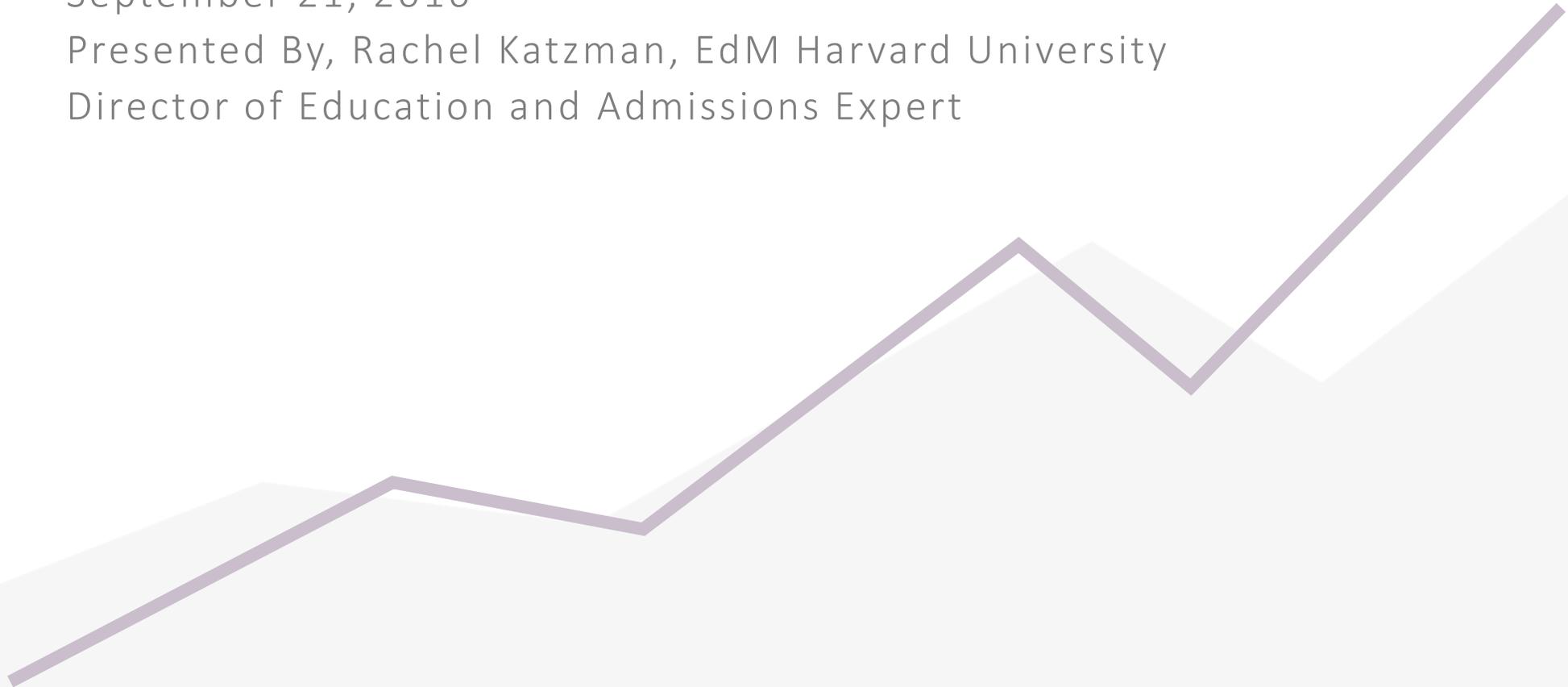


admitster.com  
OWN THE JOURNEY TO COLLEGE

# College Application Essentials

September 21, 2016

Presented By, Rachel Katzman, EdM Harvard University  
Director of Education and Admissions Expert



Not for distribution without written permission by College Match, Inc.

For more information please contact: Rachel Katzman, [rachel@admitster.com](mailto:rachel@admitster.com), 1(800) 531-7452 © 2016



# AGENDA

## Finalize your college list

- Choose the right number of schools.
- Make the cuts today!

## Manage Supplemental Essays

- Strategize your responses.
- Do the research.

**Plus, your questions answered, and insider advice!**

# Finalizing College List

## Step 1:

## Take Control of your Common App Dashboard

### Some Observations:

Student has 15 colleges on list, has applied to 10 so far

*What's your response to this amount of work?*

*Why or why not was it necessary?*

*How do you think this happened?*

My Colleges (15)	Writing Requirements	Deadline	Application	Writing Supplement	Remove
▶ Brandeis University		01/01/2016			
▶ Carnegie Mellon University		01/01/2016			
▶ Case Western Reserve University		11/01/2015			
▶ Georgia Institute of Technology		10/15/2015			
▶ Harvey Mudd College		01/05/2016			
▶ New York University		01/01/2016			
▶ Purdue University		02/01/2016			
▶ Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute		01/15/2016			
▶ Rice University		01/01/2016			
▶ Trinity University		11/01/2015			
▶ Tulane University		11/15/2015			
▶ University of Chicago		11/01/2015			
▶ University of Michigan		11/01/2015			
▶ University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill		10/15/2015			
▶ University of Southern California		01/15/2016			

# Balance College List by Following: RULE OF 3

$$3 \times 3 = 9$$

*3 Likely (67% - 100%)*

*3 Target (33% - 66%)*

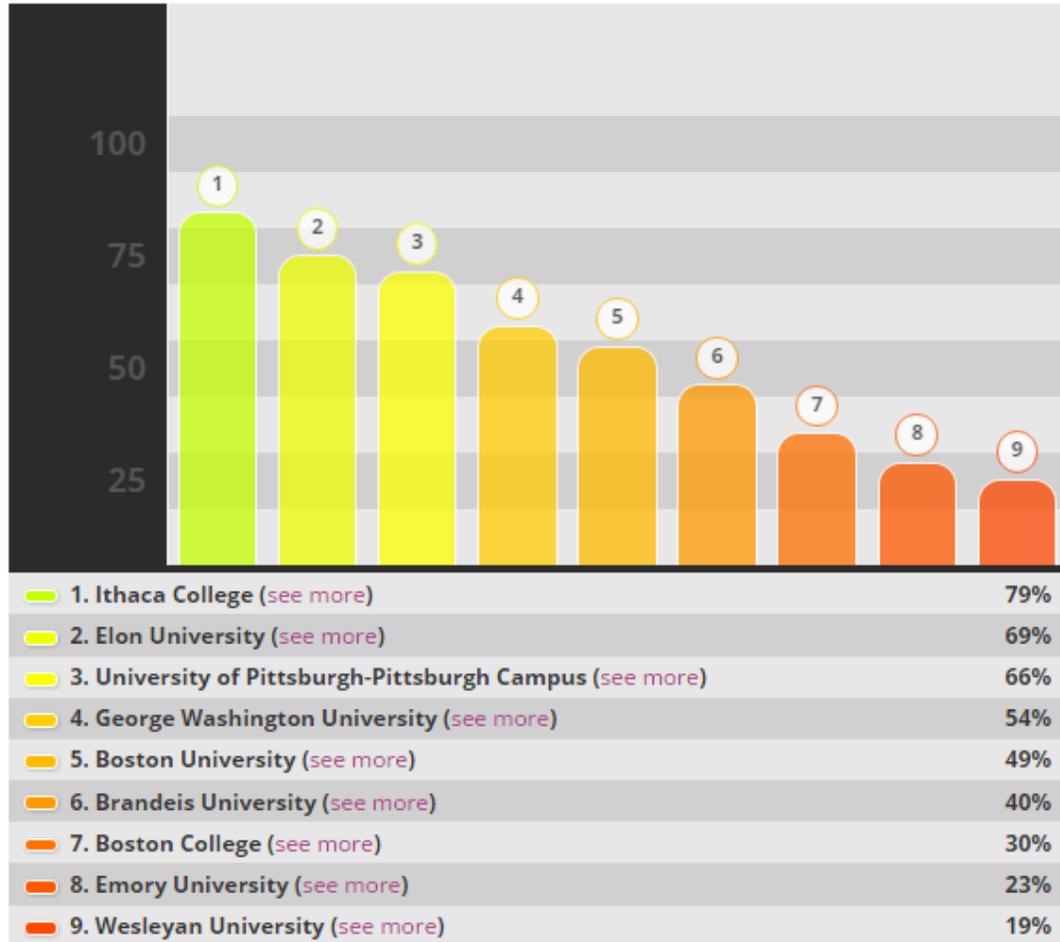
*3 Reach (10% - 33%)*

# Projections

Chances for All Colleges

My Bottom Line Analysis

Below are the estimated chances of admission for colleges on your list. **Cool Tip:** You can click on 'see more' next to the college to drill two levels down into the factors behind the prediction.



## What If? Engine

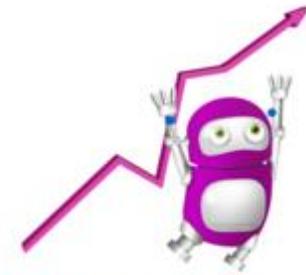
**i** New here? A fast way to enter grades and scores is to change values below and click the save button below to put them in your profile!

**i** You can activate and move the sliders to see their effect on your chances. There are two groups of sliders: click on Academic or Extracurricular to see each one. At the bottom, there are buttons to reset values to your original profile, or to save the new values to your profile.

Academic    Extracurricular

- Unweighted GPA    3.2
- Difficulty level    2
- SAT Critical Reading    680
- SAT Math    720

# Use our Projection Tools!



**ADMITSTER.COM**

[www.admitster.com/college-list-builder/](http://www.admitster.com/college-list-builder/)

## Here's an *almost* balanced list 11 schools total. 4 applications submitted.

For this student's academic profile, she has a balance of likely, target, and reach schools.

It's December 15<sup>th</sup>:

*What do you notice about due dates and submitted applications?*

*How many schools should the student "cut" in order to manage her workload?*

*What do you think is the link between writing supplements and incomplete applications?*

<input type="checkbox"/> My Colleges (11)	Writing Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Deadline	Application	Writing Supplement
▶ Brown University		01/01/2016	●	-
▶ Dartmouth College		01/01/2016	●	●
▶ Duke University		01/03/2016	●	●
▶ Harvey Mudd College		01/05/2016	●	-
▶ Johns Hopkins University		01/04/2016	●	●
▶ Rice University		01/01/2016	●	●
▶ University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill		01/15/2016	✓	-
▶ University of Pennsylvania		01/05/2016	●	●
▶ University of Southern California		01/15/2016	✓	✓
▶ Washington University in St. Louis		01/15/2016	✓	-
▶ Yale University		11/01/2015	✓	-

# Step 2: Make the Cut! (Now!)

We know this is hard, but it's essential.

## Reasons to “Cut” a school

- Application is labor intensive, and is a *significant reach*.
- You don't know enough about the school.
- You're only applying because of reputation.
- You're applying because you think you *should*, but you would never want to go.
- It's one too many.... (likely, target, or reach- don't apply to more than 3 reaches).

## Step 3: Find the “Hidden” Supplemental Essays

While your dashboard supposedly lists the “writing supplements”, many schools have hidden questions throughout their application.

You may find these in the:

- “Other” section
- “Questions
- Major selection
- Extracurricular Activities

What influenced you to apply to Harvey Mudd College? What about the HMC curriculum and community appeals to you? Please limit your response to 500 words. \*

B	I	U		Open Full Screen

Words entered: 0

Please select one of the two prompts to answer. Please limit your response to 500 words \*

Choice 1: "Scientific research is a human endeav... x ▾

Based on your selection above, please provide your essay response here. \*

B	I	U		Open Full Screen

This application requires TWO 500 word essays, but on the dashboard, says there’s no “writing supplement.”

**NOT FAIR!!!!**

# Bottom Line: Look At Each School's Application Carefully.

Click through all the links and put in your major to ensure that you have seen any additional writing prompts.

# SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAYS: Why they're essential

- For strong applicants, distinguishes you among the pool of similar candidates.
- For any candidate- gives you're the chance to make your case and show that you've done your research.
- Great supplements *can* tip an admissions decision between candidates through persuasive demonstration of interest.
- Remember, college admissions is a two-way street.

# Managing Supplemental Essays

- Make a choice! Only submit these lengthy applications to your top-choice schools (those that made the “cut”).
- Get organized- collect prompts from all schools and put in document.
- Figure out which responses you can “pre-prepare” and use across different applications, and which indeed to be their own unique response.



# Three Questions You Should “Recycle”

Write these once, and re-use across applications.

- Describe specific extra-curricular activity
- Describe personal background.
- Describe how you developed specific academic interest (s)

Note: Any supplement should have a separate topic from your personal essay.

# 1 Question You Should “Tweak”

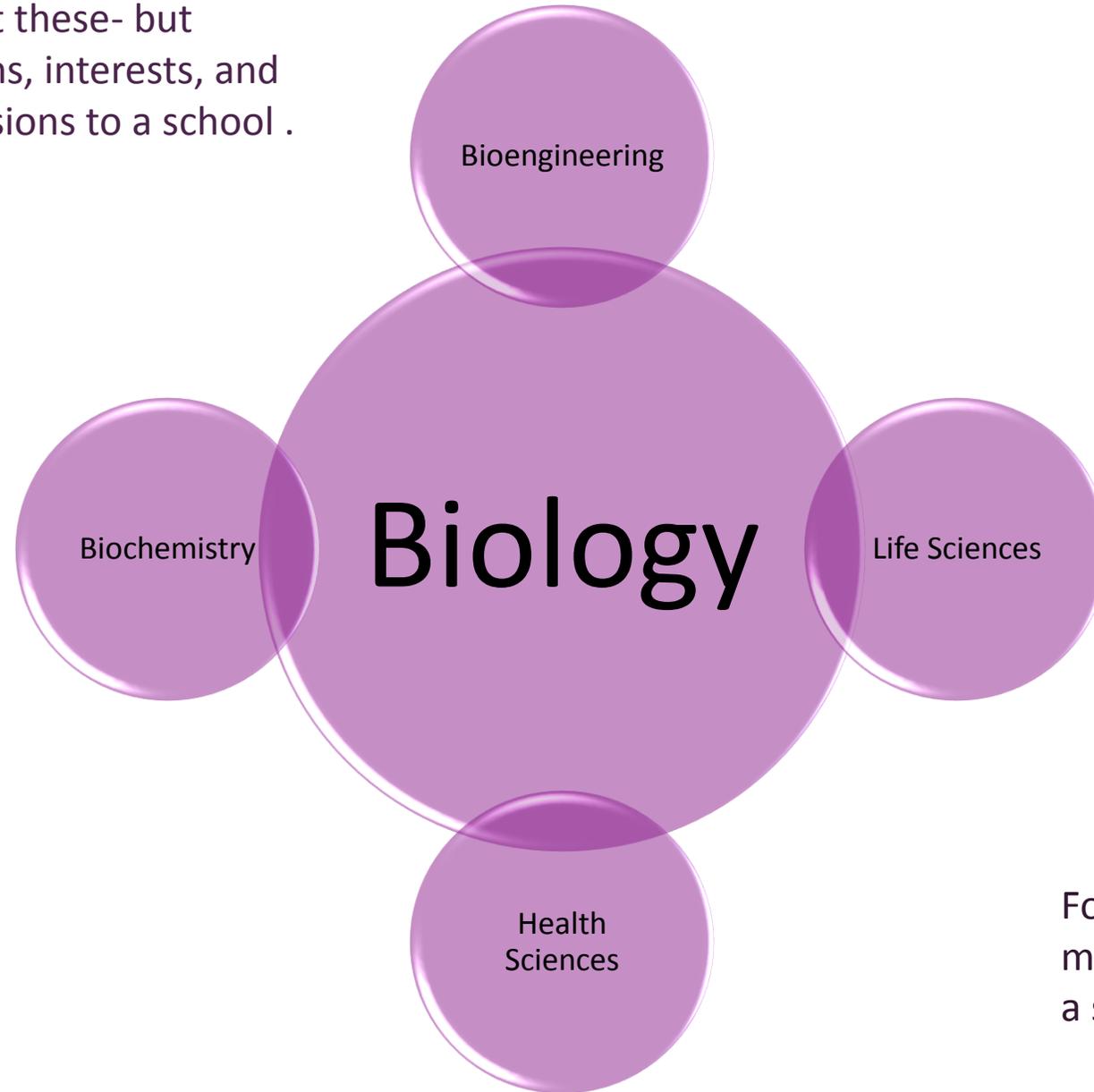
- **What program or major do you intend to pursue?**

This has to be targeted to the programs offered at a school. Schools distinguish themselves through their curriculum, and you need to show that you’ve noticed.

Hint: Choosing specific, but not always the most “competitive” programs, will help focus your essay and increase likelihood of admission.

Don’t just target the majors! Look at institutes, research, and school programs to answer this question.

You could choose any amongst these- but choose based on your strengths, interests, and realistic “projection” of admissions to a school .



For most schools, your major can change, so make a strategic choice.

# A Good Example: (A bio-engineering Student)

“Even though I ultimately plan to pursue medicine, viewing the world from an engineer's perspective enhances my ability to process the unexpected. Understanding mechanics, both man-made and within the body, will be crucial to my future practice as a doctor.”



# One question you have to customize:

- Why Us (insert school) ?

This requires you to have done your research:

- Scour the school websites by looking for news, student opportunities, research, and campus life.
- Use information from campus visits and interviews.
- Make a list, or talk it out first. While you have usually 100 words to write your response, you want to have lots of material to choose from.

Remember:

The Admissions Experts at Admitster can help you do the research!

# What to Include in This Essay

Think of it as “Why Are We a Perfect Match” By Brainstorming

What Do I Want	What Do They Have?
Music Program	Performance and Composition Tracks; Ensembles Classes in Jazz History, Music Production, Film Scoring
Informal arts scene/clubs	Acapella, Funk Ensemble, New concert hall on campus
Student Support	First year program; living learning communities

# Compare These Examples

"Michigan's well-known legacy, its fantastic football team and spectacular location in Ann Arbor are just a few reasons why I believe UM is the place for me." #supergeneric

to...

"I look forward to Academic Argumentation (225) and Professional Writing (229), as I believe these courses will provide me with a firm basis in journalistic writing technique and improve my abilities to write analytically and develop well-supported arguments. Furthermore, the Professional Writing course will teach me how to write in a concise, straightforward style, a skill vital to a journalist." #readytowrite



# What to Avoid in Supplemental Essays

- Cliché or generalized observations about the school, such as the weather, sports team, location, size, etc.
- Overly emotional writing, such as “I fell in love! Or UM is the place for me!”
- Repeating verbatim the mission or motto in your response.

See how Emory helps students avoid these mistakes: *"Undergraduates at Emory are offered countless opportunities to engage with the student body, the faculty, and your academic program of choice--from hands-on research opportunities to student organizations to volunteering. What are some of the programs and/or activities you would plan to get involved with on either campus, and what unique qualities will you bring to them?"*

# The Mysterious “Thought” Questions

*Some schools use supplements to get you to think outside of the box:*

Examples of Unusual Prompts:

- Tell us about spiders.. (U. of Richmond)
- What is so odd about odd numbers? (U. of Chicago)
- What would be a TED talk you’d like to give? (UNC)

For these, think about the *type of thinking* the prompt is asking of you and *show your critical thinking, awareness, creativity, etc.*

# Qualities of Strong Supplemental Essays

- Show “college ready” critical thinking
- Reveal more than what’s on your Common Application
- Demonstrate interest and deep knowledge of the school

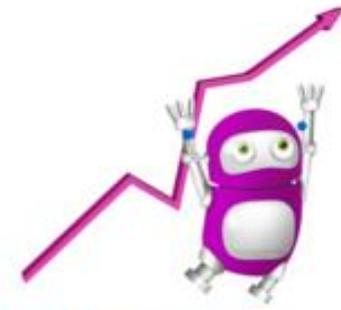
# What if My Top Choice School Has No Supplement? How to Demonstrate Interest.

- Write one anyway! Especially if it's an EA or ED school, you can write a "cover letter" to your admissions representative expressing interest in school.
- Demonstrate interest and engage in relationship through interviews, visits, social media, etc.
- Apply for merit scholarships at that school. You may not get it, but it puts you on the radar of "committed and interested" students.
- DO NOT be pesky...(rule of thumb- 1-2 contacts, and select supplementary recommendations- don't bury admissions officers)

# Summary of Presentation: How to Get through the Work



# How ADMITster Helps You!



**ADMITSTER.COM**

**First, no need to panic. Really.**

**We are here to help you take control and get work done.**

- We help you make decisions.
- We help you do the research.
- We review all writing (personal essays, supplements, resume).

**Most importantly, we're here to help you **CLICK SUBMIT!****

# ADMITSTER



Director of Education, Rachel  
Katzman, EdM Harvard



Senior Admissions Expert,  
Anjali Devutu, JD, UC  
Berkeley



Senior Writing Expert,  
Greta Myers, University of  
Washington

# Our College Advising Services

## Admissions Advising:

- One-on-one college coaching with a dedicated expert.
- Virtual sessions
- Offer an introductory 5-hour package, or purchase more hours for a discounted rates.
- *All prospective clients receive 20 min. consultation with their college expert-at no charge!*

## Essay Review Services:

- Submit any college essay to [www.admitster.com/essay](http://www.admitster.com/essay).
- Receive expert feedback within 48 hours!
- Starts at only \$75



## ***Want to Get to Work?***

Email: [Rachel@admitster.com](mailto:Rachel@admitster.com) or call (617) 307-7033

Sign sheet or talk to me after presentation 😊



Time for Your  
Questions!

# Insider Advice: What We Tell Our Clients

- Get to know your local admissions officer- notify them of application decisions, especially for ED or EA.
- Schools are still updating their testing policies! [www.fairtest.org](http://www.fairtest.org).
- Apply EA or ED only if you've had a strong junior year AND the previous year's admissions statistics give a significant edge (enrollment, differences in acceptance rates.)
- For financial aid candidates, research "Full Need Met" colleges- if you can, have at least one on your list. (67 total, 15 no loans required)
- Know the merit aid deadlines for your schools (often early). Also realize that most institutional aid is "unannounced."
- Don't be afraid to be a humanities major! (if it's an interest!)

# 15 Schools that are Full “Needs Met” (w/ no loans)

1. Brown University
2. Colby College
3. Columbia University
4. Davidson College
5. Franklin & Marshall
6. Olin School of Engineering
7. Harvard University
8. Haverford College
9. Pomona College
10. Swathmore College
11. Stanford University
12. University of Pennsylvania
13. Vanderbilt University
14. Washington & Lee
15. Yale University

# Common Application Essay Structure

1. Hook/Slice into Action
2. Expand the Story
3. Connect to Your Life
4. Explain the Impact
5. Forecast Your Future

Think of it as a road map for story, not paragraphs. Sections may be long or short.