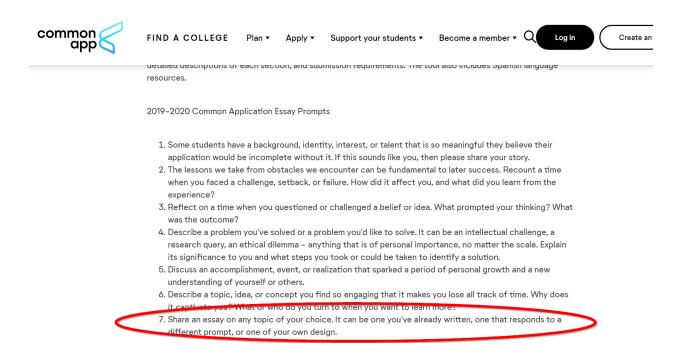
## Common App Personal Statement - Always choose prompt #7

Written by Jack Delehey on 2020 February 20th



Yes, it may be a little early for this post, but I've already had several juniors reach out to me regarding "The College Essay", more accurate called "The Personal Statement" on the Common Application. So I've decided to post here my thoughts on it. The Personal Statement is widely considered the 3rd most important portion of your application (behind GPA, SAT/ACT). So what is the best way to knock it out of the park? Two part answer:

- 1) Start early
- 2) Choose prompt #7. Don't consider any of the other prompts.

The first point is self explanatory, the second needs a bit of a deeper dive.

The Common Application presents seven possible prompts for the 500-word "Personal Statement." The first six prompts are specific, while the seventh is an essay on a "topic of your choice." These days, admissions at top universities across the country are becoming increasingly difficult. So how do you stand out? Simple: ignore the status quo. If you pick prompts #1 to #6, you certainly can write a great essay...on a topic that roughly 10-20% of all other applicants have written. Choosing option #7 allows a student to ignore the status quo, set them apart from the pack.

There's another, slightly more subtle reason prompt #7 gives you a leg-up: technically each year's prompts can be different than the previous year's. And those prompts are only released by The Common App in the summer. However, prompt #7 will always be there. So you know

it'll be an option even before The Common App officially releases it. You can't say the same for prompts #1-#6. You'd hate to write a full essay on a prompt that doesn't exist.

Of course, choosing option #7 and then writing a poor or average essay won't do you any good. Luckily, I've helped students for the past 7 years write elite college essays, utilizing tactics that help separate my students' essays from hundreds, if not thousands, of others.

At this point, it is too early in the year for juniors to dive into essay specifics but if you really want to get ahead on your brainstorming and outlining, don't consider any other prompt: topic #7 will separate you from the pack.

-Jack