

“ESSAYS THAT WORKED”

- If you are having trouble thinking of where to start, read some sample essays:
- Go to <https://apply.jhu.edu/essays-that-worked-2019/> (or you can Google “Johns Hopkins University Essays that Worked)
- Do not just read the first few...scroll some...there are PLENTY of essays to choose from!
- READ THE “Admissions Committee Comments.” These tell you why the essay worked.
- Think about the comments and why these essays are good, find patterns of what they do well to apply to your own.

COMMON APPLICATION OPTIONS

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?

BEGINNING YOUR COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ESSAY/PERSONAL STATEMENT

- Keeping in mind the patterns of what made the other essays good, think about an experience, or moment, to write about for your essay.
- Things to consider:
 - Answer the prompt! It seems obvious, but make sure you don't go off on tangents that distract from the purpose of your essay.
 - Word count is important! If you are given 500 words, that is it! This is where making friends with an English teacher is good – they can help you edit.
 - Have an even balance of plot and personality. Include what happened for informational purposes, but then make sure you have who you are in there as well!
 - **Reflection is one of the top things they're looking for!** What about that moment makes you who you are? How is that seen? What did you learn about life, yourself, etc? How will that make you a good fit for college?
 - YOU should be the main focus – this is YOUR story – it needs to be specific so that it is something only you can tell. If you write something, and after reading it, someone is like “this could be anyone,” then edit it!