




The Guide to Writing the College Essay

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Class of 2025 Advisor
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Important to Note:

Before the writing process can begin, students need to do the following:

1. Identify at least two “safe” schools and one “reach” school.
2. Conduct research on these schools to ascertain:
 - a. Tuition
 - b. Housing
 - c. Transportation
 - d. Affordability/ Disposable income
 - e. Retention Rates

After conducting the research:

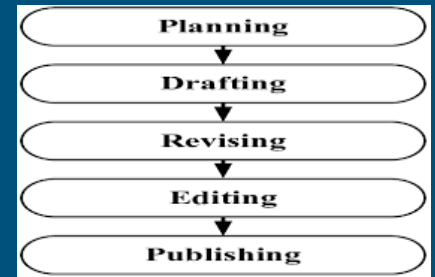
- The student should then identify the most common narrative essay prompt.
- This will assist the student with having to only write one essay that can be used for many applications.
- Students will not have to write an essay for each school, if they research the narrative essay prompts first.



The Writing Stage

1. Brainstorm what should be included in the essay to help the student stand out amongst the other applicants.
1. Organize the essay in a clear and concise manner.
1. Be sure to include a sound thesis that effectively answers the prompt.

Writing Stage ...



Most narrative essays aka the college essay are expected to hit the points that make the student “shine”, however they essay should not be longer than two pages long.

- One page is ideal, but anything over two pages is too much!!
- The admissions panel does not have extended periods of time to grant to each applicant’s admission essay.

Students should select a topic/prompt that best fits their personality, interests, or personal situations.

- Topics range from current events/ social issues, personal achievements, ethics, background & influences, and future plans or goals.
- The most common prompt- Why do you want to attend college?

This will ensure authenticity in their writing and avoid the use of “fluff” or “filler” words.



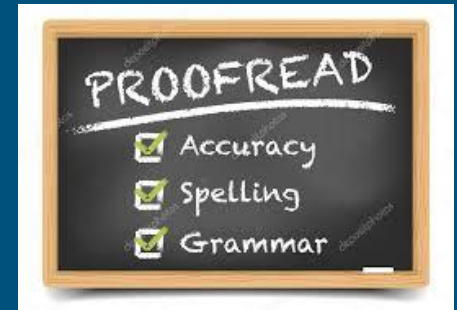
This is a formal essay! Students should refrain from the following:

- Slang and jargon
- Informal language
- Cliche writing
- Incorrect grammar usage

While this may appear as an informal essay due to the topics that are provided, students must not forget that it is a **FORMAL** essay.

After the essay is complete.

- Proofread, proofread and proofread.
 - Student should proofread their paper aloud to hear the word choice and catch any language issues.
 - Student should ensure that spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation are correct.
 - Student should have more than one set of eyes proofread their paper.

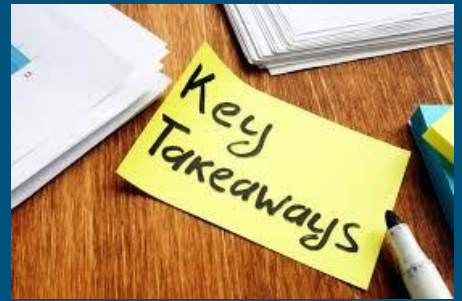


The final step

After proofreading, the student should make any edits that are needed.

- Fix mistakes, choppy sentences, ensure strong word choices were made, and that the most important information was included that casts them as the ideal candidate for the college.
- Upload to Common App and also save a copy in the Google Docs.

The Big Takeaways



1. Research the schools that are being considered for college acceptance.
2. Select the best prompt to complete the narrative essay to avoid having to write an essay for each application.
3. Brainstorm the details to be included in the essay. (Outline)
4. Write a sound thesis statement, then support it with details that make them stand out.
 - a. The narrative essay is often the one element that moves a student from the deny or wait list pile to the accepted pile.
5. Write the essay. Proofread. Ask teachers for help with proofreading.
6. Edit and then publish to Common App or save in Google Doc for future use.