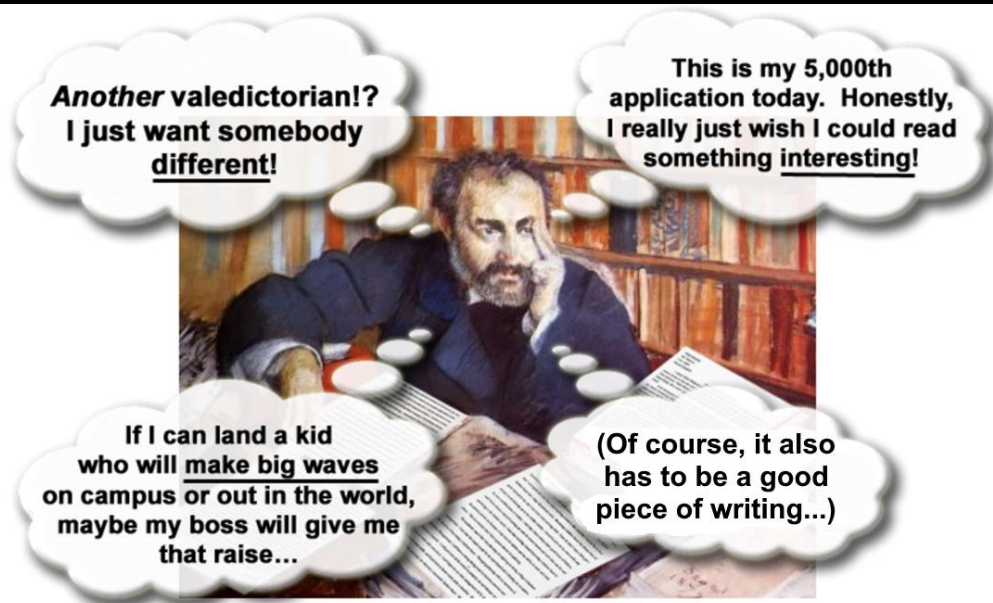


What do Admissions Counselors want?



Mastering the Personal Statement



presented by Paul Jury & **PJ Test Prep**
SAT/ACT Prep Classes, and Test/Academic Tutoring
www.pjtestprep.com – 310 529-7285

First, **What changes is this dumb virus bringing for 2021 graduates?**

TEST-REQUIRING SCHOOLS will probably be more flexible about scores and deadlines... though the SAT and ACT will likely be VERY creative about adding additional (and virus-safe!) test dates. After all, they'd prefer to stay in business.

TEST-OPTIONAL SCHOOLS will consider the SAT and ACT like "bonus gold stars" on your application, helping push you up if your grades alone are not guaranteed to get you into a school.

ALL SCHOOLS will, with grades and test scores being weird this year, give extra weight to your **COLLEGE ESSAYS!**

Overall tips:

- Logistics: **Make your list, then a plan.** UCs → Common App → Supplements/Scholarships
- Don't say what's **already been said** elsewhere on your application.
- Should I write about **COVID**? More on that in minute...
- No matter what approach you pick, make sure it's a piece of **good writing**. Get help!
- Give them what they want, but not at the expense of showing **who you are**.

Approach #1 – Make Waves

Any old kid can get good grades in college, graduate, and get a job. Counselors want to find bigger fish. Their jobs depend on it.

- Suggest what big things you'll do on campus.
- Suggest what big things you'll do in the real world.

EXAMPLES

- **My First Play**
- **Mock Trial/Real Trial**

Approach #2 – Be Different

Colleges don't just want butts in chairs. They want all types of students. Diversity.

- Suggest what makes you different than all the other high-scoring, hard-working, good-grade-getting students out there.

EXAMPLES

- **50% Russia, 50% Redondo**
- **The Twin Who Un-Twinned**

Approach #3 – Be Interesting

Counselors have to read a lot of these essays. Make them remember you.

- Tell stories/use examples
- Start with a hook
- Be funny, touching, dramatic, whatever fits your topic... but don't use a gimmick that isn't you.

EXAMPLES

- **Jesse's Uncle**
- **The Basement**

And what of writing about Covid/Quarantine/the Apocalypse?

ESSAYS DIRECTLY/ONLY ABOUT CORONAVIRUS = probably avoid.

They will see ONE MILLION of these – yours better be the one in a million.

EXAMPLES: “How Covid ruined my junior prom☹!”

ESSAY W THE PANDEMIC AS A BACKDROP (but really about something else) = probably fine, just make sure it's one or more of the above.

EXAMPLES: “Helping triage at an overrun hospital showed me I want to get into epidemiology.”

“Getting punched while working at CVS made me realize humans are strange creatures.”

ESSAY NOT ABOUT COVID = especially rare/good this year☺

Application Essay Brainstorm Sheet

- What will be the most notable thing you do in college?
- What will be the most notable thing you do in your career?
- What are you really good at?
 - o How did you get good at it?
 - o What was the moment you realized you were good?
 - o When did you get a chance to show it?
 - o How could this ability help you in college or life?
- Do you have any interesting stories?
 - o Funny?
 - o Amazing?
 - o Touching?
- What's something really random about you?
- What are you really BAD at?
- What's the biggest challenge you've had to overcome?
 - o Did you overcome it? (It's OK if you didn't)
 - o Either way, what did you learn?
- What is your biggest regret?
- Have you ever found yourself thrown into a new situation?
- Have you ever not fitting in somewhere?
- Have you ever taken any interesting trips? Any good stories? What did you learn about the world/other people/yourself?
- What has been your most meaningful extra-curricular activity, even (especially?) if it's not the most resume-worthy?
- What adults in your life/in society do you most admire?
 - o Why?



PJ Test Prep

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Full CLASS SCHEDULE @ www.pjtestprep.com

Summer College Essay/Personal Statement Class

This class is designed to help college-bound students become better writers, both in completing their college application essays, as well as for college-level writing down the line.

Students will:

- Learn how to write effective **college application essays** and personal statements, and **leave class with multiple polished essays** they can use for their UC, Common App and other applications.
- Improve on timed Standardized Test essays, like those on the **SAT, ACT and AP Exams**.
- **Get better grades** on high school essays, and learn how to **write college level essays**, like the out-of-class papers and in-class exams they'll see at competitive 4-year colleges.
- Become more **creative** writers
- Get individualized feedback through all steps of all essays

<i>Summer College Essay/ Personal Statement Workshop – \$495</i>		
<i>Location: ONLINE - Instructor: Paul Jury</i>		
<i>Class 1</i>	<i>Sun, July 12</i>	<i>5-7pm*</i>
<i>Class 2</i>	<i>Sun, July 19</i>	<i>5-7pm*</i>
<i>Class 3</i>	<i>Sun, July 26</i>	<i>5-7pm*</i>
<i>Class 4</i>	<i>Sun, Aug 2</i>	<i>5-7pm*</i>
<i>Class 5</i>	<i>Sun, Aug 9</i>	<i>5-7pm*</i>
<i>Class 6</i>	<i>Sun, Aug 16</i>	<i>5-7pm*</i>
<i>Class 7</i>	<i>Sun, Aug 23</i>	<i>5-7pm*</i>
Nov 30	UC Application Deadline	

*Given the inherent variance in how long different students need to complete their College Essays, timing and location of Essay classes will be flexible, and may include individual meetings, video chat sessions, and work periods.

Class will be instructed by **Paul Jury**, graduate of Northwestern University's Creative Writing for the Media Program, Author of "States of Confusion," Writer for TV shows on A&E, Vh1 and Discovery Channel, and founder of PJ Test Prep and Jury Academics.

www.pjtestprep.com to sign up
paul@pjtestprep.com or (310) 529-7285 for more info