commonapp ready

TIPS & BEST PRACTICES

GETTING STARTED

- Create your account using an email address you check often
- Use your legal name when filling out your registration information
- Make note of your Common App ID (CAID)
- Use the most up-to-date version of your web browser
- Bookmark apply.commonapp.org
- Download the Common App onTrack mobile app to stay organized

FILLING OUT THE COMMON APP

- Gather the materials you'll need (such as your transcript and list of activities)
- Make sure you enter your high school information correctly
- See your counselor if you need help answering questions
- Answer all required questions (marked with a red asterisk)
- Preview each section of the application as you go along

ANSWERING COLLEGE-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- Understand each college's requirements (such as testing policy and writing requirements)
- Select a start term and admission plan in order to set deadlines
- Keep track of deadlines

THE RECOMMENDATION PROCESS

- Complete the FERPA Release Authorization
- Double check each college's recommendation requirements
- Shorewood uses Naviance for teacher and counselor recommendations.
- Talk with your recommenders before inviting and assigning them
- Then use the letters of recommendation tool in Naviance.
- Communicate with your recommenders regularly

ALONG THE WAY

- Save your work
- Don't be afraid to ask for help
- Proofread and review your information for accuracy
- Look for green check marks to indicate all required question in a section are answered
- Carefully review your application PDF prior to submitting

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE

- Visit the Solutions Center (appsupport. commonapp.org) for questions regarding your application or email us at: appsupport@commonapp.net
- Check with your counselor for process-related questions
- Contact the colleges to which you are applying for college-specific questions

2017-2018 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 no more than 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. (The application won't accept a response shorter than 250 words.)

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING 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?

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.