

Personal Statement Prompts

What is a personal statement? Good question.

“Your personal statement should be exactly that — personal. This is your opportunity to tell [colleges/scholarships groups/teachers/ counselors] about yourself — your hopes, ambitions, life experiences, inspirations. We encourage you to take your time on this assignment. Be open. Be reflective. Find your individual voice and express it honestly.”

—the University of California’s suggestion to students about personal statements

What are some examples of personal statement prompts?

Here are the 2017-18 Common Application essay prompts. The essay length will be capped at 650 words.

The essay prompts are as follows:

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. [No change]
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? [Revised]
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome? [Revised]
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution. [No change]
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others. [Revised]
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? [New]
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. [New]

-Information from:

<https://www.commonapp.org/whats-appening/application-updates/common-application-announces-2017-2018-essay-prompts>

Want more examples? Run a web search for: personal statement prompts college