

College Essay Prompts

You will be writing one college application essay. The rough draft is due at the start of class on Monday, August 24, 2015; the final copy is due **Monday, August 31, 2015, at the start of your English class**. The rough draft can be word-processed (preferred) or hand-written. In either case, the essays need to be double-spaced. If you type your essay, please use a traditional font such as Times New Roman, Cambria, or Calibri. The font size must be 12 point. The final copy needs to be word processed.

The best essays will demonstrate strong composition ability and illustrate how an experience, person, or event has influenced who you are and what you plan to become. Also impressive are thoughtful essays that detail an important lesson you have learned and how that has shaped who you are and plan to become.

Topics to avoid at all costs (because this essay is to make you stand out and too many students write on these overused topics): Death, Divorce, Drugs (including alcohol) & any Deity.

Prompt Option One:

The following prompts are from The Common Application, a service many universities use for applications. Because these prompts are rather broad, chances are a response to any of them will satisfy most college essay requirements. Aim for an essay of about 600 words regardless of the prompt you select.

1. Some students have a background or story that is so central to their identity that they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what lessons did you learn?
3. Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?
4. Describe a place or environment where you are perfectly content. What do you do or experience there, and why is it meaningful to you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.

*****You must cite sources if you use published or web-based information in your response. *****

Prompt Option Two:

The following prompts are from the previous year's application for an Honors College fellowship at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. Because this prompt is rather broad, chances are a response to any of the three options (especially the "Discover" option) will satisfy most college essay requirements. Aim for an essay of about 600 words regardless of the prompt you select.

- **Discover:** Tell us about an intellectual challenge that has mattered to you – an idea that you have wrestled with and explored independently. How have you resolved it, and what impact has this had on your plans for the future?
- **Create:** Select a creative work that has changed your worldview and your view of yourself. This work could be your own, or a novel, film, formula, poem, musical piece, sculpture, building or other creative work that has inspired you to take action. Discuss the work and its effect on you.
- **Serve:** Describe your most significant involvement with service to date. Tell us about a single effort that you have taken to address hunger, literacy, diversity, sustainability or any other issue that matters to you. We want to know how you have made a lasting impact in an original way. Be sure to include a discussion of how your service work has affected your plans for the future.

*****You must cite sources if you use published or web-based information in your response.*****

Prompt Option Three:

If you have another prompt that is specific to a school where you plan to apply, you may use that, as long as you develop a full essay response (around 600 words).

*****You must cite sources if you use published or web-based information in your response.*****