

Overview of Assignment

Instead of doing a traditional summer reading assignment this year, you are beginning your college application process. Using the resources provided below, you will examine tips/tricks from various resources to write an essay in response to the Common Application Essay questions. This assignment will be **due at the beginning of our Advisory days in August**.

First Things First: Make a copy of this assignment, rename it using a smart name, like “M Jones Summer College Essay,” and ensure that it is shared with Ms. Perry (sperry@clarksvilleacademy.com).



Step 1: Principles of What “To Do” and what “Not To Do” on College Essays:

Review the following resources. As you’re reading through them, pay attention to important principles you should follow when writing your college essays:

- [27 Outstanding College Essay Examples From Top Universities 2024/2025](#) from the College Essay Guy
- [Crafting an Unforgettable College Essay](#) from The Princeton Review
- [How to Write a College Essay](#) from U.S. News & World Report
- [What Not to Write About in a College Essay](#) from the College Essay Guy

Let's try something fun and different to show what you've learned about writing great college essays. You can pick one of these options:

If writing an essay is your strong point you can write a 100 word essay instead of the choices listed below. **(10 Points)**

1. **Create a colorful poster:** You can make a big poster with pictures and short sentences that explain the important things to include when writing an awesome college essay. Think of it like making a giant cheat sheet!
2. **Record a video:** Ever wanted to be a YouTuber? Now's your chance! Record a short video where you talk about the things you should do to write a fantastic

college essay. You can even use props or draw on a whiteboard to make it more interesting.

3. **Design an infographic:** Infographics are like super cool visual summaries. Use a computer program or draw it by hand to make a colorful infographic that shows the do's of writing an amazing college essay.

Step 2: Examples of What “Not To Do” on College Essays:

Review the following resource from CollegeVine, [3 College Essay Examples that Need Improvement | CollegeVine Blog](#). As you read through these essays, pay attention to what has been written that falls under the “Not to Do” category of college essays.

Now create a "Hall of Shame" presentation to showcase common mistakes and pitfalls to avoid when writing a college essay. You can either write a 100-200 word essay or use one of the options listed above **(10 Points)**

1. **Identify Mistakes:** For each specific example, analyze and identify the specific mistakes made in the essay. These could include things like weak thesis statements, lack of organization, irrelevant information, clichés, poor grammar, or overly formal language.

Step 3: Examples of What “To Do” on College Essays:

Review the following Johns Hopkins University Office of Admissions resources. Pay attention to how each essay follows the “To Do” list from step 1. After reviewing them, complete the assignment below.

- [A Growing World | Johns Hopkins University Admissions](#)
- [Korean Sticky Notes | Johns Hopkins University Admissions](#)
- [How Hopkins Will Help Me Become a Better Mathematician](#)

*Provide a 100-200-word reflection on what “To Do” on your college essays based on the examples provided in the resources. **Note: You must cite specifics from at least 2 of the example essays. (10 Points)***

Step 4: Draft of Common App Essay (70 Points)

Write your essay!!! Choosing from the Common App essay topics linked here, [Announcing the 2025–2026 Common App essay prompts](#), select one of the prompts/topics, and paste it below. Then use the tips/tricks learned in the previous steps to draft your essay.

Paste Essay Topic HERE:

Your essay should be between 500 - 650 words. Write your essay response HERE.

BRAG (be sure to include things that highlight who and what you are and have done).