

2021-2022 Common App Essay

Directions from website: The essay demonstrates your ability to write clearly and concisely on a selected topic and helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice. What do you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores? Choose the option that best helps you answer that question and write an essay of no more than 650 words, using the prompt to inspire and structure your response. Remember: 650 words is your limit, not your goal. Use the full range if you need it, but don't feel obligated to do so. (The application won't accept a response shorter than 250 words.)

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.
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?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. 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?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
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?
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.

2021 Macaulay (CUNY Honors) Essays

As part of the Macaulay application to the class of 2026, they require that you submit two pieces of writing: an ESSAY and a second WRITING SAMPLE. Each should be around 500 words long. Your word counts may be slightly over or under, within reason.

THE ESSAY (500 words)

Describe an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.

THE WRITING SAMPLE (500 words)

Write on a topic of your choice. It may be something you have already written, something that addressed a different prompt (such as another college essay or academic assignment), or may be an essay of your own design.

In selecting your writing sample, please keep the following considerations in mind:

- Your readers will not be specialists in any specific field, submissions of a technical nature are discouraged
- Your submission can be an excerpt from a larger text, but it should be self-contained, with a reasonably clear beginning, middle, and end
- Be ambitious in your writing, but also aware of your word count limitations