

Revising

Review the Prompt

One strategy for revision that may help you is to highlight the different points of the prompt in different colors. Then use those same colors to highlight the sentences in your response that relate to those parts of the prompt. For example, a prompt may ask you to describe an award you received, what you did to earn it, and what resources you used to achieve success. You may mark any ideas in your writing that relate to the purpose of the award in yellow, the narrative/process sentences in green, and the resources in blue. This will help you recognize if there are any unmarked sentences that might not address the prompt. It can also help you to see if ideas are repeated or underdeveloped.

Word Choice

Because personal statements are often limited in terms of character or word count, you want to be sure that you get the most impact out of the words you choose to use. Choosing a word that is more precise in its meaning and connotation will help you to use the space wisely.

1 Exercise: Develop a Paragraph

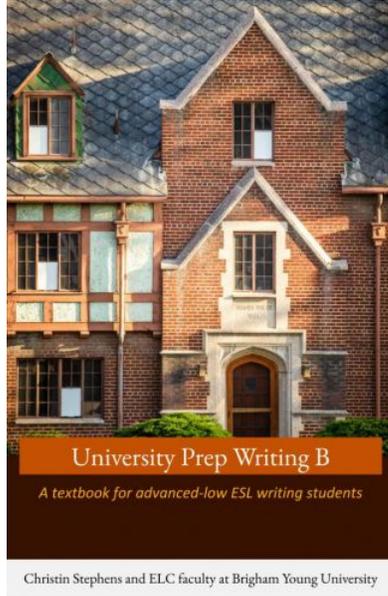
Read this example student paragraph from a personal statement. This was a general college application essay without a specific prompt. What general advice would you give the writer? What specific advice would you give about details and word choice?

The advises that my parents gave to me helped me to deal with this hard moment. That experience gave me more strength to deal with challenges. I know that during my time at college I will have many challenges, but I won't give up because know that I can do hard things.

2 Exercise: Revise Your Writing

Follow the steps below to revise your personal statement.

1. Open your essay and save a copy called "Revision."
2. Choose two or three colors to represent your main points. If you have more than that many points, you can choose more colors. However, it will be good to think about whether or not the additional points actually add strength to your essay or use space that could be better used for something else.
3. Change the text color for all sentences connected to each of those two or three points.
4. Look at any sentences that are still in black. Are they necessary? Should they be connected more clearly to your thesis and supporting details?
5. Select the highlighter in yellow.
6. Highlight any sections of your essay where words repeat too frequently or you use too many words to express an idea. Is there another way to say these points?
7. Make changes based off of this review of your draft.



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