Application Essays - Creating the Likability Factor
Goal

- Tell vs Show
- What vs How
- Status vs Likeability
- Diversity
What the Essay is Not

- A resume
- An opportunity to “educate” readers
- A five-paragraph academic essay
- An explanation or excuse of other application components
- Parents’ ideas of what their student should write
- An essay that sounds like “what colleges want to hear”
Brainstorming

Brainstorming worksheet provided

- Weird/Unique
- Honest
- Perspective
- Passion
- Vulnerable
The Value of Drafts

- It’s **hard** to start!
- **The Magic** isn’t in the beginning
- Just get **something** down on paper
- This is an ongoing **revision** process
  - even if it is just a word here and there
- Start with telling and then you can
  move to the **Show and How**
Intro Paragraph

Needs to have a **hook** - but not like English class

- **I**ntriguing
- **D**escriptive
- **E**motional
- **A**uthentic

Typically this happens through use of **Narrative**
The Reader needs to feel like they know you.

The feel should be intimate, almost like you have a shared secret.

Allow the Reader to join in the experience.
Final Paragraph

- Typically the most challenging
- Make sure your perspective is clear, precise, and concise
- Emphasize the HOW - not the laundry list
- Add humor!
Reminders

- Not all colleges have one person review the entire admissions packet
- 5 minutes on the essay is considered generous
- UCLA - 137K applicants = 14% admit rate (think about what that really looks like)
Three Readers

- **Casual Acquaintance** - someone who does not know writer WELL
  - Job - ensure the essay captures and holds attention and is memorable

- **Grammar Expert** - extremely knowledgeable and comfortable with editing
  - Job - catch technical errors, improve structure

- **Close Friend or Family** - not emotionally vested in where the student gets accepted
  - Job - read for accurate representation of the spirit and authentic character of the writer
Q & A

Kate McGunagle - 323-433-9775;
kate@enhancedprep.com

Rachel Mead - 949-668-0575;
rachel@enhancedprep.com

Text to register for our monthly counselor newsletter, digital copy of the brainstorming sheet, and a copy of these slides: ‘Counselor Resources’ to 31996