

To use these questions and thought starters, copy and paste from the Google Doc right into the document editor in your UPchieve session.

PERSONAL STATEMENT BRAINSTORMING WORKSHEET

The college essay is an exciting opportunity to share who you are, what matters to you, and how you think. Think of it as a chance to communicate directly with the admissions officer! Before choosing a prompt, consider what you want the admissions committee to know about you.

What's important to you? What do you love? (This can be activities, hobbies, passions, social issues, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Can you think of any specific stories you might want to tell or favorite moments you could describe? List three.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What do you want the admissions officer to think about your character and personality as they reach the end of your essay?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How might you start your story?

COMMON APP PERSONAL STATEMENT PROMPTS:

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

Consider your responses to the questions on the first page in the context of these prompts. Which prompt(s) do you think best fit your chosen topic? Keep this prompt in mind as you begin to outline your essay.

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

Why?

How could you use the five senses to engage the reader?
(What did you see, what did you hear, etc.)

Go micro for a moment. Choose one small detail and describe it as specifically as you can.

What's happening at the beginning of your essay?

The middle?

The end?

What will we have learned about you?