

College Admissions Essay: Writing Tips

By USFSM Learning Support Services (10/2012)

❖ ***3 Types of Questions***

➤ **Who are you?**

- The school wants to know you better
- How you choose to present yourself
- Reveal your personality, insight, and commitment
- Find one or two things that reveal your best qualities
- Avoid the urge to tell all

➤ **Why us?**

- Your goals
- Your commitment is to this particular school
- Your decision to apply to this school or particular career path

➤ **The “Creative ” Question**

- This is used by colleges to evaluate you through your choice of some tangential item: a national issue, a famous person, what you would put in a time capsule, a photograph.
- School is looking at your creativity and the breadth of your knowledge and education.
- This is something to react to, a way to show yourself and write about your real views.
- Use common sense.

<i>DO</i>	<i>DON'T</i>
ANSWER THE QUESTION	USE SLANG
USE PERSONAL DETAIL	USE GENERALIZATIONS
BE HONEST	EXAGGERATE
USE ACTIVE VOICE	BE WORDY
REVISE, REVISE, REVISE	SEND YOUR FIRST DRAFT
PROOFREAD!	HAVE GRAMMAR & PUNCTUATION ERRORS

ON-LINE RESOURCES

- Big Future by the College Board “8 Tips for Crafting Your College Essay”
<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/essays/8-tips-for-crafting-your-best-college-essay>
- Writing the College Essay:
<http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/admissions/College%20Essay%281%29.pdf>
- Bates College. Writing the Essay:
<http://www.bates.edu/admission/tips-for-a-great-application/writing-the-essay/>
- NACAC. Writing a College Essay: Top Ten Tips:
<http://www.nacacnet.org/studentinfo/articles/Pages/Writing-a-College-Essay-Top-Ten.aspx>
- Peterson’s Application Tips:
<http://www.petersons.com/college-search/application-essay-tips.aspx>
- 7 Worst Types of College Entrance Essays:
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/liz-oneill/the-7-worst-types-of-coll_b_787319.html#s187452&title=The Cringelnducing Metaphor](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/liz-oneill/the-7-worst-types-of-coll_b_787319.html#s187452&title=The%20Cringing%20Metaphor)
- US News 10 Tips for Writing College Application Essay
<http://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/professors-guide/2010/09/15/10-tips-for-writing-the-college-application-essay>
- Connecticut College Admission: Essays that Worked
<http://www.conncoll.edu/admission/essays-that-worked.htm>
- John Hopkins Undergrad Admissions: Essays that Worked
<http://apply.jhu.edu/apply/essays.html>

Notes:

