

CHOOSING A TOPIC

Choosing a topic for your application essay is one of the most important decisions in your college application process. To help you get started, answer the questions below in complete sentences, on the front side of your paper only.

- 1) What hobbies and non-school pursuits really excite you and engage your heart and mind?
- 2) What social cause do you hold near and dear? Perhaps there is an event (local, national, or international) that has touched you in a personal way.
- 3) What academic subject really sparks your interest? Why does that subject engage you? Has it led to experiences or study outside of school?
- 4) What is your strongest personality trait? Does any attribute, quality, or skill distinguish you from everyone else? How did you develop this attribute?
- 5) How would your friends characterize you? What would they write about if they were writing your admissions essay for you?
- 6) Consider your favorite books, movies, works of art, etc. How have these influenced your life in a meaningful way? Why are they your favorites?
- 7) Have you experienced a moment of epiphany, as if your eyes were opened to something to which you were previously blind?
- 8) What are your major accomplishments, and why do you consider them accomplishments?
- 9) What have you done outside the classroom that demonstrates qualities sought after by universities? Of these, which means the most to you?
- 10) When have you struggled mightily for something and succeeded? What made you successful?
- 11) When have you struggled mightily for something and failed? How did you respond?
- 12) What was the most difficult time in your life, and why? How did your perspective on life change as a result of the difficulty?
- 13) Of everything in the world, what would you most like to be doing right now? Where would you most like to be? Who, of everyone living and dead, would you most like to be with?
- 14) What are your dreams of the future? When you look back on your life in thirty years, what would it take for you to consider your life successful?
- 15) How does this particular university fit into your plans for the future? Why do you want to spend two to six years of your life at a particular school?