



## 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading (British Lit. and AP Lit.)

### **The College Admissions Essay**

Many colleges across the United States use Common App for their admissions process. Even schools that do not use Common App tend to use similar admissions essays prompts. Thus, to prepare for the coming college admissions season, you will select one of this year's Common App essay prompts and draft a full admissions essay in response. Common App's essay word limit is 250-650 words. Most student writing starts off verbose and needs cutting, so the word count for this assignment is 500-650 words. Note that if you are in the process of applying for a school that uses a prompt other than those given by Common App, you can submit it through Prompt 7, which is an essay of your choice.

#### Prompt Choices:

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. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
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. 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.

#### Writing Checklist:

- Hook – a specific incident (including narrative details like description, dialogue, setting, etc.) begins the essay and conveys the writer's personality and/or point
- Focus – the essay addresses the prompt without meandering off topic
- Voice – the writer's voice is personal and appropriate for the audience and purpose; diction, syntax, and choice of detail reflect purposeful attention
- Organization – the essay follows a logical progression of ideas, free of extraneous information; the paragraph breaks make sense in the organizational structure, and sensible transitions move the essay along without being formulaic
- Sentence Structure – the essay features varied sentence structures including some complex sentences with phrases and clauses; it is free of fragments and run-ons



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- Conventions – the essay is mostly free of errors in spelling, capitalization, pronoun usage, verb tense, and punctuation
- the procedural stuff – the draft is typed in the correct font (Times New Roman, 12 point, double-spaced); it includes a header and word count; and it was submitted on time