

English IV Summer Reading Assignment 2019-2020

Assignment 1: Complete a total of 20 logged hours of Official SAT practice from Khan Academy. You should have already complete 6 or more hours during the previous school year. Make sure you log in through the Khan icon that is on your Launchpad. Please provide a screenshot or snippet of the 20 logged hours.

Assignment 2:

Directions: **Read and annotate** the following article. Highlight in **yellow** any ideas you like. Highlight in **pink** any words that are new to you and define them. Highlight in **green** any ideas you disagree with and explain why you disagree. You need to have multiples in each category.

Then look at the list of college essay prompts and complete one school's criteria or a common or coalition essay topic.

US News and World Report

"How to Write a College Essay" By Kelly Mae Ross, Reporter |March 21, 2018, at 3:05 p.m.

College admissions experts offer tips on selecting a topic as well as writing and editing the essay.

How to Write a College Essay

Not only is the college essay a place to showcase writing skills, it's one of the only parts of a college application where a student's voice can shine through.

"The essays are important in part because this is a student's chance to really speak directly to the admissions office," says Adam Sapp, director of admissions at Pomona College in California.

Prospective college students want their essay, sometimes called a personal statement, to make an impression and boost their chances of being accepted, but they only have several hundred words to make that happen.

This can feel like a lot of pressure.

"I think this is the part of the application process that students are sometimes most challenged by," says Niki Barron, associate director of admissions at Middlebury College in Vermont, "because they're looking at a blank piece of paper and they don't know where to get started."

From brainstorming essay topics to editing the final draft, here's what students need to know about crafting a strong college essay.

Getting Started on the College Essay

A good time for students to begin working on their essays is the summer before senior year, experts say, when homework and extracurricular activities aren't taking up time and mental energy. Starting early will also give students plenty of time to work through multiple drafts of an essay before college application deadlines, which can be as early as November for students applying early decision or early action.

Students can go online to review essay requirements for the colleges they want to apply to, such as word limits and essay prompts. Many students may start with the Common App, an application platform accepted by more than 750 schools. The main essay on the Common App, which students can submit to multiple colleges, cannot exceed 650 words.

In addition to the main essay, some colleges ask applicants to submit one or more additional writing samples. Students are often asked to explain why they are interested in a particular school or academic field in these supplemental essays, which tend to be shorter than the main essay.

Students will want to budget more time for the writing process if the schools they're applying to ask for supplemental essays.

How to Pick a College Essay Topic

The first, and sometimes most daunting, step in the essay writing process is figuring out what to write about.

There are usually several essay prompts to choose from on a college application. They tend to be broad, open-ended questions, giving students the freedom to write about a wide array of topics, Barron says.

The essay isn't a complete autobiography, says Mimi Doe, co-founder of Top Tier Admissions, a Massachusetts-based advising company. "It's overwhelming to think of putting your whole life in one essay," she says.

Rather, experts say students should narrow their focus and write about a specific experience, hobby or quirk that reveals something personal, like how they think, what they value or what their strengths are or illustrates an aspect of their background.

Students don't have to discuss a major achievement in their essay – a common misconception. Admissions officers who spoke with U.S. News cited memorable essays that focused on more ordinary topics, including fly-fishing, a student's commute to and from school and a family's dining room table.

What's most important, experts say, is that a college essay is thoughtful and tells a story that offers insight into who a student is as a person.

So, no matter what topic students choose, they'll ultimately be writing about themselves, says Ethan Sawyer, founder of the College Essay Guy website which offers free and paid essay-

writing resources. "What we think of as the topic is just the frame or the lens that we're using to get into other parts of you."

If students are having trouble brainstorming potential topics, they can ask friends or family members for help, says Stephanie Klein Wassink, founder of Winning Applications and Admissions Checkup, Connecticut-based college admissions advising companies. Wassink says students can ask peers or family members questions such as, "What do you think differentiates me?" Or, "What are my quirks?"

The essay should tell college admissions officers something they don't already know, experts say. So students should ensure they're writing about something that isn't mentioned elsewhere in their application, perhaps in the activities section, or expand greatly on the topic if it is noted elsewhere.

Writing the College Essay

Some experts encourage students to outline their essay before jumping into the actual writing.

But there isn't one correct way of doing things, says Sara Newhouse, vice president for admission and financial planning at Birmingham-Southern College in Alabama. "Your writing process is your own," she says. Newhouse encourages students to use whatever process worked for them in the past when completing writing assignments for English or other high school classes.

The first draft of an essay doesn't need to be perfect. "Just do a brain dump," Doe says. "Don't edit yourself, just lay it all out on the page."

When writing, students should keep in mind that the tone of an essay doesn't need to be overly formal, says Monica Gallego Rude, a director at Collegewise, an admissions consulting company headquartered in California.

"Aim to write as if you are writing to your favorite teacher," Gallego Rude says, meaning someone students can speak freely and have fun with.

If students are having a hard time getting started, they can try focusing on their opening sentence, Doe suggests. She says an essay's opening sentence, or hook, should grab the reader's attention.

Doe offered an example of a strong hook from the essay of a student she worked with:

"I first got into politics the day the cafeteria outlawed creamed corn."

"I want to know about this kid," she says. "I'm interested."

But Sawyer cautions that students shouldn't get so caught up in writing the perfect hook that they neglect the rest of their essay. He also says he's read some essays that were excellent overall even though they had what he would consider mundane hooks.

Editing and Submitting the College Essay

While admissions officers try to learn about students via the essay, they are also gauging writing skills. So students want to make sure they submit top-notch work.

"The best writing is rewriting," Sapp says. "You should never be giving me your first draft."

When reviewing a first essay draft, students should make sure their writing is showing, not telling, Doe says. This means students should aim to show their readers examples that prove they embody certain traits or beliefs, as opposed to just stating that they do.

After editing their essay, students should seek outside editing help, experts say.

While there are individuals and companies that offer paid essay help – from editing services to essay-writing boot camps – students and families may not be able to afford the associated fees. However, there may be options to defray the costs; Sawyer, for example, says he offers scholarships to students from low-income families that cover the cost of one-on-one essay consultations.

Students have other options when it comes to essay help. They can ask peers, teachers, school counselors and family members for help polishing an essay.

Newhouse says it works well to have other people proofread an essay in two stages. The first stage focuses on content. Readers should look for information gaps in the essay – anything they are confused about. Once the content is nailed down, the second proofing stage focuses on style, including grammar, punctuation and spelling.

But proofreaders should not change the tone of the essay. "Don't let anyone edit out your voice," Doe says.

When an essay is ready to go, students will generally submit it online, along with the rest of their application. On the Common App, for example, students copy and paste their essay into a text box.

Sapp says even though students often stress about the essay in particular, it's not the only thing college admissions officers look at. "The essay is the window, but the application is the house," he says. "So let's not forget that an application is built of many pieces."

2018-19 Common App Essays

Nearly 700 colleges accept The Common Application, which makes it easy to apply to multiple schools with just one form. If you are using the Common App to apply for college admission in 2018, you will have 250–650 words to respond to ONE of the following prompts:

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma—anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

The Coalition Application Essay Prompts 2018-2019

1. Tell a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.
2. Describe a time when you made a meaningful contribution to others in which the greater good was your focus. Discuss the challenges and rewards of making your contribution.
3. Has there been a time when you've had a long-cherished or accepted belief challenged? How did you respond? How did the challenge affect your beliefs?
4. What is the hardest part of being a teenager now? What's the best part? What advice would you give a younger sibling or friend (assuming they would listen to you)?
5. Submit an essay on a topic of your choice.

Valencia Bridges Scholarship Essay:

Answer the following questions in one essay for 350-500 words.

- Why do you want to participate in the Bridges Summer Program?
- Describe a major personal problem you have experienced or an obstacle you have overcome.
- How will the Bridges Summer Program will help you in achieving your educational and career goals?

University of Central Florida:

Write about 2 of the following 4 prompts: (250 words each for 500 words total)

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

FAMU (Required. Select two. 250 each or 500 total for both.)

- Describe an activity, interest, experience, or achievement in your life (this could be a book, movie or an activity or experience at work, home or school) that has been particularly meaningful to you.
- How has your family history, culture, or environment influenced who you are?
- What qualities or unique characteristics do you possess that would allow you to contribute to the university community?