



The Writing Success Center

Personal Statement Brainstorming

These prompts may be similar to what you'll find on scholarship or college applications that require a personal statement. Try answering some with a short free-write to see what ideas come out!

- What has been the most interesting, intriguing, and exciting part of your life — why, and what did you learn from it?
- Discuss an activity or experience that has helped you to clarify your long-term academic goals.
- Discuss a class or internship that you have taken to develop expertise in your major field of study.
- Describe a person (dead or alive; real or imaginary) who has shaped your values or beliefs.
- In five years, where do you see yourself working and what do you envision yourself doing?
- Discuss a need of society that you hope to address in your career. Use statistics and other published resources to document the magnitude of the problem.
- Describe your hometown and explain its impact on your beliefs and values.
- Discuss an obstacle that you've had to overcome to achieve your academic goals.
- When are you really you? When have you been so immersed in what you were doing that time seemed to evaporate?
- What ideas, books, theories, or movements have made a profound impact on you?
- How are you a typical product of your generation of culture? In what ways do you deviate from the norm?