



Personal Insight Questions Workshop

Purpose of Personal Insight Questions

- Get to know you better
- Highlights your life experience, interests and accomplishments
- Shows how you are different from other applicants
- Provides context to the rest of your application



The Basics

- Freshmen must select 4 questions to respond to from the 8 options.
- Each response has a limit of 350 words.
- All questions have equal value; there is no advantage or disadvantage to choosing certain questions over others.
- Responses should explore your life and accomplishments. When sharing examples explain why they are relevant to the person you are today.
 - Responses should be about the present or recent past.



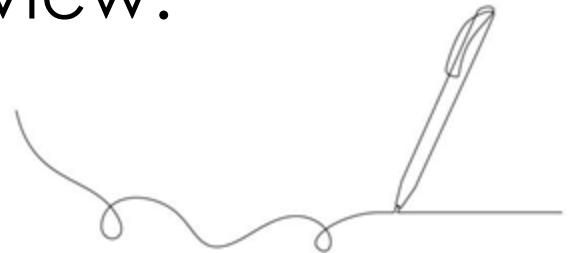
What is UC looking for??

- Authenticity
- Student voice
- More information about the student – who they are and the context of their accomplishments
- More relevant information that best reflects individual circumstances



Keep in mind....

- Personal insight responses are NOT reviewed in a vacuum.
- All freshman review process is comprehensive.
- UC uses the responses to support and/or explain other information in the application.
- This is NOT an essay; writing style & grammar are not part of the review.



Also remember...

- Do not overly focus on style or structure. Admissions does not grade on style – creativity, entertainment, or uniqueness – value is placed on content.
- Make yourself the focal point. Use “I” and “me” statements.
- Providing new information about yourself by adding depth and/or clarity to your application.



Common Pitfalls

- Not reading the instructions
- Not writing about recent events
- Repeating information listed elsewhere in the application
- Listing accomplishments without detail
- Using clichés
- Writing more about an inspirational person than yourself
- Rambling, unfocused thoughts
- Being overly humorous, self-deprecating or glorifying



Suggestions before getting started

- **Get organized!**
 - Brainstorm, make an outline, use a graphic organizer
- **Read the application instructions carefully.**
 - Prompts and word counts
 - Answer the question- use key words

- **Be concise**

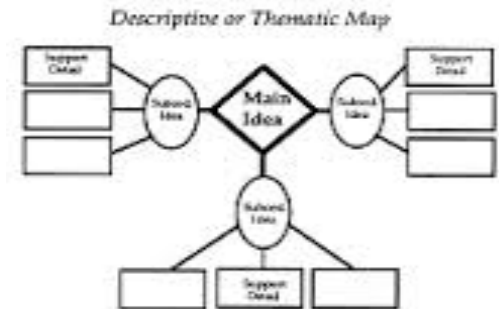
- to the point

- **Avoid clichés**

- “trials and tribulations”

- **Know your audience**

- What kind of institution are you applying to? It is a general application?



The Questions

1. Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes or contributed to group efforts over time.

Things to consider:

A leadership role can mean more than just a title. It can mean being a mentor to others, acting as the person in charge of a specific task, or taking the lead role in organizing an event or project. Think about what you accomplished and what you learned from the experience. What were your responsibilities?



2. Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.

Things to consider: What does creativity mean to you? Do you have a creative skill that is important to you? What have you been able to do with that skill? If you used creativity to solve a problem, what was your solution? What are the steps you took to solve the problem?



3. What would you say is your greatest talent or skill? How have you developed and demonstrated that talent over time?

Things to consider: If there is a talent or skill that you're proud of, this is the time to share it. You don't necessarily have to be recognized or have received awards for your talent (although if you did and you want to talk about it, feel free to do so). Why is this talent or skill meaningful to you?



4. Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity or worked to overcome an educational barrier you have faced.

Things to consider: An educational opportunity can be anything that has added value to your educational experience and better prepared you for college. For example, participation in an honors or academic enrichment program, or enrollment in an academy that's geared toward an occupation or a major, or taking advanced courses that interest you; just to name a few.



5. Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to overcome this challenge. How has this challenge affected your academic achievement?

Things to consider: A challenge could be personal, or something you have faced in your community or school. Why was the challenge significant to you? This is a good opportunity to talk about any obstacles you've faced and what you've learned from the experience. Did you have support from someone else or did you handle it alone.

**CHALLENGE
ACCEPTED**

6. Think about an academic subject that inspires you. Describe how you have furthered this interest inside and/or outside of the classroom.

Things to consider: Many students have a passion for one specific academic subject area, something that they just can't get enough of. If that applies to you, what have you done to further that interest? Discuss how your interest in the subject developed and describe any experience you have had inside and outside the classroom such as volunteer work, internships, employment, summer programs, participation in student organizations and/or clubs and what you have gained from your involvement.



7. What have you done to make your school or your community a better place?

Things to consider: Think of community as a term that can encompass a group, team or a place like your high school, hometown or home. You can define community as you see fit, just make sure you talk about your role in that community. Was there a problem that you wanted to fix in your community?



8. Beyond what has already been shared in your application, what do you believe makes you a strong candidate for admissions to the University of California?

Things to consider: If there's anything you want us to know about you but didn't find a question or place in the application to tell us, now's your chance. What have you not shared with us that will highlight a skill, talent, challenge or opportunity that you think will help us know you better?



Final Thoughts

- Make sure you proofread
- Do not wait until the last minute to write your essays
- Relax
- Submit Early

YOU GOT THIS