

KELSEY SCHOOL PROPERTY TRUST

Personal Statement & Essay Prompt Worksheet

Writing a college essay can seem daunting! The best thing to do is to start out with a lot of ideas, and then narrow them down to ones that you feel confident you can write about well. Remember this is the chance for the Kelsey School Property Trustees to get to know you better, and to understand who you are as a person. You don't need to feel pressured to write about the most unique experience in the world — this is a time to share a bit more about yourself and what would make you such a great choice for our scholarship.

1. Brainstorming

Let's start by thinking about you!

What are 3 adjectives that best describe you? (e.g. creative, determined, passionate)

What do you think is important for the Trust to know about you that they wouldn't be able to tell from your application?

What are some of the things you consider most important in your life, and how have they shaped who you are as a person?

Only respond to the questions below if they apply to you and what you want to write about.

Have you faced a challenge in your life that you'd want to write about? How has it shaped who you are today?

Do you know what you want to study? Are there certain traits or experiences that have shaped that decision?

2. Essay Prompts

Please select two (2) of the following essay topics and submit them as a part of your application:

- ☐ 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.
- ☐ 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?
- ☐ Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
- ☐ 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?

- ☐ Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
- ☐ 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?

3. Outlining

Essay topic:

What are some examples from your life that best answer this question?

As you outline, keep these questions in mind:

- What message do you want to come across to the Trustees?
- What does this example show about you?
- What details can you include about this example?
- What is the main theme you want to get across to the people reading your essay?
- How does each paragraph support this message?

4. Writing

Remember this is a draft! Keep a few things in mind as you write:

1. Focus on yourself — this is a personal statement, so make sure that even if you talk about how other people have impacted you, you bring the essay back to yourself.
2. Show, don't tell — be descriptive about your experiences, and add concrete details to make your stories stronger. Think of the 5 senses while writing.
3. Positive vs. negative — if you're talking about an experience that was negative, remember to come back to some positive ways it impacted who you are as a person, and how you grew.

5. Helpful Links & Resources

A few outside resources if you'd like extra guidance while you write:

- [US News — College essay tips and sample essays](#)
- [College Board — Tips for writing the essay](#)
- [Princeton Review — Application essay topics](#)
- [College Essay Guy — Free resources](#)
- [College Wise — Resources](#)
- [Podcast — College Essay Guy](#)
- [Podcast — Inside the Admissions Office: Personal Statement Prep](#)
- [Podcast — Getting In \(essay segment starts at 19:30\)](#)
- [Video — US News essay overview](#)