It's important to plan your workload, so read through each of your college applications carefully and make sure you know how many and what sort of essay/personal statement you'll be required to write.

**Application types:**

1. **The Coalition**  
   The Coalition is used by 130 universities. This option was formally known as the Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success

2. **Universal College Application**  
   Universal College Application is used by over 75 institutions.

3. **Individual college or state application**  
   Specific instructions will be explained

4. **The Common Application**  
   The Common Application is known as the CommonApp and is used by 800 colleges. Essay prompts for the next year’s intake reset on August 1 each year.

   To learn about the CommonApp check out this EducationUSA Australia video

**The importance of your essay/personal statement**

Your transcript is the ‘who’, ‘what’ and ‘where’ of the application, whereas your essay(s) and letters of recommendation form the ‘why’ and ‘how’. Think of each essay as an opportunity to share highlights and lessons learned from your life.

Remember that admissions staff have read many essays in their career, so having a completely unique thought is unlikely. However, your application can always stand out through an engaging and compelling essay that is clearly focused, well-written and demonstrates your personality and maturity.

Do not let the relatively short word count minimize the importance of this task—or the quality that is expected. The U.S. students you’re competing against spend in excess of 6 months in preparing their essays. Don’t be daunted by this task! Instead enjoy the challenge of your essay being the way to share your story.