

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