

Senior English Summer 2019 Reading and Writing Assignment

The purpose of the 2019 summer assignment is for you to get ahead in your college application process. As you may have been told, the senior year of high school will be the busiest year of your life thus far. By working this summer on the application essay, you position yourself well ahead of the curve as you enter your senior year. Even if you are not planning to attend college in 2020, this assignment gives you an opportunity to have a “back-up” essay in case you change your mind.

This summer’s assignment contains three parts, briefly described here and more descriptively described below:

Part 1 – Read *50 Successful Harvard Application Essays: What Worked for Them Can Help You Get into the College of Your Choice*, 5th Edition.

Part 2 – Choose three essays which you deem interesting or relevant. Write a brief composition (200-300 words) as to why you chose each of the three that you chose.

Part 3 -- Write a college entrance essay based upon one of the prompts (from the common app) listed below.

In sum, you will peruse a book of essays, write one short composition comparing/contrasting three interesting or relevant Harvard essays, then write your own college entrance essay patterned after one of the Harvard essays.

Now consider the assignments in more detail.

Part 1: Here is an Amazon link to the text --

https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1250127556/ref=ox_sc_sfl_title_9?ie=UTF8&psc=1&smid=ATVPDKIKX0DER

Part 2: Choose three essays from the Harvard book, essays that seem especially interesting to you. Write a brief composition in which you compare and contrast those three essays. You will only write *one* comparison/contrast essay, not three. The essay should be 200-300 words in length, approximately one double-spaced page.

Part 3: Write a college application essay based upon one of the following Common App essay prompts.

Common App Essay prompts:

The essay demonstrates your ability to write clearly and concisely on a selected topic and helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice. What do you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores? Choose the option that best helps you answer that question and write an essay of up to 650 words, using the prompt to inspire and structure your response. Remember: 650 words is your limit, not your goal. Use the full range if you need it, but don't feel obligated to do so.

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. 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.
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. Describe an event or several events that shaped your thinking and compelled you to apply to a Christian university.

Grading Requirements

1. The assignment is due on the first day of school. Late work receives a 33% penalty for each day it is late.
2. You will receive up to 100 points for both written pieces: 100 points for the comparison/contrast composition and 100 points for the college application essay.
3. The comparison/contrast composition will be graded thus: you will receive a 5-point deduction for each spelling or grammatical error.
4. The college application composition will be graded with the following rubric:

Organization and Focus (clear main ideas and supporting details; staying on topic)

1 2 3 4 5 Your score _____ X 4 = _____/20

Originality (vivid details, fresh word choice, creativity, risk-taking)

1 2 3 4 5 Your score _____ X 4 = _____/20

Writer's Voice (consistent throughout, engaging, conveys individual personality)

1 2 3 4 5 Your score _____ X 4 = _____/20

Freedom from Error (spelling, grammar, punctuation, Freedom from Error usage)

1 2 3 4 5 Your score _____ X 4 = _____/20

Overall success (interesting topic, clearly developed, the essay “works”)

1 2 3 4 5 Your score _____ X 4 = _____/20