing samples?
• Does my major choice require an essay?
• Do any college scholarships require an essay?
• What does each part of the application say about me?
• What does the transcript – grades, classes taken, and trend in grades – say about me?
• What do my background and family say about me?
• What does my standardized testing say about me?
• What do my out-of-school commitments say about me?
• What do I hope my recommenders say about me?
• Considering the applicant you just described, what’s missing about you in the application so far?
• What stories about yourself could “fill in the blanks”?
• What does someone need to know about you to really understand you and your path?
• Is there anything that needs to be explained, but won’t fit into a college essay? This could include family responsibilities, a part-time job, time out of school, illnesses or injuries that impacted your grades, or transferring schools.
• Why do you want to attend each college?
• Can you write at least a paragraph about each college?
• Who can help you proofread and edit your essay?

Resources:
College websites
Commonapp.org
Essay brainstorming sheet (attached)
huffingtonpost.com/marjorie-hansen-shaevitz/writing-a-college-essay_b_3704103.html
princetonreview.com/college-advice/application-essay-topics

English teacher
Counselor