

College Essay Class of 2019

Below are the 2018-2019 Common Application Essay Prompts. The purpose of an essay prompt is to inspire a response. The direction that you take to respond to the prompt is entirely up to you. The final draft of the essay can be no more than 650 words. Your first draft can be up to 800 words. Things to consider before you begin:

1. Your common application will include your GPA, SAT scores, teacher recommendations, activities, and employment. Therefore, the essay should not merely reiterate these facts. The essay is your chance to tell the reader something that they have not already learned about you from your Common Application.
2. Consider opening the essay with a specific story that you believe tells the reader something important about who you are. Say it in an interesting and creative way that shows who you are through your word choice.
3. How do you think your life experiences, upbringing, environment, culture, values, etc. differ from others who are applying to college? Why does this make you a better candidate? How does this experience translate into characteristics that are important to colleges when looking at students?
4. Consider your audience. Many of you will be applying into special opportunity programs like EOP and HEOP. These programs are specifically designed for students that have faced adversity in life and who may not meet the minimum requirements for admission. They are looking for students that have exhibited strong character, ability to overcome adversity, leadership, and determination. Someone who is not afraid to face challenges head on.
5. What is the difference between where you live and where you attend high school. In Zip code 11201 the average home value is between \$800,000 - \$1,000,000, the average rent is between \$3,000 - \$7,000/Month, and the average salary is \$200,000+. At Saint Joseph High School 90% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch. Why does any of this matter? How does it make you a better candidate?

2018-2019 Common Application Essay Prompts:

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. [No change]
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? [Revised]
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome? [Revised]
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. [No change]

5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others. [Revised]
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? [New]
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. [New]

Summer Reading Assignment

Part 1

In order to keep up your critical reading skills and to prepare for British and Colonial Literature, you are required to complete two assignments: read *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde **and** a free choice book. The assignments must be brought to your English class on September 10, 2018 and will count towards your first quarter grade. The assignments will be graded as follows:

- Both *The Picture of Dorian Gray* assignment and the free choice assignment will count as a small project. Small projects account for 20% of your overall grade.
- In addition you will be quizzed on *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Quizzes account for 15% of your overall grade.

Please bring the book with you and type your assignments in MLA format using 12pt. Times or Times New Roman, double spaced, with one inch margins all around and a 1 tab indent on your paragraphs. **Please use appropriate in-text citations as needed.**

The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde

The Picture of Dorian Gray is Oscar Wilde's story of a fashionable young man who sells his soul for eternal youth and beauty is the author's most popular work. The tale of Dorian Gray's moral disintegration caused a scandal when it first appeared in 1890, but though Wilde was attacked for the novel's corrupting influence. After you have read the book, please respond to the following question:

The British novelist Fay Weldon offers this observation about happy endings. "The writers, I do believe, who get the best and most lasting response from their readers are the writers who offer a happy ending through moral development. By a happy ending, I do not mean mere fortunate events—a marriage or a last minute rescue from death--but some kind of spiritual reassessment or moral reconciliation, even with the self, even at death." Utilizing *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in a well-written essay, identify the "spiritual reassessment or moral reconciliation" evident in the ending and explain its significance in the work as a whole. Use appropriate, specific, evidence to develop your essay.

Part II: Free Choice Book

Read any one of the following books which you can purchase or borrow from the school or a public library. When finished, create a presentation using PowerPoint, Prezi, or another visual presentation format about the book you chose using the rubric on the following page.

Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Woolf

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte

Vanity Fair by William Thackeray

The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy

The Time Machine by HG Wells

The Elephant Man by Christine Sparks

Of Human Bondage by Somerset Maugham

Women in Love by DH Lawrence

Dubliners by James Joyce

Hound of the Baskervilles by Arthur Conan Doyle

Emma by Jane Austen

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland Through the Looking Glass by Lewis Carroll

Bliss by Fiona Zedde

The Famished Road by Ben Okri

The Bride Price by Buchi Emecheta

The Icarus Girl by Helen Oyeyemi

Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi

Part II con't: Free Choice Book

Your answers to these questions will be given in the form of a presentation. Using PowerPoint, Prezi, or another presentation-based program, use the following rubric to develop your presentation.

BOOK TITLE ____ / 3	Speaker does not state the title. 0			Speaker state the title. 3		
AUTHOR ____ / 2	Speaker does not state the author. 0			Speaker state the author. 2		
SUMMARY ____ / 20	Speaker does not give a complete summary of the book – includes very few details. 1 2 3 4	Speaker does not give a complete summary of the book – includes some details. 5 6 7 8	Speaker gives a partial summary of the book – includes some details. 9 10 11 12	Speaker gives a complete summary of the book – includes some details. 13 14 15 16	Speaker gives a complete summary of the book – includes several important details. 17 18 19 20	
MAIN CHARACTERS ____ / 5	Speaker does not list characters or does not give descriptions. 0 1	Speaker gives a list of most of the main characters, but no descriptions. 2	Speaker gives a list of all the main characters, but only describes some of them. 3	Speaker gives a list of all the main characters, but only a vague description. 4	Speaker gives a list of all main characters with full descriptions. 5	
FAVORITE PART ____ / 5	Speaker does not share his or her favorite part. 0		Speaker shares his or her favorite part but does not explain why. 2		Speaker shares his or her favorite part with a full explanation why. 5	

READ FROM BOOK _____ / 5	Speaker does not read from the book. 0		Speaker reads a part from the book, but it does not encourage others to read this novel. 2		Speaker reads a part from the book that encourages others to read this novel. 5					
EYE CONTACT _____ / 5	Speaker does not look at audience 0 1		Speaker rarely looks at audience 2		Speaker looks at audience half the time 3		Speaker looks at audience most of the time 4		Speaker looks at audience entire time 5	
Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas _____ / 20	Speaker does not speak loud enough for others to hear and style is not appropriate to purpose or task 1 2 3 4		Speaker does not speak loud enough for others to hear, and information is not presented in a logical order 5 6 7 8		Speaker presents some of the information, but it is not presented logically 9 10 11 12		Speaker presents information logically but rushes through presentation 13 14 15 16		Speaker presents information clearly, concisely, and logically 17 18 19 20	
VISUAL AIDE _____ / 15	Visual aide does not meet requirements, shows little effort, is messy, or too small. 1 2 3 4 5			Visual aide meets most of the requirements, shows some effort, and is neat. 6 7 8 9 10			Visual aide meets all requirements, shows great effort, and is neat. 11 12 13 14 15			

A note on plagiarism: plagiarism is copying the work of another person without proper acknowledgement. There are two parts in the definition: *copying* and the *absence of proper acknowledgement*. As a result, it gives an impression to an ordinary reader that the work is the original work of the author when in fact it was copied from some others' work. The idea underlying plagiarism is very simple: if you appropriate the work of another person, you should give proper recognition to that person.

Plagiarism covers “any other form of assessment.” It covers tests, homework, take-home examinations, assignments, projects, and other forms of coursework. Copying does not necessarily mean copying word for word. Closely paraphrasing or substantial copying with minor modifications (such as changing grammar, adding a few words or reversing active/passive voices) is still copying for this purpose. It is not so much the form of the copying that is important, but the substance of what is copied. It does not matter what the nature of the source is. It may be a book, an article, a page from the internet, or simply an assignment of another

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student. ***If you are found to have plagiarized, you will receive a 0 on your assignment and parents/guardians will be contacted.***