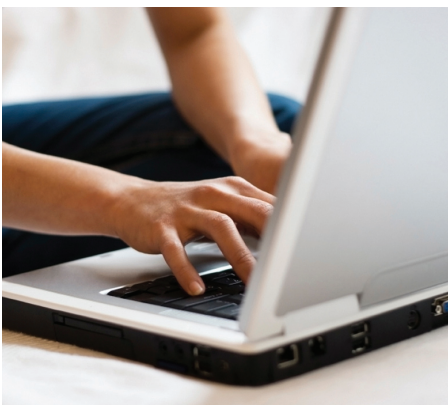


## THE COLLEGE ESSAY

The college application essay is an opportunity to explain yourself, to open your personality, charm, talents, vision and spirit to the admission committee. It is your chance to display your thought processes and carefully crafted writing style. Don't let this process intimidate you. Sit down and express yourself!



### Tips for writing a compelling college essay:

**Carefully read all directions.** Pay attention to detail and select a topic based on those provided. If a word amount is specified, be sure to fulfill the requirement. It is acceptable to go over the specified word amount, but the essay should not be pages and pages in length.

**Know your audience.** Your essay is going to be read by one or more professionals who are assessing your ability to succeed at their university or college. A good rule of thumb is to craft the essay as if it were a class assignment. Avoid slang, curse words and inappropriate topics.

**Choose a familiar topic.** When you write about something that is important to you, your essay naturally will be more sincere and effective. Ideally, your essay should reflect your distinctive personality and life. Avoid generic themes unless you have an unusual perspective to present.

**Use your personality.** One of the signs of a good writer is the ability to demonstrate rather than tell. Instead of stating that you are thoughtful or adventurous, show us in your essay. For example, if you are a curious person, don't be afraid to tell us a tale of where your curiosity has taken you.

**Write an essay, not a resume or a list.** Remember, you are writing the essay as though it were a classroom assignment. If you want to provide information about extracurricular activities, you may supplement your application with an activity sheet.

**Proofread, proofread, proofread.** Double and triple check your essay. Look carefully for spelling errors, grammatical mistakes and mechanical inconsistencies. Common mistakes often include confusing *their* and *there*, *its* and *it's*, using the wrong college name in your essay (remember your audience!) and neglecting to capitalize correctly.

**Be authentic.** Receiving help and advice from teachers, friends and parents is a great way to ensure your essay will be top notch. However, this is *your* essay and it should reflect *your* ideas, thoughts and writing style. Feel free to have a parent, teacher or counselor proofread your essay when you are finished.