

College Essays That Nearly All Seniors Write

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Finishing your writing during summer is always the #1 recommendation from last year's Seniors...

1. Your resume: have many people review this before you use it in interviews and attach it to your college apps.

2. Your main essay

- About 500-650 words
- Written in 1st person with clear, personal voice
- One clear story with one clear thesis
- No: sports, death, depression, divorce, Missions, or your hero
- Possible topics: a passion, a favorite hobby, a funny/embarrassing experience, a time you really grew/learned, a favorite memory
- No philosophies - don't go on about what you think, feel, believe
- Be funny!!

3. Small Activity essay (some colleges ask for this)

- Paragraph on your most meaningful extracurricular activity
- Begin with a small/narrative story/memory/defining moment (a hook)
- What does it mean to you? What does it make you think about?
- How have you changed? How has it affected your future?
- Do not describe/define the activity. We all know what football is...

4. ~150 words on your most meaningful *academic* experience and how it helped you choose your major

- Begin this with a small/narrative story/memory/defining moment (a

hook)

- Say what you learned and how this experience affected your goals

5. "Why do you want to come to this college?" (Why School X is my Top Choice)

- This can be up to a full page long
- Research your top schools and come up with at least 5 specific, academic reasons each
- Write why you are convinced it's the perfect academic place for you; say why you "need" to go
- Discuss your interview, campus visit, profs/students you talked with, meeting admissions
- Discuss NAMES of majors, specific classes, programs they offer, professors there, clubs, research opps, etc etc
- You need to demonstrate that you understand/want the academic environment and that you NEED it to achieve your career goals

6. Diversity essay

- How you will bring diversity or a time that you saw two cultures or viewpoints in conflict, positive or negative
 - Focus on your unique experiences and viewpoints
 - This is not just a question about race or religion--culture can be defined broadly

7. For a Jesuit or Christian school: (Azusa, Seattle U, Pepperdine, etc)

- Write about why the mission of that school is a good match for you

8. UC Prompts:

- Select 4 of 8 prompts, using a maximum of 350 words each
- These are posted on the UC sites. You will chop your Common App main essay down to be one of these.
 - Activities sections: UC schools allow you to enter up to 40 activities, jobs, camps, extra classes, etc and descriptions

■ Additional Comments: Use this space to tell anything you want them to know about you that you have not had the opportunity to describe elsewhere in the application.

9. Start the [Common App](#) as soon as it goes online (August 1st) and finalize it by Aug. 30th. You can apply to many colleges with the Common Application.

○ The Activities page is a project in and of itself. You get to list up to 10 activities, clubs, sports, volunteering, jobs, camps, etc. For each one you get 50 CHARACTERS with spaces for the title and 150 CHARACTERS (not words!) with spaces (always with spaces) for the description. Do these in a word doc and get them awesome before you paste them into the app.