

## AP Literature 12th Grade Summer Assignment 2023-2024

Welcome to your SENIOR year! For your summer assignment, you will:

- 1) Write the *first* draft of your college personal statements.
- 2) Read 2 chapters from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*. If you are unable to purchase your own copy, google “**how to read literature like a professor revised pdf**” to find an online version.
- 3) Read *Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger. If you are unable to purchase your own copy, google “**Catcher in the Rye pdf**” to find an online version.

DETAILS BELOW!

- 
1. For the personal statement assignment, you may do ONE of the following:
    - a. Answer TWO of the UC Personal Insight Questions (max 350 words *each*)
    - b. Answer ONE of the Common Application Essay Prompts (650 words)

Turn your essays into turnitin.com by **Friday, August 11th at 11:59 pm**

Class ID: **39197921**

Enrollment Password: corebaby

- 2) Read Chapter 1 (Quest) and reread Chapter 12 (Symbols) from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*. **Be prepared for a multiple choice test on this reading the first day of school.**
- 3) Read *Catcher in the Rye* and be prepared for a **multiple choice reading exam on the first day of school**. You will also be required to write an **in-class AP-style essay on the text Wednesday, August 23rd**, using the analysis skills you have acquired from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*. The questions at the end of this handout will help guide your reading, although you do not need to formally answer them.

---

## **2023-2024 FRESHMAN UC PERSONAL INSIGHT QUESTIONS**

**\*\*Check the UC Website to Verify Questions and View an Informational Video\*\***

<https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/how-to-apply/applying-as-a-freshman/personal-insight-questions.html>

Directions: Although for the *actual* UC application you will write four of the eight essays, for **THIS** summer assignment, you will write on **TWO** of the prompts. Each response is limited to a **maximum of 350 words**. On the top of your assignment, write the prompt and your word count.

### Questions & Guidance (taken from the UC website)

Remember, the personal questions are just that — personal. Which means you should use our guidance for each question just as a suggestion in case you need help. The important thing is expressing who you are, what matters to you and what you want to share with UC.

***1. Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes or contributed to group efforts over time.***

Things to consider: A leadership role can mean more than just a title. It can mean being a mentor to others, acting as the person in charge of a specific task, or taking the lead role in organizing an event or project. Think about what you accomplished and what you learned from the experience. What were your responsibilities?

Did you lead a team? How did your experience change your perspective on leading others? Did you help to resolve an important dispute at your school, church, in your community or an organization? And your leadership role doesn't necessarily have to be limited to school activities. For example, do you help out or take care of your family?

***2. Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.***

Things to consider: What does creativity mean to you? Do you have a creative skill that is important to you? What have you been able to do with that skill? If you used creativity to solve a problem, what was your solution? What are the steps you took to solve the problem? How does your creativity influence your decisions inside or outside the classroom? Does your creativity relate to your major or a future career?

***3. What would you say is your greatest talent or skill? How have you developed and demonstrated that talent over time?***

Things to consider: If there's a talent or skill that you're proud of, this is the time to share it. You don't necessarily have to be recognized or have received awards for your talent (although if you did and you want to talk about it, feel free to do so). Why is this talent or skill meaningful to you?

Does the talent come naturally or have you worked hard to develop this skill or talent? Does your talent or skill allow you opportunities in or outside the classroom? If so, what are they and how do they fit into your schedule?

**4. Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity or worked to overcome an educational barrier you have faced.**

Things to consider: An educational opportunity can be anything that has added value to your educational experience and better prepared you for college. For example, participation in an honors or academic enrichment program, or enrollment in an academy that's geared toward an occupation or a major, or taking advanced courses that interest you — just to name a few. If you choose to write about educational barriers you've faced, how did you overcome or strive to overcome them? What personal characteristics or skills did you call on to overcome this challenge? How did overcoming this barrier help shape who are you today?

**5. Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to overcome this challenge. How has this challenge affected your academic achievement?**

Things to consider: A challenge could be personal, or something you have faced in your community or school. Why was the challenge significant to you? This is a good opportunity to talk about any obstacles you've faced and what you've learned from the experience. Did you have support from someone else or did you handle it alone? If you're currently working your way through a challenge, what are you doing now, and does that affect different aspects of your life? For example, ask yourself, "How has my life changed at home, at my school, with my friends or with my family?"

**6. Think about an academic subject that inspires you. Describe how you have furthered this interest inside and/or outside of the classroom.**

Things to consider: Many students have a passion for one specific academic subject area, something that they just can't get enough of. If that applies to you, what have you done to further that interest? Discuss how your interest in the subject developed and describe any experience you have had inside and outside the classroom — such as volunteer work, internships, employment, summer programs, participation in student organizations and/or clubs — and what you have gained from your involvement. Has your interest in the subject influenced you in choosing a major and/or future career? Have you been able to pursue coursework at a higher level in this subject (honors, AP, IB, college or university work)? Are you inspired to pursue this subject further at UC, and how might you do that?

**7. What have you done to make your school or your community a better place?**

Things to consider: Think of community as a term that can encompass a group, team or a place — like your high school, hometown or home. You can define community as you see fit, just

make sure you talk about your role in that community. Was there a problem that you wanted to fix in your community?

Why were you inspired to act? What did you learn from your effort? How did your actions benefit others, the wider community or both? Did you work alone or with others to initiate change in your community?

***8. Beyond what has already been shared in your application, what do you believe makes you stand out as a strong candidate for admissions to the University of California?***

Things to consider: If there's anything you want us to know about you, but didn't find a question or place in the application to tell us, now's your chance. What have you not shared with us that will highlight a skill, talent, challenge or opportunity that you think will help us know you better? From your point of view, what do you feel makes you an excellent choice for UC? Don't be afraid to brag a little.

**Need more help?**

- Download the [worksheet for freshman applicants](#) [PDF]
- See our [writing tips & techniques](#)

---

## 2022-2023 Common Application Essay Prompts

***\*\*Check the Common App Website to Verify Questions and View Additional Informational\*\****

<https://www.commonapp.org/apply/essay-prompts>

Directions: Choose ONE prompt. The word limit for the essay is 650. On the top of your assignment, write the prompt and your word count.

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design..

---

### Personal Statement Tips:

- **Present your information and ideas in a focused, deliberate and meaningful manner.** A personal statement that is simply a list of qualities or accomplishments usually is *not* persuasive.
- **Write responses that get right to the point.** These are short essays, so there is little room for wandering. Don't worry about being abrupt — you need to get your information out there.
- **Use specific, concrete examples and language.** Avoid generalities like "being on the track team was fun" and go right for the details. Make sure your response directly addresses the prompt, avoid a collection of facts or examples, and expand on — don't simply repeat — information contained in your application.
- **Adhere to word restrictions.** Keep to the word count as closely as you can — a few words over or under the limit is okay, but be careful.
- **Ensure that the responses complete the application.** The personal statement answers are an extension of your application. They should give new information, not repeat things you've already put in your application.

---

*Catcher in the Rye*

As you read *Catcher in The Rye*, consider the following guiding questions. They will help you prepare for class discussions and the in-class essay on Tuesday, 8/23, but you will not need to formally submit written responses to these questions at this time.

1. Consider the following symbols in the novel: Pencey Prep (the students and their major benefactor), the carousel, the ducks in Central Park, Allie's mitt, the red hunting hat, and the museum and the mummies. What might each represent?
2. Consider Holden's disdain for "phonies." Why does he hate this idea so much? Next, consider his own thoughts and actions (two very different ideas). Where does Holden fit into the world of phonies?
3. J.D. Salinger's diction (word choice) for Holden Caulfield is unique and interesting. His voice is easily distinguished among other iconic literary characters. What do you find interesting/unique/distinguishable about Holden's style of speech? What types of words does he use? What is the tone?
4. Throughout the novel, Holden pretends to be other people. What purpose might this serve?
5. Throughout the novel, Holden attempts to call many people for help. Holden wants to call Jane several times, but never does. Why do you think this is so? Who else does Holden attempt to call? How might phone calls serve as a metaphor in the novel?
6. One place Holden arguably feels comfort and happiness is in the museum. Why does he like it there so much? What specifically does he say about it?
7. Although Allie, Holden's brother, is not actually alive in the novel, he is an important character. Holden even talks to him throughout the novel. This is called an *apostrophe*. What purpose might this serve in the novel?
8. In one of the most powerful scenes in the novel, Holden takes his sister Phoebe for a ride on the carousel in Central Park. Why is this scene so important?
9. Consider the significance of the title: *The Catcher in the Rye*. It's an allusion to a Robert Burns poem, "Comin' Thro' the Rye" (look it up). What is the difference between "meeting" and "catching," and what does the protagonist fail to realize by this misunderstanding?
10. Why do we label the "f-word" profanity, and what does it mean to be profane? What exactly is profane about that word, given what it represents to Holden? What does he fear will be the effect of this profane word? Is he right?