

Common Application Essay

AP American Studies 2017-2018

Greetings Future Seniors!

“Wait, I’m barely a junior!” you say. True, but in just one short year you will be seniors and that means college applications will be foremost on your minds. Many colleges require applicants to submit the Common Application essay. The story you’ll eventually tell on your college application might not have even happened to you yet, but that doesn’t matter. The point here is to get you thinking—about yourself, what you care about, and the experiences and relationships that reveal who you are.



To practice narrative writing techniques, to give you a head start on the college application process, and to ease the burdens that accompany senior year, we are going to focus on the college application essay for our first writing assignment this year.

The Purpose:

Colleges often ask applicants to submit essays along with their ACT scores and other academic information in order to find out more about the applicants than the simple application form reveals. College admissions officers want to know what makes you distinctive, and what unique interests, experiences, and perspectives you will bring to their institution.

The Approach:

1. Carefully read and consider each prompt. Which one appeals to you? Which one fits your life experience?
2. Brainstorm a list of your experiences.
3. Rely heavily on narrative strategies when formulating your response.
4. Draft your essay and then, REVISE, REVISE, REVISE.

The Requirements:

Your essay should be 600-900 words, typed, double-spaced, and it should conform to the MLA formatting guidelines outlined in your *BHS Writer’s Handbook*.