

COMMON APP ESSAY TIPS: PROMPT 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."

1. START NARROW



Pick a specific object or everyday ritual you couldn't live without. It doesn't have to be unique. In fact, choosing something ordinary that has a **special place in your heart** is better than aiming for "exotic" or "shocking." The more genuine you are, the more readers can sense it. Ask yourself, "Why can't I live without it?"

This can be as simple as telling a story about Saturday pizza dinners with a relative, putting on makeup, or staring at clouds when you want to escape.

2. SHOW GROWTH



In your introduction, state what your passion is and that it has shaped you. Paragraph 2 will give a brief overview of how your passion came to be and **introduce a personal dilemma you encountered or an insight you learned about life** while pursuing this passion. Let how your relationship to this object or ritual show the type of person you have become.

Think of personal development issues like learning to change your perspective or building perseverance.

3. FUTURE OUTLOOK



How did solving the dilemma or reaching that epiphany change or reinforce your values? **How did that passion help you** approach life and its challenges, interact with others, and pursue academic and extracurricular interests? How do you intend to apply what you have learned to life in college and beyond?

Think of how you have become more confident in who you are and the personal goals you have set for yourself as a result of this object or ritual. Stylistically, end your essay by coming full circle. Combine your opening paragraph presentation with an optimistic future outlook.

Remember you're telling **YOUR** story. Don't wander off topic. Every sentence should be connected to how **YOU**'ve changed, who **YOU** are now, what **YOU** want for your future, and why.



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