

HOW TO WRITE THE COLLEGE APPLICATION ESSAY

The general - Specific Introduction includes:

- ☒ a general statement in the topic area
- ☒ increasingly specific statements
- ☒ finally, the thesis statement

The Body includes:

- ☒ topic sentence related to thesis
- ☒ supporting evidence/examples/development
- ☒ the clincher to drive the point home!

The Conclusion includes:

- ☒ a restatement of the thesis
- ☒ OR a short summary of the essay
- ☒ OR possibly a new point or conclusion resulting from your original thesis



TOPIC IDEAS

- ☒ most important learning experience
- ☒ an influencing volunteer experience
- ☒ experience in a fast food restaurant
- ☒ your election to an office/position
- ☒ trials/rewards of newspaper writing
- ☒ success/failure of your work on ...
- ☒ favorite class or teacher
- ☒ outcome of a good/bad decision
- ☒ a catalytic event in your life

What Will the College Expect to See in My Essay?

- ★ *Motivation and self-discipline*
- ★ *Strength of character*
- ★ *Community service/volunteer work*
- ★ *Consistency with the rest of your application*
- ★ *Signs of maturity and growth*
- ★ *Leadership skills*
- ★ *Intellectual curiosity*
- ★ *Strong writing skills/self-expression!*
- ★ *CREATIVITY!!*

STEP-BY-STEP

- ✓ Unless a question/topic is presented to you on the application, brainstorm ideas or select a topic from the list above.
- ✓ If a topic is provided for you, examine it carefully. Underline key words. Be sure that you understand what is expected in your essay.
- ✓ Experiment! Try to approach the question/topic from several different perspectives.
- ✓ Remember to place the focus of your essay on your most distinctive qualities.
- ✓ Decide on the tone. Humor is a fabulous vehicle if it suits your temperament and if it's done in good taste.
- ✓ Decide whether to focus on one major experience that illustrates several points - or use several specific experiences to clarify several focus points, each in its own carefully developed paragraph.
- ✓ It is possible to skip the standard introduction. If your writing skills are strong and you are able to illustrate your focus points through a short almost story-like narrative, go for it! Just be very certain that the focus remains clear throughout. Never, ever lose sight of the focus!
- ✓ Make your writing concrete, real, vivid. Use powerful active voice verbs! Choose your vocabulary carefully. You don't want to use vocabulary that impresses; you want vocab that is appropriate to the essay. essay.
- ✓ When the draft is done, ask yourself, "Do I have a strong focus? Is it clear to the reader? Is my evidence strong, convincing, specific, detailed, and vivid?" Revise!!! Rewrite!!!
- ✓ Edit for grammar, syntax, spelling, and punctuation. Type or word process the final version.
- ✓ Now, pat yourself on the back for a job well done!