**Components of a College Essay**

Structured reflection is important. The college application process is a rare opportunity in life. Applicants shouldn't just go through it with the goal of getting into a school but with the mindset that they want to learn more about themselves -- learn more about their values, crystallize their aspirations, and identify the experiences that they need to make an impact on the world.

Your college essay is not a static piece of writing. It is a picture of who you are as an individual – in the past, present, and in the future. The essay is a representation of the “you” that is below the surface, that is more than your clothes, more than a list of activities. The essay should be dynamic, meaningful, and personal – only you could write it. If the essay prompt is asking about your family’s impact on you – it is asking about the impact on you, not extensive information about your family. The essay is all about YOU!

**College Essay - What Should I Write? What Do They Want Me To Write About?**

* Don’t describe your science project in detail – describe your curiosity.
* Don't write what you think others want to hear. Answer the question honestly.
* Don't talk about Aunt Sally's death. Talk about how Aunt Sally's death affected you.
* If it's the first time you've thought about it, don't write your college essay about it.
* Write about something personal that you can be passionate about.
* Don’t spend time/words on a travelogue - where you went and how you got there. If you visited a site where bombings occurred, for example, this could be a great chance to talk about how the violence in the world was now in your face and how you felt about it. Spend more time on connecting your feelings of violence with the bombings. Don’t simply express sympathy for victims. Or relief that you live in a safe environment. You have to get way down inside yourself and express how you really feel.
* Don't ask "what does the admission committee want to read?" but instead ask yourself: "What is it about me that I want to be sure colleges know?"
* Show AND tell; don't simply write that you are a leader; i.e., show how you lobbied the administration to change the study hall policy.
* Essays show who you are, not simply what you've done.

**The following are ideas from college admissions counselors, who by the way, will be reading your essays.**

* What we look for in an essay (in general):
  + sophisticated writing;
  + cogent communication;
  + passion;
  + content;
  + answer the question!
* Landmines - things to avoid or to be very, very careful with:
  + the "I" essay;
  + it's/its;
  + their/there/they're; etc;
  + trite phrases or words, such as myriad, plethora, broaden your horizons, etc;
  + using larger words that don't fit or are inappropriate.
* Risks (these topics might work well, but students should be warned of the inherent risks):
  + profanity;
  + drugs;
  + describing inappropriate behavior;
  + boyfriend/girlfriend;
  + shock value;
  + sympathy;
  + travel/community service ("those poor people") - not a warning to not write about these trips, just to be careful about tone when doing so;
  + humor (if you're not naturally funny, don't try to start now!; Some humor is good but too much can be bad);
  + writing about depression or other mental health issues;
  + writing about religion;
  + poetry.
* Do not rely on spell check!
* Online applications - don't treat informally like an e-mail; take care in crafting responses and looking for errors.
* Recipe for the College Essay:
  + 3 parts thinking to one part writing;
  + Write about something you care about (demonstrate passion and intellectual curiosity)
  + Be focused and provide detail rather than choosing too broad a topic and not getting specific enough (trying to solve the world in 500 words)
  + Attention to detail - avoid the landmines mentioned above and other careless errors such as spelling and grammatical errors, writing in different colored pens on the same application, having your parent or someone else fill out part and you fill out another (different handwriting).  No sloppy applications!
  + Keep in mind your audience - 23 - 65 years olds with diverse backgrounds
  + Read your essay out loud.
  + Have two people review your essays but not more than that.  Edit but don't overedit.
  + When having someone read your essay, recreate the situation will essay will face - have someone read it in about 2 minutes and then take it away.  Ask them what you wrote about (to see if you are clearly getting your point across).

**More about what college admissions staffs say about the personal statement:**

* “Write from your soul, write from your heart, and reflect upon your experiences.”
* Be personal.
* Select a subject you can write about with feeling and authority, yet unusual enough to distinguish you from the mass of other applicants.
* Use vivid and precise language; avoid typos, misspellings and grammatical errors.
* It is easy to write about one’s parent(s) as influential, but it is difficult to make a defining difference between your wonderful parent and all the other influential parents the readers will snooze through.
* The death of a grandparent can be moving and emotional but not unusual.
* It takes time, thought and some intellectualism to write about a particular book, world/local issue or historical figure; perhaps you might interest the reader in your ideas, feelings and analysis of such items.
* Choice of topic is not as important as the level of insight, meaning and analysis offered.
* Tasteful humor is always appreciated; arrogance or fluff turns readers off.
* Personal adversity that affected your academic performance can be the topic of an essay but not as an excuse or to be whined about.
* The most successful essays show curiosity and self-awareness
* The best personal statements are not necessarily the longest.

**From Johns Hopkins admissions counselors on “reading students’ applications:”**

* I approach each application thinking first about how a particular student will contribute to the campus community and then I examine their overall academic abilities and attributes.
* I tend to begin with the personal side of the application starting with the essay, the resume, and the recommendations. I look for students who have something to say. I look for students who are leaders and progressive thinkers. I like to review an application and gather a sense of:  “I can’t wait to see what this student is going to accomplish here at Hopkins and years to come!”  From there I see if their academic success mirrors their personal success.
* One favorite essay? After over 1½ decades of reading them? Actually, I do have a favorite. One stands out. It starts with a description of the applicant and a group of his classmates trying to use a pinhole camera, and how this simple invention is really a tool to help us represent the world around us. The essay moves on to make the point that we need invention (like language, and mathematics and the sciences, and even faith) to understand the universe, as “Everything overwhelms us.” Provocative ideas are expressed with a real poetry in that essay, too.
* Every applicant is smart.  Every applicant boasts a pristine transcript coupled with countless community service hours and an extensive resume of leadership positions.  For me, the most difficult part of reviewing an application is trying to distinguish what makes a student unique.  What qualities does this individual have that will really help him or her succeed in this community?  Will he or she make a sincere impact here at Hopkins both inside and outside the classroom?  Every applicant can succeed in one dimension, but I think the students that are truly well-rounded are harder to find on paper.
* I look for signs of curiosity from the applicant. I love reading about what drives someone's interest and/or why they feel the university can help in their quest of higher learning. In the end, I have an affinity for someone who wants more than the prestige that comes from attending a top-tier university.

**Sample essay questions:**

**UF (for class of 2012)**

Your essay should be no longer than 450 words.

Write a concise narrative in which you describe a meaningful event, experience or accomplishment in your life and how it will affect your college experience or your contribution to the UF campus community. You may want to reflect on your ideas about student responsibility, academic integrity, campus citizenship or a call to service.

**FSU (for class of 2012):**

Your essay should be no longer than 500 words.

Florida State University is more than just a world-class academic institution preparing you for a future career. We are a caring community of well-rounded individuals who embrace leadership, learning, service, and global awareness. With this in mind, which of these characteristics appeal most to you, and why?

**UCF (for class of 2012):**

Respond to two of the topics below. Your personal statement should be no longer than 250 words each or a total of 500 words for both statements.

1. If there has been some obstacle or bump in the road in your academic or personal life, please explain the circumstances.
2. How has your family history, culture, or environment influenced who you are?
3. Why did you choose to apply to UCF?
4. What qualities or unique characteristics do you possess that would allow you to contribute to the UCF community?

**Others:**

* The 18th-century French philosopher Denis Diderot said, “Only passions, great passions, can elevate the soul to great things. “ Describe one of your passions and discuss its contribution to your personal growth.
* It is common knowledge that Thomas Edison invented the light bulb. Less well know is the fact that he failed 6,000 times before succeeding. Reflect on an accomplishment you achieved in an unlikely way.
* Newton’s First Law of Motion states that an object in motion tends to stay in motion in the same direction unless acted upon by an external force. Tell us about an external influence (a person, an event, etc.) that affected you and yow it caused you to change directions.
* Tell us about an activity that is important to you, and why.
* Describe your academic interests and how you plan to pursue them at [college].
* Ask yourself a question and then answer it.

**Essays That Worked**. This information is from Connecticut College and their web site - http://www.conncoll.edu/admission/essays.htm. You can get a good idea of what colleges are looking for, as these students were admitted.

**2010 UGA Essay Prompt**

For the Freshman applicants for the Summer and Fall of 2010, here are the essay topics for UGA's four short essays (limit of 200 words for each short essay). In addition, we also suggest you review both the [Suggestions for Writing Admission Essays](https://www.admissions.uga.edu/article/suggestions_for_writing_admission_essays.html) and the [Hints for Applying to College](https://www.admissions.uga.edu/article/top_ten_hints_for_applying_to_college.html) pages.

1. Choose an intellectual or creative opportunity from your high school years that you have enjoyed and highlight how you have grown personally because of the experience.
2. "Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born." Anais Nin  From freshman year to now, we know that you have interacted with a number of people in your high school who are different from you and have affected who you are now. Tell us about one such relationship, with a focus on the details of your interaction, not the person.
3. Tell us an interesting or amusing story about yourself that you have not already shared in your application.
4. "Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and cannot remain silent."  Victor   Hugo      If someone were to look at your music collection right now, they would probably know a great deal about who you are. Individuals are drawn to music, and each song conveys something about that person. Select a musical piece to be your theme song.

UCF General Guidelines for the Personal Statement (from their Website)

Use these points to help you write an effective personal statement.

Do...

1. Yourhomework.Researchtheschooland/orprogramtowhichyouareapplying.

2. Brainstorm.Takeapersonalinventory:Whatmakesyouunique?Whatresearch have you conducted? What are your career plans? What should the admissions committee know about you? Write honestly about what interests and excites you.

3. Writeacoherent,well-structuredessay.Giveyouressaydirectionwithaunifying metaphor or analogy.

4. Writeaninterestingessay.Startwithanattention-grabbinglead–ananecdote, quotation, question, or engaging description of a scene.

5. Endyouressaywithaconclusionthatrefersbacktothelead,orcompletesyour metaphor or analogy.

6. Reviseyouressayatleastthreetimes,askingyourselfthesequestions:Aremy goals well articulated? Have I demonstrated my knowledge of the school and/or program? Have I answered the question(s) asked? Is my voice being heard?

7. Asksomeoneelsetocritiqueyourpersonalstatement. 8. Proofreadyourpersonalstatementbyreadingitoutloud,orreadingitintoatape

recorder and playing back the tape. 9. Writeclearlyandsuccinctly.

Don't...

1. Don’tsummarizeyourentirelife.Stayawayfrominformationthatdoesn’tsupport your metaphor or analogy.

2. Don’tstartyouressaywith“Iwasbornin...”or“Myparentscamefrom...”or“I’ve always wanted to be...” Avoid these hackneyed statements and clichés altogether.

3. Avoidlisting.Don’tsimplyreiterateyourresume.Pickandchoosetwotofourmain qualifications to focus on.

4. Don’ttrytobefunny.Gentlehumorisokay,butyoudon’twanttoriskthatthe admissions committee won’t get the joke.

5. Don’twritewhatyouthinktheadmissionscommitteewantstohear.Behonestand yourself.

UCF – UWC 5/4/096. Don’temphasizethenegative(lowGPA,testscores)bygivingweakexcuses. Balance any weaknesses by also emphasizing your strengths.

7. Don’ttrytoimpressyourreaderwithyourvocabulary.

8. Don’t rely exclusively on your computer to check your grammar and spelling.

9. Don’tmakethingsup.Remember,thepurposeofthepersonalstatementistoallow the admissions committee to get to know YOU.Describe a significant interest or experience that has special meaning for you.

1. How have you grown and developed over the years?
2. Life is short. Why do you want to spend 5 or 6 years at a particular university or college?
3. What do you plan to do with your college degree?
4. Why have you chosen this career or profession?
5. What are your long-term career goals?
6. How is the degree necessary for the fulfillment of your goals?
7. Does any specific attribute, quality or skill distinguish you from everyone else? How did you develop this attribute?
8. What are the reasons for your interests? Analyze your childhood. How were your interests shaped from your upbringing?
9. How would your friends characterize you? Look at yourself from the outside.
10. Have you experienced a moment of epiphany, as if your eyes were opened to something you were previously blind to? Describe this moment and your percepts about it.
11. What are your dreams of the future? Now looking back at everything you have done what you would to change?
12. Where do you see yourself, career wise, 10 years from now?
13. Of everything in the world what would you like to be doing right now? Where would you like to be the most? Who would you prefer to be with at this moment?
14. What is a mission you are accomplishing on the earth?
15. What is your approach to life? Reveal your life philosophy.
16. What was the most difficult time in your life? How did you overcome these difficulties?
17. How did your perspective on life change as a result of the difficulty?
18. Describe your most rewarding experience.
19. How have all your acquired experiences shaped your career goals?
20. Have you ever met with "Triumph and Disaster"? How did you meet those two impostors? Can you tell that you have faced them in a worthy manner?
21. Have you ever struggled for something and failed? How did you respond? Have you experienced a feeling of disappointment and dissatisfaction of yourself?
22. Imagine yourself being an actor/actress. Tell about your feelings before the opening night of the performance where you play the title role.
23. Evaluate a significant experience, risk you have taken, or ethical dilemma you have faced and its impact on you.
24. An intellectual experience that has mattered to you.
25. Philosophy of Learning.
26. Talk about how a person can change his direction.
27. What are your career aspirations?
28. Have you ever struggled mightily and succeeded? Describe what you have felt at the glorious moment of victory? What does a winner feel?
29. What is the major contribution you've made in any field of your life?
30. Discuss your academic background and achievements.
31. Choose a prominent person (living, deceased, or fictional) that you would like to interview and explain why.
32. Identify a person who had a significant influence on you and explain the influence.
33. Describe a successful student.
34. What a college education means to me?
35. What author, musician, actor influenced on shaping your ideology? Why especially this person is so significant to you. Did he/she help you to see another side of the world?
36. Write a speech for delivery before some group or write an article or editorial for a publication.
37. What is a major achievement in your life? Who and what assisted you in reaching your aim?
38. Hiking to Understanding.
39. Reveal your personality by naming all the positive and negative features you possess. Which of them you'd like to get rid of and which you'd like to promote and enhance.
40. What is your strongest and most determined trait of character? Do you maintain strong beliefs and adhere to philosophy?
41. Tell about the most unforgettable experience you've ever had.
42. Discuss your research experience. What would you like to research?
43. Write about a book that has special significance for you.
44. What are the most important extracurricular or community activities? What made you join these activities?
45. Explain why especially you must be accepted to a particular college, university.
46. What would you like to study? Describe your academic interests.

**The College Essay  
100+ Fine Prompts**  
1. What have you undertaken or done on your own in the last year or two that has nothing to do with academic work? (Northwestern)  
  
2. Imagine that you have the opportunity to travel back through time. At what point in history would you like to stop and why? (Swarthmore)  
  
3. What is the best advice you ever received? Why? And did you follow it? (University of Pennsylvania)  
  
4. Select a creative work -- a novel, a film, a poem, a musical piece, a painting or other work of art -- that has influenced the way you view the world and the way you view yourself. Discuss the work and its effect on you. (New York University)  
  
5. What do you think has been the most important social or political movement of the twentieth century? Do you share a personal identification with this cause? (Trinity College, CT)  
  
6. If you were to look back on your high school years, what advice would you give to someone beginning their high school career? (Simmons)  
  
7. It has been said [Andy Warhol] that “in the future everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes.” Describe your fifteen minutes. (New York University)  
  
8. What single adjective do you think would be most frequently used to describe you by those who know you best? Briefly explain. (Stanford)  
  
9. Describe an intellectual experience of the past two years that has given you great satisfaction. (Amherst)  
  
10. Create a question we haven’t asked and then provide the answer. (Something to that effect anyway. Dartmouth used this a few years ago. I had a student who posed the following question and wrote a seven-page response: “Write about a time when life threw you a curve and how you handled it.”)  
  
11. If you were to describe yourself by a quotation, what would the quote be? Explain your answer. (Dartmouth)  
  
12. Tell us about the neighborhood that you grew up in and how it helped shape you into the kind of person you are today. (Yale and the University of Chicago)  
  
13. You’ve just written a 300-page autobiography. Send us page 217. (University of Pennsylvania)  
  
14. If you could be a “fly on the wall” to observe any situation -- historical, personal, or otherwise -- describe what you would choose to observe and why. What would you hope to learn and how would it benefit you? (University of Pittsburgh/94)  
  
15. If we could only admit one more student to the University of Pittsburgh, why should it be you? (University of Pittsburgh/94)  
  
16. Describe a risk that you have taken and discuss its impact on your life. (Kalamazoo College/93)  
  
17. If you could spend a year with any real or fictional person in the past, present, or future, whom would you choose? Why? (Kalamazoo College/93)  
  
18. What invention would the world be better off without, and why? (Kalamazoo)  
  
19. Write you own essay question and answer it. (Kalamazoo College/93)  
  
20. If you had the power to change three things in your community or in the world, what would you change and why? (Middle East Technical University in Turkey/93, provided by an exchange student)  
  
21. If you had the gift of telepathy, the ability to read other people’s minds, would you use this gift or not? Explain. (Middle East Technical University/93)  
22. Tell us about one of the best conversations you’ve had. (Stanford/93)  
  
23. If you were to write a book, on what theme or subject matter would it be based, and why? (Stanford/93)  
  
24. Tell us how a particular book, play, film, piece of music, dance performance, scientific theory or experiment or work of art has influenced you. If you choose a novel, film or play, assume we know the plot. (Notre Dame/93)  
  
25. Select a technological innovation of this century and discuss its effects on your family, local community or nation. (Notre Dame/93)  
  
26. Read Annie Dillard’s An American Childhood. Choose one of her observations or ideas and write a creative, reflective or provocative essay. (Notre Dame/93)  
  
27. Read Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail.” Drawing upon personal experience, write a creative, reflective or provocative essay. (Notre Dame/93)  
  
28. Attach a small photograph of something important to you and explain its significance. (Stanford)  
  
29. Tell us about a conversation you’ve had that changed your perspective or was otherwise meaningful to you. (Stanford)  
  
30. Evaluate a significant experience or achievement that has special meaning to you. (Harvard)  
  
31. Tell one story about yourself that would best provide us, either directly or indirectly, with an insight into the kind of person you are. For example, the story can simply relate a personal experience, or a humorous anecdote; it can tell about an especially significant academic encounter or about an unusual test of character. The possibilities are unlimited (well, almost so). You choose. Just relax and write it. (Princeton)  
  
32. Sartre said “Hell is other people,” while Streisand sang, “People who need people are the luckiest people in the world.” With whom do you agree? (Amherst)  
  
33. If you could hold a conversation with someone (living or deceased) you consider significant, whom would you talk to and what would you talk about? Describe your conversation. (University of Oregon)  
  
34. Describe your hometown and how you are a product of this environment. (Puget Sound)  
  
35. You are on your dream vacation and have just finished shooting a roll of film. As you go to develop the film, the local merchant offers to make a postcard of one of your photos. Describe the photo, why you selected it and write a brief note to your friends back home. (Be sure to include where you are and what you have been doing there.) (University of the Pacific)  
  
36. Select any issue that is of importance to you and discuss your views. (New College of University of South Florida)  
  
37. Describe how a piece of art, a work of literature, or a dramatic presentation has had a significant impact on your intellectual development and your appreciation of the fine arts. (Santa Clara University)  
  
38. If you could go back and change one day in your life, what would you change and why? (Santa Clara University)  
  
39. Tell us about the most embarrassing moment of your life. (Santa Clara University)  
  
40. Seattle Pacific University seeks to admit students who will best succeed in and benefit from an environment where learning and Christian faith are integrated (although a profession of Christian faith is not required for admission). How would enrolling at SPU help you accomplish your educational and personal goals? (Seattle Pacific University)  
  
41. Why are you interested in attending Willamette? (Willamette)  
  
42. What are the responsibilities of an educated person? (University of Puget Sound)  
  
43. Explain how your experiences as a teenager significantly differ from those of your friends. Include comparisons. (University of Puget Sound)  
  
44. Who are the people who have done the most to influence your personal development and in what ways were they influential? (Carleton College)  
  
45. Ask and answer the one important question which you wish we had asked. (Carleton College)  
  
46. If you had a day to spend as you wish, how would you use your time? (Carleton College)  
  
47. At Colorado College, diversity is considered an integral component of every student’s liberal arts education. Discuss your division of “diversity” and the ways in which you expect it to affect your college experience. (Colorado College)  
  
48. Name one book you have read in the past year, describe your reason for considering this book significant and what you gained from reading it. (Lewis and Clark College)  
  
49. Describe your most important academic accomplishment or intellectual experience to date. We don’t want to know about test scores or course grades, rather we want to know about your creativity, your willingness to take intellectual risks or your affinity for scholarly endeavors. (MIT)  
  
50. Tell us about yourself. (University of California)  
  
51. Please provide information that you feel will give a more complete and accurate picture of yourself, e.g., background, personal philosophy or traits, goals, etc. Be sure to describe the influence of these factors. Please be concise and limit your response to one or two pages. (Pomona College)  
  
52. The subject of food is never far from our minds here in College Admissions. It is a topic of serious conversation this year on campus, too, with the publication of a book called The Hungry Soul: Eating and the Perfecting of our Nature, by Leon Kass, M.D., a Chicago faculty member who teaches in the College. The book takes a philosophical look at what food, eating, and table manners have to tell us about our human estate. Compose an essay about a memorable meal you have eaten. We are especially interested in the details: the occasion, your company at this meal, its physical setting, the kinds of foods you ate, or their preparation. (University of Chicago)  
  
53. Discuss a significant experience or achievement that has influenced your life.  
  
54. Discuss how some negative experience (disability, illness, failure) has had a positive influence on your life.  
  
55. Discuss an important personal relationship you have had and explain how it has changed your life.  
  
56. Discuss how your travel experiences have affected you as a student and a citizen of the world.  
  
57. Describe a personal habit that helps to define you as a person.  
  
58. Discuss the most important piece of advice you have ever received and explain its effect on your life.  
  
59. Discuss how a specific place can be used to help illustrate your personality.  
  
60. Select three adjectives that describe you and explain.  
  
61. Describe a fictional character. Be sure to point out what you do or do not like about the character and relate these attributes to yourself.  
  
62. Discuss how something you have read has affected you or changed your mind about something.  
  
63. Discuss an activity, interest, experience, or achievement in your life (this could be a book, movie, or an activity or experience at work, home, or at school) that has been particularly meaningful for you. (University of Florida)  
  
64. How has your family history, culture, or environment influenced who you are? (University of Florida)  
  
65. What qualities or unique characteristics do you possess that would allow you to contribute to the University community? (Florida State)  
  
66. Pick a story of local, national, or international importance from the front page of any newspaper. Identify your source and give the date the article appeared. Then use your sense of humor, sense of outrage, sense of justice—or just plain good sense—to explain why the story engages your attention. (University of Chicago)  
  
67. At a crucial point in his career, the African-American writer James Baldwin withdrew to a secluded spot in the Swiss Alps. “There,” he later wrote, “in that absolute alabaster landscape, armed with two Bessie Smith records and a typewriter, I began to try to recreate the life that I had first known as a child and from which I had spent so many years in flight… It was Bessie Smith, through her tone and her cadence, who helped me to dig back to the way I myself must have spoken…and to remember the things I had heard and seen and felt. I had buried them very deep.” Inevitable, certain things—songs, household objects, familiar smells—bring us instantly back to some past moment in our lives. Start an essay by describing one such thing and see where it takes you. (University of Chicago)  
  
68. Modern improvisational comedy originated in Hyde Park on the campus of the University of Chicago with the Compass Players. Some of the Players went on to form the Second City comedy troupe, precursor to the Saturday Night Live show on TV. With this essay option we invite you to test your own improvisational powers by putting together a story, play, or dialogue that meets all of the following requirements:  
  
1. You must begin with the sentence, “Many years later, he remembered his first experience with ice.”   
  
2. All five senses—sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell—have to figure in the plot.   
  
3. You have to mention the University of Chicago, but please, no accounts of erstwhile high school students applying to the University—this is fiction, not autobiography.   
  
4. These items must be included: a new pair of socks, a historical landmark, a spork (the combination of spoon and fork frequently seen among airline flatware), a domesticated animal, and the complete works of William Shakespeare.   
  
Have fun, and try to keep your brilliance and wit to three pages max. (U of Chicago)   
  
69. One of Ramapo’s goals is to increase your capacity for learning and to teach you to think “outside the box.” Describe an experience that has had a significant impact on your intellectual development. (Ramapo College)  
  
70. React to a crisis or critical moment in your life at which time thinking as usual was no longer possible. Such a situation may have occurred after the death of a loved one, a drastic move from one part of the country to another, or during a public catastrophe. Do not feel limited by these examples. Describe the event and tell us how it changed your thought process. (Ramapo College)  
  
71. Write about a person who has had a significant influence on you, and describe that influence. (Hope College)  
  
72. There are many ways to define words like diversity and multi-cultural. However, what defines our culture as much as anything is the food we eat. Please explain how food plays an important part in your family’s culture. Provide examples as to how food defines you, your family, and your ethnicity. Be as specific as possible.   
  
73. Write about some issue of local, national, or international concern and its significance to you. (Hope College)  
  
74. Write about something that is important to you. (Hope College)  
  
75. Community service can be a valuable part of the college experience. If you were to devote one year of service to a volunteer project, what would it be, and what would you hope to accomplish? (Goucher)  
  
76. What do you think has been the most important social or political movement of the 20th century? Do you share a personal identification with this cause? (Goucher)  
  
77. Discuss some issue of personal, local, or national concern and its importance to you. (Hood)  
  
78. If you could travel through time and interview any historical figure, whom would you choose, what would you ask, and why? (Hood)  
  
79. Explain why and how you would, if given the opportunity, change a decision you made in the past. (Salisbury State)  
  
80. Describe how the character of a literary work you have read recently has made a lasting impression on you. (College of Notre Dame of Maryland)  
  
81. Optimistic futurists envision a world without boundaries; an interdependent global society. Write about your personal impression of this idea. (College of Notre Dame of Maryland)  
  
82. Select two people who have been role models in your life and describe why. (College of Notre Dame of Maryland)  
  
83. State in a well-written essay: a) your reason for selecting Loyola College and b) your personal goals and professional plans upon completion of college. (Loyola)  
  
84. You are encouraged to use the space below to supply any additional information or background you believe will be of assistance or service in the consideration of your application. We would also be interested in knowing how you would analyze your academic strengths and weaknesses as a potential University student. (Towson State University)  
  
85. Please complete a one-page personal statement and submit it with your application. (James Madison University)   
  
86. How would you describe yourself as a human being? What quality do you like best in yourself and what do you like least? What quality would you most like to see flourish and which would you like to see wither?" (Bates College)   
  
87. Do you believe there's a generation gap? Describe the differences between your generation and others. (Denison University)   
  
88. Write a brief essay about your activities, interests, achievements and talents. 89. The goal of the essay is to help us to get to know you as an individual. Point out your strengths, and explain any inconsistencies in your record.  
  
90. Describe a humorous experience you have had.  
  
91. Please write about a life experience that has influenced your intellectual and personal growth.  
  
92. If you had to formulate the perfect admissions question, what would it be, and how would you answer it?  
  
93. Briefly describe how [the name of the college] can help you to achieve your academic and personal goals.   
  
94. Choose one of the following topics about which you would like to write: your family, friends, or another person who has influenced you, the best and worst features of your secondary school, a recent development in your community, a scientific or other problem which you would like to solve, travel or living experiences in other.   
  
95. Select a technological innovation of this century and discuss its effects on your family, local community or nation. (Notre Dame)   
  
96. Look through old family photos and pull out a few that remind you of important times or significant moments. (Remember that the impact of a moment is what makes it significant. A hike through the woods can sometimes be more significant than a birthday.) Choose one of these "Kodak Moments" to describe and explain its significance to you. Speak about the photograph and your feelings about what you see in it.   
  
97. If you were to develop a Mt. Rushmore representing the 20th century, whose faces would you select and why? (William and Mary)   
  
98. History has recorded the American Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, and the Sexual Revolution. Today we are witnessing a revolution in the way we receive information. What do you think will be the next great revolution, and what will be its impact on you and your society? (Northwestern)  
  
99. Using a piece of wire, a car window sticker, an egg carton, and any inexpensive hardware store item, create something that would solve a problem. Tell us about your creation, but don't worry: we won't require proof that it works. (Johns Hopkins)   
  
100. Princeton’s unofficial motto is “Princeton in the Nation’s Service and in the Service of All Nations.” In what ways do you imagine using your talents and convictions in service to communities—large or small—during your lifetime? (Princeton)  
  
101. “The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing. One cannot help but be in awe when one contemplates the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvelous structure of reality. It is enough if one tries to comprehend only a little of this mystery every day.” ~ Albert Einstein. Write about a personal experience or an aspect of the world that has engaged your curiosity or inspired awe in you. (Princeton)  
  
102. What historical event of the 1990’s has most influenced your perspective on the world or your approach to life, and how? (Princeton)  
  
103. Tell us about a person who influenced your life in a significant way. (Princeton)  
  
104. What is your favorite quotation and why? (Princeton)  
  
105. Elvis is alive! Okay, maybe not, but we have been persuaded that recent Elvis sightings in highway rest areas, grocery stores and laundromats are part of a wider conspiracy involving five of the following: the metric system, the Mall of America, the crash of the Hindenberg, Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, lint, J.D. Salinger, and wax fruit. Construct your own theory of how and why five of these items are related. (University of Chicago)