

Sampling of Application Essay Topics

University of California

1. Describe the world you come from — for example, your family, community or school — and tell us how your world has shaped your dreams and aspirations.
2. Tell us about a personal quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution or experience that is important to you. What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are?

Stanford University

1. Evaluate a significant experience, achievement, risk you have taken, or ethical dilemma you have faced and its impact on you.
2. Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you, and describe that influence.
3. Describe a character in fiction, a historical figure, or a creative work (as in art, music, science, etc.) that has had an influence on you, and explain that influence.
4. Stanford students are widely known to possess a sense of intellectual vitality. Tell us about an idea or an experience you have had that you find intellectually engaging.
5. Virtually all of Stanford's undergraduates live on campus. What would you want your freshman year roommate to know about you? Tell us something about you that will help your roommate—and us—know you better.
6. Tell us what makes Stanford a good place for you.

Common Application

1. Evaluate a significant experience, achievement, risk you have taken, or ethical dilemma you have faced and its impact on you.
2. Discuss some issue of personal, local, national, or international concern and its importance to you.
3. Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you, and describe that influence.
4. Describe a character in fiction, a historical figure, or a creative work (as in art, music, science, etc.) that has had an influence on you, and explain that influence.
5. A range of academic interests, personal perspectives, and life experiences adds much to the educational mix. Given your personal background, describe an experience that illustrates what you would bring to the diversity in a college community, or an encounter that demonstrated the importance of diversity to you.