

**University of Washington in the High School  
Summer Writing Assignment 2018**

**Writing Task:** From a college or university application (preferably a school you are applying to) choose one question which best leads to a significant and eloquent revelation of yourself. If you are not yet sure which school you are applying to, please choose from one of the four options below:

1. Creative people state that taking risks often promotes important discoveries in their lives or work. Discuss a risk that has led to a significant change in your personal or intellectual life.
2. Tell a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.
3. Describe a time when you were a newcomer or placed outside your comfort zone. How did you adapt?
4. Describe the most challenging obstacle you have overcome. Discuss its impact, and tell what you've learned.

Presumably, you will write about something you care about, yet the intricacies of your emotions should be **SHOWN** to the reader rather than **TOLD**. The reader will, hopefully, identify with the experience in ways that you, as writer, intended. Do your best to:

- Develop a clear focus
- Use powerful nouns and verbs (minimize to be verbs—am, is, are, was, were)
- Include concrete images and specific examples

As you choose your topic, **AVOID**:

- Use of second person pronouns (“you” and “your”)
- Essay topics that deal with social, religious or political themes that argue the “right” side of the argument.
- The classic stereotypes of the genre:
  - “How \_\_\_\_\_(sport) has formed my character.”
  - “How my trip to \_\_\_\_\_ (travel spot) has forever changed me.”
  - “How \_\_\_\_\_ (person, usually now deceased) has made me who I am today.” Though your paper may touch upon some of these experiences, be aware that these often-explored topics may make college essay readers groan.....

Please bring a rough draft of 750-900 words to class with you on the first day of school next year. We'll focus on this essay for our first writing assignment of the year.