

Arlington

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



COLLEGE APPLICATIONS AND ESSAY WRITING WORKSHOP

Wednesday, September 26, 2018 — 5:00 P.M.

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THE BASICS OF THE COLLEGE APPLICATION



1. **Go to www.commonapp.org:** This is almost a one-stop shop for students who desire to attend college. More than 800 colleges are a part of this website.
2. **Create an account:** Come up with your own unique username and password.
3. **Add schools to your list:** This is where you chart your own course. Search for the schools you desire to attend.
4. **Understand your schools specific requirements:** All schools are not the same, so their requirements may not be the same. You must do the legwork to discover their requirements.
5. **Gather your general application information:** Vital information such as your high school transcript, PSAT/SAT scores and dates, extra curricular / community service activities, parents' information such as educational background, occupational and employment information, etc.
6. **Start your application:** On your mark, get set, go!
7. **A good point of reference:** Allen Cheng was successful in getting into Harvard, Princeton, Stanford and MIT. Visit [this link](https://blog.prepscholar.com/successful-harvard-application-common-application-harvard-supplement#common_personal) to get an idea of how he successfully used Common App to get into college. Every situation is different and times have changed. (He completed his application in 2005.) However, the tips he shares here are invaluable and the principles of applying yourself remain the same.

https://blog.prepscholar.com/successful-harvard-application-common-application-harvard-supplement#common_personal



3 KEYS
TO
SUCCESS



1. Know yourself
2. Give them what they ask for
3. Have your facts straight

The #1 Most Important College Application Question: What Is Your PERSONAL NARRATIVE?

If you stepped into an elevator with Yale's Dean of Admissions and you had ten seconds to describe yourself and why you're interesting, what would you say?

This is what I call your PERSONAL NARRATIVE. These are the **three main points that represent who you are and what you're about.** This is the story that you tell through your application, over and over again. This is how an admissions officer should understand you after just glancing through your application. This is how your admissions officer will present you to the admissions committee to advocate for why they should accept you.

The more unique and noteworthy your Personal Narrative is, the better. This is how you'll stand apart from the tens of thousands of other applicants to your top choice school. This is why I recommend so strongly that you develop a Spike to show deep interest and achievement. A compelling Spike is the core of your Personal Narrative.

Well-rounded applications do NOT form compelling Personal Narratives, because "I'm a well-rounded person who's decent at everything" is the exact same thing every other well-rounded person tries to say.

Everything in your application should support your Personal Narrative, from your course selection and extracurricular activities to your personal statements and recommendation letters. You are a movie director, and your application is your way to tell a compelling, cohesive story through supporting evidence.

Yes, this is overly simplistic and reductionist. It does not represent all your complexities and your 17 years of existence. But admissions offices don't have the time to understand this for all their applicants. Your PERSONAL NARRATIVE is what they will latch onto.

Here's what I would consider my Personal Narrative (humor me since I'm peacocking here):

- 1) A science obsessive with years of serious research work and ranked 6th in a national science competition, with future goals of being a neuroscientist or physician
- 2) Balanced by strong academic performance in all subjects (4.0 GPA and perfect test scores, in both humanities and science) and proficiency in violin
- 3) An irreverent personality who doesn't take life too seriously, embraces controversy, and says what's on his mind

These three elements were the core to my application. Together they tell a relatively unique Personal Narrative that distinguishes me from many other strong applicants. You get a surprisingly clear picture of what I'm about. There's no question that my work in science was my "Spike" and was the strongest piece of my application, but my Personal Narrative included other supporting elements, especially a description of my personality.

Source: Allen Cheng

https://blog.prepscholar.com/successful-harvard-application-common-application-harvard-supplement#common_personal



THE ACRONYM GAME

The Acronym Game is one of the most exciting and highly anticipated activities I share with my audiences. Perhaps it's because I enjoy seeing people delighting in seeing themselves from a perspective that they may not have considered previously.

This game is pretty simple to play. In the space below, write your name in a vertical line. Next to each letter, think of a positive adjective that accurately describes you. These adjectives should help paint a clear picture of who you are, your character, etc. Be unique. Try to stay away from common, boring words, but also try to refrain from words that have meanings of which you are unsure of. A word may sound good, or it may be popular, but if you're not really sure it meets a true description of who you are, that may not be a good choice for you. It may be helpful to have a dictionary or thesaurus nearby.

Also keep in mind that you should avoid duplicating a word. For example, if you have two E's in your name and you've already used the word *elegant*, don't use it again. I've provided an example by using my name. In the space provided on the next page, create your acronym. You may also wish to add your middle and/or last name on the back of the page. As well, you may choose to find a picture of yourself and include it in the white space on the right side of the page. If you're really excited about it, you may find yourself adding more pictures and creating a collage. It's all up to you!

Note: There are 13 spaces provided for you to write your acronym. If you have more than 13 letters in your name, simply create your acronym on the back of the paper.

THE ACRONYM GAME *(continued)*

Note: *There are 13 spaces provided for you to write your acronym. If you have more than 13 letters in your name, simply create your acronym on the back of the paper.*

Example:

- A - Articulate
- L - Loyal
- O – Optimistic
- N - Notable
- I - Innovative
- A - Amiable

Your name:

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

_____ - _____

RESUME

- Definition: a brief written account of your personal, educational and professional qualifications and experience.
- Length: Typically one page
- Includes:
 - Name: First and last; Jr. or III; middle initial (optional).
 - Contact info: best phone number; email address
 - Summary or Objective
 - Summary: Brief description of who you are, background.
 - Objective: What are you hoping to achieve by sharing this resume?
 - Education: School's name; city, state; anticipated graduation date.
 - Honors and Accomplishments (See below.)
 - Involvement/Memberships (See below.)



Honors and Accomplishments

1st place winner in GICAA Talent Showcase

Honor roll, grades 8 through 11

Principal's List, grades 8 through 11

Perfect attendance, grades 5 through 11

Scholar of the Month, January 2017

1st Runner up, Homecoming Queen

Highest ranking pitcher on school's baseball team, Spring 2017

Citizenship Award—Junior year

Selected to participate in NFL-sponsored football camp

Involvement/Memberships

President, Student Government Association, senior year

Student Ambassador, junior and senior years

Red Cross Volunteer with ACS Student Chapter, junior year

Volunteer Summer Camp Leader, Enon Baptist Church, Summer 2017

Member, Chess Club, junior year

Captain, Basketball Team, senior year

SAMPLE RESUME

First Name Last Name

6 Elm Avenue, Stockler, CA 91733

Home: 111.111.1111 Cell: 766.555.4444

First.lastname@email.com

SUMMARY

Honor roll high school student with a passion for working with children. Extensive experience working with youth from ages 2-15. Praised and awarded for organizational skills and ability to develop safe, fun, and engaging environment for children.

EDUCATION

Pepperona Central High School, Pepperona, CA

High school diploma anticipated in May 20XX

GPA 3.86, honor roll each semester

Electives: Screen printing, Culture & Foods

Activities: Wind Ensemble, Stage Crew

VOLUNTEER & COMMUNITY SERVICE

Stocklerbridge Hospital, Stockler, CA

Pediatric Ward Volunteer

Fall 20XX – present

Actively contribute to help create a supportive environment for short- and long-term pediatric patients. Visit children and their parents in patient rooms to identify individual needs; monitor common play area for safety and cleanliness. Perform administrative work and run errands for pediatric staff.

- Develop and implement activities to entertain patients ages 5-15, including arts and crafts activities and theater workshops.
- Received Volunteer-of-the-Summer award for critical role in developing a theater program for patients.

Horizon Women's Shelter, Stockler, CA

Teen Volunteer and Advocate

Spring 20XX - present

Work alongside other teen volunteers to arrange programs for victims of domestic violence

- Organized and co-led daycare program for children at the women's shelter.

CERTIFICATION

CPR and AED Certification, April 20XX

References are available upon request.

RESOURCES

- www.studentedge.org/jobs/resume-builder
- www.hloom.com/resumes/high-school-student-templates/
- www.thebalancecareers.com



- I. General—Intro, three points, conclusion
 - A. Introduction
 - What are you going to talk about?
 - State your points
 - Start with an inspiring or thought provoking quote.
 - Include statistics
 - Use a rhetorical question
 - B. Three points: Begin with an opening statement and support it.
 - C. Conclusion:
 - Summarize what you've stated
 - Make it compelling
 - Make it thought provoking
- II. Follow the instructions
 - A. Word count—Do not go over!
 - B. Topic—Be sure to identify the subject and stick to it.
- III. Think before you write
- IV. Proofread
- V. Check spelling (not Spellcheck!)
- VI. Check punctuation (not Spellcheck!)



Common grammatical errors to avoid

- Your and you're: Your represents something that belongs to you; you're is the contraction for you are.
- It's and its: It's is the contraction for it is; its is a the possessive of or belonging to it.
- Loss and lost: Loss is a noun. I am sorry for your loss. Lost is an adjective. The little boy was lost.
- Periods, not commas, go at the end of a sentence.
- Only capitalize proper nouns.
- A and an: Words that begin with a vowel should begin with *an* rather than *a*.
- Apostrophes and the letter s:
 - If a word ends in an s already, to make it possessive, add the apostrophe after the s. Correct: Mrs. Jones' class. Incorrect: Mrs. Jones's class.
 - If a word is plural and ends in an s, make it possessive by adding the s at the end of the word. Example: The dogs' chains were broken. (There was more than one dog.)
 - If a word is singular and needs to be made possessive, add the apostrophe at the end of the word. Example: The dog's chain was broken. (Only one dog.)

