

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part 1- (Let's start planning!) This part is all about getting your ideas flowing.

Step 1: Read each question carefully. Think about the rephrased version and the sentence frames.

Step 2: Look at the example answer. Notice how the example uses the sentence frames to tell a story.

Step 3: Now, write your own answer for each question. Use the sentence frames and the example as a guide.

Have fun with this! Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. Just focus on sharing your own experiences and thoughts.

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.

Rephrased Question:

Is there something special about you that you want to tell us about? Maybe it's something you've learned, something you're good at, or something that makes you who you are. If you have something important to share, please tell us your story!

Sentence Frames:

- "I want to share about [your unique aspect]."
- "This is important to me because [explain why it's meaningful to you]."
- "This [background/identity/interest/talent] helps me to [explain how it benefits you]."
- "This part of my life has made me [explain how it's influenced you]."

Example:

"I want to share about my love for music. This is important to me because music makes me happy and helps me to relax. Playing music helps me to be creative and learn new things."

¹Student response #1

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?

Rephrased Question:

Everyone faces tough times. Tell us about a time when **you had a problem** or **something didn't go as planned**. What happened, how did it **make you feel**, and what **did you learn from it**?

Sentence Frames:

- "One time, I had a problem when **[describe the challenge]**."
- "It was hard because **[explain how it made you feel]**."
- "This experience taught me that **[explain what you learned]**."
- "Now, I know that **[explain how the experience changed you]**."

Example:

"One time, I had a problem when **I tried out for the school play but didn't get a part**. It was hard because **I really wanted to be in the play and I felt sad**. This experience taught me that **it's okay to try new things even if I don't succeed the first time**. Now, I know that **I should keep trying and not give up easily**."

¹ Modified by Marcelo Sousa ESOL Teacher 8/2/2024

²*Student response #3*

3. 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?

Rephrased Question:

Everyone makes **mistakes** or has **things that are hard**. Tell us about a time when you **faced a challenge** or **something didn't go your way**. What happened, how did it **make you feel**, and what did you **learn from it**?

Sentence Frames:

- "One time, I had a hard time when **[describe the challenge]**."
- "I felt **[describe your feelings]** because **[explain why you felt that way]**."
- "This made me learn that **[explain what you learned]**."
- "Now, I know that **[explain how the experience changed you]**."

Example:

"One time, I had a hard time when **I tried to learn how to ride a bike. I kept falling down, and I felt frustrated**. This made me learn that **it's okay to make mistakes and keep trying**. Now, I know that **I can do anything if I practice and don't give up**."

² Modified by Marcelo Sousa ESOL Teacher 8/2/2024

³*Student response #3*

4. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?

Rephrased Question:

- Have you ever thought about something and wondered **if it was really true**? Tell us about a **time** when you **questioned** or **disagreed** with **an idea**. What made you **think differently**? What **happened after** that?

Sentence Frames:

- "One time, I wondered about [**the belief or idea**]."
- "I started to think differently because [**explain what made you question it**]."
- "After that, I [**explain what happened as a result of your questioning**]."
- "Now, I [**explain how your thinking changed**]."

Example:

"One time, I wondered about **the idea that everyone should always be happy**. I started to think differently because **I saw that sometimes people are sad or angry, and that's okay**. After that, I **learned that it's important to accept all kinds of feelings**. Now, I know that it's **okay to feel different emotions, and that doesn't mean something is wrong**."

³ Modified by Marcelo Sousa ESOL Teacher 8/2/2024

⁴*Student response #4*

5. 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?

Rephrased Question:

Has someone ever done **something nice for you** that really **surprised** you? Tell us about a time when someone did something **kind** that made you **feel happy** and **thankful**. How did that **make** you **feel**, and did it **change** how you **act** or **think**?

Sentence Frames:

- "One time, someone surprised me by [**describe the kind act**]."
- "I felt [**describe your feelings**] because [**explain why you felt that way**]."
- "This made me want to [**explain how it motivated you**]."
- "Now, I [**explain how the experience changed you**]."

Example:

"One time, someone surprised me by **helping me with my homework when I was struggling**. I felt **really happy and thankful** because **I didn't think anyone would help me**. This made me want to **be a good friend and help others when they need it**. Now, I **try to be kind and helpful to my friends and classmates**."

⁴ Modified by Marcelo Sousa ESOL Teacher 8/2/2024

⁵*Student response #5*

6. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

Rephrase Question:

- Think about a time when something **important happened in your life**. Maybe you did something **great**, something **exciting** happened, or you learned something **new** about **yourself** or **other people**. Tell us about this **experience** and how it **helped you grow** and **learn**.

Sentence Frames:

- "One time, I [**describe the accomplishment, event, or realization**]."
- "This made me realize that [**explain your new understanding**]."
- "This experience helped me to [**explain how it helped you grow**]."
- "Now, I [**explain how you are different because of this experience**]."

Example:

"One time, I **won a writing contest**. This made me realize that **I am good at writing and that I enjoy it**. This experience helped me to **be more confident in my abilities**. Now, I **am not afraid to share my writing with others**."

⁵ Modified by Marcelo Sousa ESOL Teacher 8/2/2024

⁶Student response #6

7. 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?

Rephrased Question:

- Is there something you **love to learn about** that makes you **forget everything else**? Tell us about a **topic, idea, or thing** that you find really **interesting**. Why do you like it so much? **Where do you go** to learn more about it?

Sentence Frames:

- "I love learning about [**the topic, idea, or concept**]."
- "It's so interesting because [**explain why it captivates you**]."
- "When I want to learn more, I [**explain where you go for information**]."
- "I like to learn about this from [**explain who or what you learn from**]."

Example:

"I love learning about **animals**. It's so interesting because **I can learn about how different animals live and what they do**. When I want to learn more, **I go to the library and read books about animals**. I also like to **watch documentaries about animals on TV**."

⁶ Modified by Marcelo Sousa ESOL Teacher 8/2/2024

⁷*Student response #7*

8. 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.

Rephrased Question:

- What would you like to write about? You can **choose any topic** you want! Maybe you have an **essay you already wrote**, you want to **write about something different**, or you have your own idea. Tell us about **anything that interests you!**

Sentence Frames:

- "I want to write about [**your chosen topic**]."
- "I'm going to write about [**explain what you will write about**]."
- "My essay will be about [**explain the main idea of your essay**]."
- "I will write about [**explain the different parts of your essay**]."

Example:

"I want to write about **my favorite sport, soccer**. I'm going to write about **why I love to play soccer**, how it makes me feel, and how it's helped me to learn new things."

⁷ Modified by Marcelo Sousa ESOL Teacher 8/2/2024

⁸*Student response #8*

Part 2 (Essay) - Let's take a look at an example essay! It uses the structure we talked about, shares a personal story, and uses clear language. Read through it carefully and notice how it works.

Now, think about which question from our list you'd like to write about. Which one has the most interesting story for you?

When you've picked your question, scroll down and start writing your essay!

Title: My Journey to Growth

Introduction

I remember the day I first learned to ride a bike. It was a sunny afternoon, and my dad held onto the back of my seat as I wobbled down the sidewalk. I was so scared, but I knew I wanted to do it. I wanted to feel the wind in my hair and the freedom of moving on my own. This experience taught me that even when things are hard, if you keep trying, you can achieve anything you set your mind to. That's a lesson I've carried with me throughout my life, and it's one I know will be important as I begin college.

Body Paragraph 1: My Strength: Perseverance

⁸ Modified by Marcelo Sousa ESOL Teacher 8/2/2024

Learning to ride a bike was tough. I fell countless times, scraped my knees, and even cried a few times. But my dad kept encouraging me, and I refused to give up. I practiced every day, and slowly, I began to gain confidence. Finally, I was able to ride without his help. That moment of triumph taught me that perseverance is key to success. It's a strength I've used in everything I do, from learning a new language to tackling challenging coursework. I know this strength will be crucial for me in college, where I'll face new challenges and opportunities.

Body Paragraph 2: My Challenge: Adapting to a New Culture

When I moved to the United States a few years ago, I was overwhelmed by the new culture and language. It was tough to make friends and adapt to a new way of life. But I was determined to learn and grow. I joined an English as a Second Language (ESL) program and immersed myself in American culture. I learned to embrace the differences and celebrate the diversity of this country. This experience taught me the importance of adaptability and resilience. I know that going to college will be another step in my journey of adapting to new environments and learning from different perspectives.

Body Paragraph 3: My Passion: Learning New Languages

I've always loved languages. Learning a new language opens up a whole new world of communication and understanding. I'm fascinated by how different cultures express themselves through language. I'm excited about the opportunity to continue learning languages at your college. I've heard about your strong language program and the diverse student body, which will provide me with the chance to interact with people from all over the world. I believe that studying languages will enhance my understanding of the world and help me achieve my goal of becoming a global citizen.

Conclusion

My journey has been filled with challenges and triumphs. I've learned the importance of perseverance, adaptability, and the joy of learning new things. I believe that your college will provide me with the resources and support I need to continue growing and achieving my goals. I'm eager to embrace the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, and I'm confident that I can make a positive contribution to your community.

Part 3 (Essay) It's time to write your essay!

You've already explored the different questions and thought about your answers. Now, you're ready to put it all together in a well-structured essay.

Here's what to do:

1. Choose your question: Remember the question you picked earlier. This is the topic you'll be writing about.
2. Use your notes: Look back at your answers from Part 1. These will help you remember your ideas and personal story.
3. Follow the graphic organizer: Use the graphic organizer to guide you as you write your essay. Each section of the organizer will help you focus on a different part of your essay.

Remember:

- Use clear language: Make sure your essay is easy to understand.
- Tell a story: Share your experiences and thoughts in a way that is engaging and interesting.
- Use the sentence frames: They can help you get started and make sure you cover all the important parts of the essay.

You've got this! I'm excited to read what you write.

College Essay Graphic Organizer

I. Introduction

- Hook: (Write a sentence that grabs the reader's attention. Think of a memorable experience, an interesting observation, or a quote that relates to your essay.)
 - Example: *"The first time I heard the sound of a hummingbird's wings, I felt a sense of wonder that I'd never experienced before."*

Hook

- Background: (Briefly introduce yourself and the context of your essay. Who are you? Why are you writing this essay?)
 - Example: *"As a student who grew up in [Country], I've always been fascinated by the power of language..."*

Background

- **Thesis Statement:** (What is the main point you want to make in your essay? Answer the main question of the prompt.)
 - **Example:** *"My passion for learning languages, coupled with my experiences overcoming challenges, has prepared me to thrive in your college community."*

thesis Statement

II. Body Paragraph 1: Strength

- **Topic Sentence:** (What is your strength? Start with a sentence that directly connects to the first question: "What are you most proud of?")
 - **Example:** *"One of my greatest strengths is my perseverance."*

Topic Sentence

- **Supporting Detail 1:** (Think of a specific accomplishment or experience that shows this strength. Explain the process, challenges, and outcomes.)
 - **Example:** *"In high school, I joined the debate team, even though I was initially nervous about public speaking. After countless hours of practice and preparation, I won the regional debate tournament."*

Supporting Detail 1

- **Supporting Detail 2:** (Explain how this experience helped you develop this strength. Connect it to your future goals.)

- Example: *"This experience taught me that with hard work and dedication, I can overcome any obstacle. I know this strength will be invaluable as I pursue a degree in [Major]."*

Supporting Detail 2

III. Body Paragraph 2: Growth

- Topic Sentence: (What is a challenge you faced? Start with a sentence that directly connects to the second question: "What is something you have learned about yourself through a challenge you faced?")
 - Example: *"One of the biggest challenges I faced was adapting to a new culture when I moved to [Country]."*

Topic Sentence

- Supporting Detail 1: (Describe the challenge and explain how you dealt with it. What did you learn?)
 - Example: *"I struggled with the language at first, and I missed my family and friends dearly. However, I joined an ESL program and immersed myself in the local community."*

Supporting Detail 1

- Supporting Detail 2: (Explain how this challenge helped you grow. Connect it to your future goals.)
 - Example: *"Through this experience, I learned the importance of resilience and adaptability. I know these skills will be essential as I navigate the challenges of college life."*

Supporting Detail 2

IV. Body Paragraph 3: Passion

- **Topic Sentence:** (What are you passionate about? Start with a sentence that directly connects to the third question: "What are you passionate about, and how would you pursue that passion at this college?")
 - **Example:** *"I'm passionate about learning new languages and exploring different cultures."*

Topic Sentence

- **Supporting Detail 1:** (Explain what makes this passion important to you. What do you love about it?)
 - **Example:** *"I find it fascinating to learn how different languages express the same ideas in unique ways. It opens up a world of possibilities for understanding and communicating with others."*

Supporting Detail 1

- **Supporting Detail 2:** (Research specific programs, clubs, or resources at the college that align with your passion. Explain how you would use these opportunities.)
 - **Example:** *"I'm excited about the opportunity to continue learning languages at your college. I've heard about your strong language program and the diverse student body, which will provide me with the chance to interact with people from all over the world."*

Supporting Detail 2

V. Conclusion

- Restate Thesis: (Briefly reiterate the main point of your essay.)
 - Example: *"My passion for learning languages, coupled with my experiences overcoming challenges, has prepared me to thrive in your college community."*
- Summarize Key Points: (Highlight the most important points you made in your body paragraphs.)
 - Example: *"I've learned the importance of perseverance, adaptability, and the joy of learning new things. I'm confident that I can make a positive contribution to your college community."*

Restate Thesis - Summarize Key Points

- Call to Action (Optional): (End with a final thought or statement that leaves a lasting impression on the reader.)
 - Example: *"I'm eager to embrace the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, and I'm confident that I can make a positive contribution to your college community."*

Call to Action (Optional)