

College Essay Boot Camp



Objectives:

1. To become skillful in the process of brainstorming, writing, and refining college essays
2. To finish and refine *at least* one high quality response to a college essay prompt by the early decision deadline.
3. You will submit one college essay to me on November 3rd. There may be additional time to refine, based on PARCC testing requirements (1st week of November).
4. This college essay will be displayed in the school.

Deadlines and Assessment:

1. You must submit your final essay at the beginning of class Monday, November 3rd.
2. Your essay will be assessed out of 25 points (Formative) on the rubric attached.¹
3. For early decision/early action deadlines, it is expected that you submit your essay to your college by midnight on October 31st.

Prompts: *You are expected to do one of the following:*

- Research the individual schools to which you want to apply, and respond to a prompt specific to your college/university.
- Use one of the Common App prompts either if you do not yet know your specific university, or if your college/university uses the Common App.

Common App Prompts:

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.

Additional Expectations

1. If you plans for next year are unclear, it is still an expectation that you write one college essay. Having one strong essay will give you a tool to apply in the future, should you desire.
2. There may not be time for writing multiple essays, though many of you might want/need to. This mini-project is designed to give you the tools to write more, but not necessarily the time.

¹ Rubric is from the NY Times: <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/studentactivity/20090423b.pdf>