Sample Essay Questions on College Applications

1. Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you, and describe that influence.

2. Evaluate a significant experience, achievement or risk that you have taken or ethical dilemma you have faced and its impact on you.

3. Discuss some issue of personal, local, national or international concern and its importance to you.

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. During your time in college, you are likely to attend classes, study, conduct research, complete an internship, work a part-time job, participate in student clubs and organizations, spend time with friends and, among countless other possibilities, earn a degree. How do you hope to be remembered by your peers and classmates? What do you hope your professors would say about you in a letter of reference to a prospective employer or graduate school?

6. Describe the one teacher who has had the greatest impact on you.

7. Write a letter to your future college roommate. Introduce yourself. Tell him/her about your reasons for choosing this college, your college goals and your hopes and dreams for the future.

8. Describe a particularly meaningful school, job, or volunteer activity in which you have had to demonstrate leadership. Did you gain any new insights either about your own talents or values or about other people and the world around you?

9. State a social, political or professional issue affecting our world today that has people taking sides either "for" or "against" that issue. Write a convincing argument on your side of the issue, citing research, data or other documents to support your opinion.

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