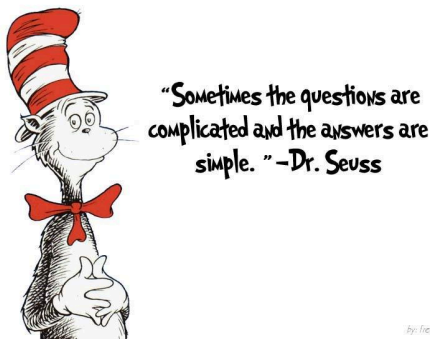


Supplemental Essay suggested approach

- ***Believe it or not, these shorter essays are probably harder to write than the longer essays like your Personal Statements because you get limited word count to make your point in a compelling & memorable way.*** I always suggest to my clients that they begin by properly interpreting the intent behind each supplemental essay question/prompt.
 - A beloved educator (Dr. Seuss) provides an important–yet almost ironic–strategy tip that I like to apply for supplemental essay questions especially. Sometimes students assume that **interpreting the questions properly** is so easy & straightforward that the correct interpretation gets overlooked. Really, you'll never get the answer right if you interpret the question incorrectly. (Ummm...have you ever read any UChicago prompt? Or even just the Stanford prompts?)



- After interpreting the meaning + intent behind a supplemental essay, start by brainstorming those key nouns that you expect the Admissions Reader to remember! With a limited word count, if you want your unique experiences, strengths, and insights to be more memorable and visual in the mind of the Admissions Reader, then make sure that you use those key nouns as a launchpad for your message. Eventually, key verbs will also materialize that will add to the weary Reader's ability to visualize and remain focused on your response from among the hundreds of others that he/she will read that week. This tip helps you get maximum value with your limited word counts, everyone!
- Those ***"Why Major, Why School?"*** essays
 - A good tip for your essay hook: **briefly articulate a problem** that you'd like to solve in the world, society, or your chosen career field/profession.

Immediately, this helps weary Admissions Readers perk up, especially if you identify a problem that has gone unsolved or unrecognized. Those Admissions Readers will want to root for your success! This problem that you hope to solve through your education will help frame and give context to the college pathway that you will describe further in this concise essay.

- Every year at the end of the process, many of my students admit that they should have finished their **more elaborate college research** back in the spring—instead of having to go back during the fall to find the details they missed during their initial research. By the time school re-starts, you won't feel like going back to do the proper college research—such as identifying:
 - [Elective classes](#) that will help you solve that previously articulated problem.
 - [Professors](#) whose specialty & research which will help you solve your previously articulated problem.
 - [Extracurricular organizations](#) which will help you solve that previously articulated problem.
 - [Specialized programs](#) (e.g. interdisciplinary studies programs, study abroad programs, joint degree programs, research programs, etc.) which will help you solve that previously articulated problem.
 - [College resources & centers](#) (e.g. Career Centers, Mentorship programs, Writing Centers, etc.) which will help you solve that previously articulated problem.
 - *Are you getting it now? :)*
- Whereas most every student applying to that same college or program goes and visits the same college webpages, there is one online resource rich in school-specific information that applicants ignore: **[online alumni magazines](#)** for each college!
 - Read as many current issues and archived issues as possible! Click here for an [example](#) from my own undergraduate school.
 - Some of the non-PDF issues have a Search 🔍 feature where you can search for things like a specific major or program.
 - Absorb the jargon and language communicated among the students, alumni, and faculty so that you can utilize the same jargon and language in the “Why School” portion of your essays.
 - Remember: if you cannot get excited by the customs, traditions, events, programs, and everything else covered in the alumni magazines, then maybe that school isn't the best fit for you.
 - This alumni magazine research can even be a fun family project. Parents are always wondering how they can better assist their

kids in this process, so here is the one way they can help. Students should create a well-organized Google Doc with criteria for information that you want to research for each school. Share that document with your family members, and then assign a different college to each of them. Let them be your eyes! Have them copy & paste newly discovered information into your Google Docs, and then discuss them around the dinner table! It can be a wonderful bonding experience, and it will help your parents better understand why you favor one college over another.