

THE COLLEGE ESSAY

Most college-bound students approach the task of writing a personal essay for college admissions with some trepidation and a few questions: How important is the essay? What do colleges look for? How is it used? Who reads it? If you are such a student, a few facts and tips may put the essay into perspective and help you produce your best effort.

First of all, the essay is important - to you and to the college. According to one admissions director, "It makes the facts in the student's folder come alive for us. Because it is the student's personal statement, no single piece of admissions evidence gets as much attention and provokes as much discussion."

The essay is your opportunity to take charge of the information the college receives about you, and to provide information that does not appear in grades, test scores, and other materials. It allows you to reveal your intelligence, talents, sense of humor, enthusiasm, maturity, creativity, expressiveness, sincerity, and writing ability - traits that count in the admissions evaluation.