

# Evaluate Yourself

## Answer these questions to be ready for a college essay

### Questions to Evaluate Yourself

The questions which follow can help you focus college selection and admission where it belongs, on you as an individual. You may feel embarrassed or self-conscious when you first consider these questions. However, an honest and thoughtful self-evaluation can reveal what you should look for in colleges and prepare you for statements you will be asked to make about yourself in essays and interviews when you apply to college. If you are willing to look seriously at yourself, you can find the colleges which are right for you and present yourself effectively to them.

### Your Goals and Values

1. What aspects of your high school years have you enjoyed the most?
2. Have you missed anything during this time?
3. If you could live this period over again, would you do anything differently?
4. What values are most important to you?
5. What do you care most about?
6. What concerns occupy most of your energy, effort, and thoughts?
7. How do you define success?
8. Are you satisfied with your accomplishments to date?
9. What do you want to accomplish in the years ahead?
10. What kind of person would you like to become?
11. Of your unique gifts and strengths which would you most like to develop?
12. What would you most like to change about yourself?
13. Is there anything you have ever secretly wanted to do or be?
14. If you had a year to go anywhere and do whatever you wanted, how would you spend that year?
15. What events or experiences have shaped your growth and way of thinking?

### Your Education

16. What are your academic interests?
17. Which courses have you enjoyed the most?
- 18.

20. Consider interests pursued beyond class assignments: topics chosen for research papers, lab reports, independent projects; independent reading; school activities; job or volunteer work. What do your choices show about your interests and the way you like to learn?
21. How do you learn best?
22. What methods of teaching and style of teaching engage your interest and effort the most?
23. How would you describe your school?
24. Is learning and academic success respected there?
25. Has your school environment encouraged you to develop your interests, talents, and abilities?
26. Have you felt limited by your school environment in any way?
27. What would you preserve or change about your school if you had the power and money to do so?
28. How much do you genuinely like to read, discuss issues and exchange ideas?
29. What has been your most stimulating intellectual experience?
30. How well has your school prepared you for college?
31. In what areas of skill or knowledge do you feel confident?
32. In what areas do you feel inadequately prepared for college study?
33. Have you been challenged by your courses?
34. Have you worked up to your potential in high school?
35. Is your academic record an accurate measure of your ability and potential?
36. Are your SAT scores accurate measures of your potential?
37. What do you consider the best measures of your potential for college work?
- 38.** Are there any outside circumstances (in your recent experience or background) that have interfered with your academic performance? Consider such factors as: after school job, home responsibilities or difficulties, excessive school activities, illness or emotional stress, parental pressure, English not spoken at home, problems of course scheduling or other factors which are unique to your recent experience or background.

### **Your Activities and Interests**

39. What activities do you most enjoy outside the daily routine of school and other responsibilities?
40. Looking back, would you have made different choices?
41. Do your activities show any pattern of commitment, competence, or contribution?

42. How would others describe your role in your school or home community?
43. What do you consider your most significant contribution?
44. After a long, hard day, what do you most enjoy doing?
45. What do you do for fun or relaxation?

### **The World Around You**

46. How would you describe your school, family and hometown?
47. How has your environment influenced your way of thinking?
48. How have your interests and abilities been acknowledged or limited by your school and home?
49. What do your parents and friends expect of you?
50. How have their expectations influenced the goals and standards you set for yourself?
51. What pressures have you felt to conform?
52. What has been the most controversial issue in your school or community?
53. How does the issue concern you?
54. What has been your reaction to the controversy?
55. What is your opinion about the issue?
56. Have you ever encountered people who thought and acted differently than you did?
57. What viewpoints have challenged you the most?
58. How did you respond?
59. What did you learn about yourself and others?
60. What distresses you most about the world around you?
61. Assuming the obligation and opportunity to change the world, where would you start?
62. Do you have any current heroes or heroines or historical heroes?
63. What books have you read which have changed your way of thinking?

### **Your Personality and Relationships With Others**

64. How would someone who knows you well describe you?
65. What are your finest qualities?

66. What are your most conspicuous shortcomings?
67. Would you agree with their assessment?
68. How have you grown or changed during your high school years?
69. Which relationships are most important to you and why?
70. Describe the people whom you consider your best friends.
71. Describe your best critics.
72. Describe your best advocates.
73. In what way are they similar to or different from you?
74. Describe the groups in your school.
75. Which ones do you feel you belong to?
76. Which ones do you feel alienated from?
77. What kind of people do you associate with and admire?
78. Generally, how do you respond to people who think and act differently than you do?
79. How are you influenced by others who are important to you?
80. What pressures have you felt to conform?
81. How important to you are approval rewards and recognition?
82. How do you respond to pressure, competition, or challenge?
83. How do you respond to pressure, competition, or challenge?
84. How do you feel about choices and making decisions for yourself?
85. What are the best decisions you have made recently?
86. How much do you rely on direction, advice, or guidance from others?
87. Have you ever chosen anything because it was new or interesting?