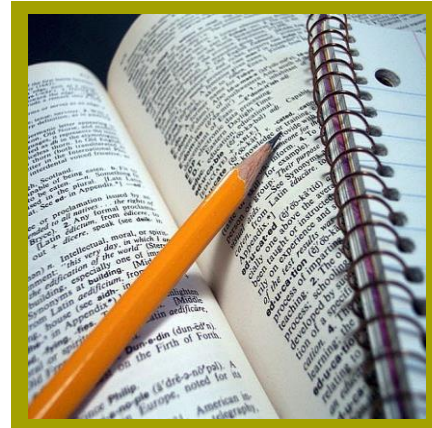




Writing the College Essay



Woodbridge High School
English Department and
Counseling Department

MR. DAVIS and MS. TAYLOR

+ College Essay First Thoughts

- They matter – a LOT!!!
- Your chance to give admissions office a sense of person behind the numbers
 - About expressing your personality and voice
- Must stand out amongst thousands
 - Luckily for you, most range from terrible to boring



+ College Essay/Personal Statement Prompts

- Choose 1 of the 5 prompts below and write an essay of no less than 250 and no more than 650 words which addresses that topic.
- Some students have a background or story that is so central to their identity that they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what lessons did you learn?
- Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?
- Describe a place or environment where you are perfectly content. What do you do or experience there, and why is it meaningful to you?
- Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.

+ Modes of Writing

- Note language of the prompts
 - “Recount”
 - “Reflect”
 - “Describe”
- Asking for **Narrative** response
- Supported by vivid **Description**
- **Thesis Driven** Narrative
- Show not Tell



+ Goal Setting/ Thesis Creation



- Prove **one** thing about yourself
 - Do not reproduce brag sheet!!!
 - Express motivation behind accolades
- Be willing to take risks
- Present a case for your admission
- Sample of your writing ability



+ Match Topics to Qualities



3 Essay Topics	Personal Qualities You Can Highlight
Story Central to Identity	Concern for Others
Why College X	Intellectual Curiosity
Person who has Influenced You	Leadership

+ Other Brainstorming Strategies

- Gather Your Stories
- Timeline
- Goal Setting
- Research Schools
- List of Important People
- English Department College Essay Packet has a ton of Great Graphic Organizers



+ Writing Strategy



- Must have strong hook
- Focus on anecdote
 - Narrate, do not explain or analyze
- Consider Audience
- Personal Voice
 - Not slang or informal but should express your personality
 - Find a tone that works for you
 - Have people who know you proofread for authenticity

