

What topics should I avoid?

- A blow-by-blow account of an event. This is not the time to merely retell a story; instead it is a reflection on something that has happened to you.
- Anything that is already in your application or will be mentioned by one of your recommenders. For example, if you completed a leadership training course with your English teacher, and you know she will mention it in her letter of recommendation, don't discuss this. On the same note, don't discuss that game winning basket or your leadership style as president of NHS.
- Nothing academic. There's no need to discuss a paper in AP Biology, even if it was fantastic.
- Cooking—it's done too often (though, I've been known to allow some cooking topics)
- Covid—most students shouldn't mention this in their application at all. We all went through it.
- Taylor Swift references, unless it is especially catchy
- Any topic that shows privilege; that means trips to ski resorts or Italy, a course you took at a prestigious university that you paid for, and some hobbies
- Tone that is sarcastic, elitist, angry
- Anything illegal
- Your romantic life
- A story about someone else
- Politics
- Something with an unpleasant ending
- Generally, family trips, though there might be some ok situations
- Anything that happened before 9th GRADE

RISKY Topics:

- Mental health or physical health issues
- School-related learning experiences