

PERSONAL STATEMENT

“The Personal Statement supports and augments the application...it is an argument on behalf of the student by the student...it is more than a creative writing assignment. It should have uniqueness and completeness.”

TIPS

- Prepare a timeline and start early. Complete the UC or private school application before writing the essay. The application is the text to which the essay will respond. The application's contents can help you recognize personal and academic experiences worthy of reflection. You will not repeat what is in the application, but expand on something in the application.
- It is not a creative writing assignment. Answer the question directly. If you do not answer the question, they will not read your essay.
- Remember the readers are educated strangers, not someone who knows you. Make sure your answers are complete and include all important details.
- Students must write their own responses, the readers are savvy and know if someone else is writing your essay.
- Write analytically; answer the “why” of the question, like an essay-thesis statement, body and conclusion.
- Focus on the “why/how” of the question, not the “what”.
- Do not list activities, use clichés, or try to be funny or wildly creative.
- Don't experiment with various fonts and formats, keep it easy to read. Use a 12-point font size and use New Times Roman or something like that. Use double spacing for easier reading.
- Be persuasive in your answers. Don't let emotion determine your response.
- If you want someone to read your essays before submitting them, try not to have your current teacher or parent do it, they know you too well and may not be the best objective reader.
- It is recommended that the person who reads your essay should also have a copy of your application and/or Student Profile sheet.
- Don't worry about grammatical/spelling corrections until the very end. You want to focus on what you want to write first.

ESSAYS

- You will have a total of 1,000 words for 2 essays.
- You are allowed to use the 1000 words in any way you want. You could do two 500 word essays or one 600 and one 400 and so on. You should not have an essay that is shorter than 250 words.

QUESTION #1

“Describe the world you come from- for example, your family, community OR school- and tell us how your world has shaped your dreams and aspirations.”

- Read the prompts carefully, they will help guide you to what they are asking
- It is recommended that you pick one area to focus on. (family, community or school)
- Make sure you focus on yourself and your experience.
- Explain how your family, community, or school affected your decision on a major or **why** you're going to college.

QUESTION # 2

“Tell us about a personal quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution or experience that is important to you. What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are? ”.

- Read the prompts and select one quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution or experience you want to focus on.

- Be specific, and provide supporting examples rather than simply listing attributes such as “good sense of humor” or “determination”.
- Again, do not list something already in the application. Choose one and expand on it and explain what happened.
- If you don’t feel you have a “talent”, experience, contribution, or personal quality, think of your everyday activities; what you do in a normal day or week. Relate this to how these activities could be seen as leadership qualities, show your integrity, how you take care of others, etc (do not use how you helped a friend with a boyfriend/girlfriend problem).
- You can use sports here but be very careful with this one- do not talk about how you overcame an injury, they know athletes get injured. You can talk about how a particular game or practice influenced you in some way or showed leadership skills, for example.