**Essay #1: College Admissions Essay for the Common App**

Yes, it is that time, a momentous (albeit frustrating) occasion, when you fill out your applications for college admission. Therefore, your first paper in this class will be multi-purposed: an essay writing assignment for English and a pragmatic essay to help garner you college admission.

The details of the assignment are directly from the Common Application, the non-profit entity that oversees your application and all its nuances (recommendations, essays, etc) and are in accordance with the Common Application’s changes for the 2013 – 2014 writing portion.

**Assignment:**

You will select one of the prompts given by the Common Application. Then, you will compose an essay that is *as close to 650 words as possible* ***WITHOUT GOING OVER*** (didn’t that just sound like the Price is Right?). While I may not be a stickler about length in essays, the college admissions boards ARE and so are the people with the Common App. If you cannot produce a substantial essay in less than 650 words, you stand a good chance of not being accepted (if your application comes down to your essay).

Your essay needs to be typed (obviously), 12 point font, Times New Roman or equivalent. You should double space and MLA format the entire thing. Review of MLA format will happen in class.

**Prompts & Instruction As Given by the Common Application Site:**

Instructions. The essay demonstrates your ability to write clearly and concisely on a selected topic and helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice. What do you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores? Choose the option that best helps you answer that question and write an essay of no more than 650 words, using the prompt to inspire and structure your response. Remember: 650 words is your limit, not your goal. Use the full range if you need it, but don’t feel obligated to do so. (The application won’t accept a response shorter than 250 words.)

*• Some students have a background or story that is so central to their identity that they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.*

*• Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what lessons did you learn?*

*• Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?*

*• Describe a place or environment where you are perfectly content. What do you do or experience there, and why is it meaningful to you?*

*• Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.*