

# COMMON APP ESSAY TIPS: PROMPT 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."

\*Newly added prompt for 2017-2018 admissions cycle.

## 1. SHARE A SELF-PORTRAIT



While it sounds great to choose whatever topic you want, remember that the admissions essay is a personal statement. This essay is your chance to introduce yourself to the admissions committee and show them who you are as an individual, apart from grades and test scores.

*Be careful of recycling old essays from school if they're purely academic. You will most likely need to edit the document to include elements that demonstrate personal growth and intellectual curiosity.*

*Topics you might include hypothetical situations, such as (1) if you could speak with someone from the past, who would it be and why and (2) if you could write your future college roommate, what would you say to introduce yourself. Alternatively, you could explore your favorite book or a person you admire, or you can get inspiration from supplemental essay topics asked by other schools. For example, Dartmouth has used "'It's not easy being green' was a frequent lament of Kermit the Frog. Discuss." Obviously, if you are applying to a school that asks for a supplemental essay, make sure that your main Common App essay topic doesn't overlap with the supplemental one!*

## 2. SHOW CRITICAL THINKING AND SELF- REFLECTION



Since you're writing a personal statement, provide information about why the topic you chose is significant to you and instrumental in your quest to become a well-rounded and independent critical thinker.

*Make sure to focus on how you benefit from your topic choice. That is, how has this subject matter influenced your personal development and decision-making process.*

## 3. SHOW WHAT YOU CAN OFFER THE SCHOOL



Your application essay should serve as the admissions officers' cheat sheet on who you are and whether you'd be a fit for their community, culturally, socially and academically. While grades and test scores do the heavy-lifting in proving the latter point, your emotional and social assets would be better reflected through your essay. Choose your topic wisely.

*Show that you are a diversified thinker who can thrive in a multicultural environment. Convince the admissions officers that you would be an active, contributing member at their school.*

Remember that this is YOUR story. Each sentence should reinforce the idea that you are emotionally, socially, and intellectually mature and ready to tackle the new experiences you will encounter in college!



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