

WRITING THE COLLEGE ESSAY

DO:

- Write multiple drafts.
- Check for grammar and spelling errors.
- Be concise; the reader will always appreciate quality rather than length in an essay.
- Make your essay reflective and individualized; your essay is a roadmap to your life so tell a story that only you can tell.
- Stick to one topic.
- Be honest; pay attention to detail just like you would do when completing a job application.
- Show don't just tell; provide examples of what you are articulating about yourself.
- Make sure the reader is able to hear "your voice" not someone else's voice.
- Make sure the reader can place himself or herself in the story so that they can understand you.
- In the final analysis, always ask yourself, why am I saying this?

DON'T:

- Assume the essay is not an important part of the admission process.
- Repeat information that appears elsewhere in your application.

- Think that just because it is difficult to write about one's self, you do not have anything important or interesting to write about.
- Be a victim and blame others for any setbacks you have encountered.
- Think that you have to be overly philosophical or solve all of the world's problems.
- Write about a topic that dwells about another person and/or situation and does not allow you to reveal important things about yourself.
- In most cases, unless these topics really allows you to say something about yourself, avoid writing about the death of someone you didn't know that well, sex, your political views, or an experience that money can buy.