

EducationUSA Canada Essay Writing Exercise #3 Outline

Choose your essay prompt:

1. Open your Themes and Stories exercise document.
2. After attending the second boot camp session, take time to review and edit the table. If something seems like it is in the wrong column, move it to the other column. Delete out any stories that you know you won't write an essay about.
3. Start with the first Story in the righthand column. Draw a line to each Theme on in the left column that is exemplified in this story. It could be one. It could be all of them!
4. Move to the next Story and repeat the above exercise. Do this for each Story.
5. Open the [Common App prompts](#) (or other essay prompts you are working with)
6. Review your Stories and consider which one (or ones) you might want to use to write your essay. If you find that a couple of your Stories express the same Themes, you may choose to write an essay using multiple examples.
7. Choose the Common App prompt that you think would be best for your Story or Stories. If you aren't sure, you can make outlines for each prompt you think might work.
8. You are now ready to make an outline! Go to the next page.

Topic

The topic of your essay is the “how.” The prompt that you choose will shape how you tell your story. For example, if you are someone who wants to write a story about cooking, the topic might be “how cooking helped me through a difficult time in my life,” “discovering cooking as a passion unlocked the world of biochemistry,” or “lessons I learned while cooking with my grandmother.”

Consider a motif:

A motif is a reoccurring, thematic element in a piece of writing. A motif can be an object, image, sound, word, or concept that takes on figurative or symbolic meaning throughout a story. Motifs are woven throughout a piece of work to tie the stories together.

In admissions essay writing, motifs go well when the use of it is meaningful to the student's overall stories and themes and successfully ties them together. Motifs are unsuccessful when the imagery is forced and detracts from the story.

Motifs are an advanced level of writing, and it is not recommended for every student. Do not feel like you need to incorporate a motif, as it is easy for them to not work well. When in doubt, write something straightforward!

What's the difference between a motif and a theme?

A theme is an abstract concept that underlies the entire story. A motif is a recurring element throughout the story that points toward that theme.

Summary:

PROMPT (copy/paste prompt you will be answering)

THEMES

STORY/STORIES

TOPIC

MOTIF (If you are using one)

Outline:

INTRODUCTION

Hook (save for last)

Main topic/thesis (answer to the prompt)

BODY PARAGRAPH 1 (What is the point of this paragraph? What part of the story are you telling? What themes are explored?)

BODY PARAGRAPH 2 (What is the point of this paragraph? What part of the story are you telling? What themes are explored?)

BODY PARAGRAPH 3 (Do you need a third paragraph? What is the point of this paragraph? What part of the story are you telling? What themes are explored?)

CONCLUSION (What did you learn? What is the point? Which themes will be summarized here?)