



Adrian's Essay Brainstorming Exercises

Welcome! This document contains five brainstorming exercises that will serve as the basis for the first session and the rest of your writing. Please take some time to complete these before our first meeting. You can complete all the work directly on this document. Feel free to complete them on pen and paper first and record your results here after.

Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted, put on some music, and have fun!

Ready? *Let's begin.*

The Essence Objects Exercise

Instructions: Click [here](#) to start the Objects Exercise. Record your results below.

My Essence Objects List	
1.	Chipped Reed(s)
2.	Fish Legs
3.	Tacos (asada and pastor)
4.	Toothpaste
5.	Controllers
6.	Scratching pole (Aka my legs)
7.	Bookshelf
8.	Water Polo ball (Blue berry)
9.	Goggles tied together
10.	Blue Heron
11.	Full set of dragon balls
12.	Broken frying pan
13.	Atlas Shrugged
14.	Rom coms
15.	Curly Hair
16.	Rulers and Compasses
17.	Clickers
18.	Tangled ties and cables
19.	Dusk/Dawn
20.	Origami Stars



The Values Exercise

Instructions: Highlight and **bold** the 10 values you connect with most from the list below. Of those 10, **underline** your top 5. Finally, ***italicize*** your top 3. Then scroll down to the next activity. (Download a printable copy of the values list [here](#).)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">o communityo inspirationo moneyo intellectual statuso financial gaino laughtero serenityo physical challengeo responsibilityo competitiono careero fameo working with otherso freedomo securityo strengtho self-controlo hungero personal developmento trusto faitho involvemento adventureo vulnerabilityo adaptabilityo friendshipo excellenceo job tranquilityo powero passiono cooperationo affectiono wisdomo _____o _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none">o challengeso commitmento leadershipo helping otherso influenceo wito successo patienceo listeningo diversityo loveo fast-paced worko nutritiono competenceo practicalityo creativityo excitemento collaborationo social changeo beautyo ecological awarenesso quality relationshipso travelo decisivenesso curiosityo spiritualityo loyaltyo honestyo independenceo supervising otherso recognitiono accountabilityo democracyo _____o _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none">o self expressiono stabilityo arto autonomyo risko balanceo self-disciplineo courageo familyo empathyo working aloneo humilityo efficiencyo intensityo health and fitnesso meaningful worko my countryo musico trutho resourcefulnesso respecto braveryo communicationo change and varietyo compassiono natureo expertiseo ordero privacyo close relationshipso religiono knowledgeo growtho _____o _____
---	---	---

Values Exercise:

Top 5

Top 3

#1



- | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------|----------------------|
| 1. Hunger | Autonomy | Autonomy | |
| 2. Growth | Hunger | Balance | <u>Hunger</u> |
| 3. Autonomy | Balance | Hunger | |
| 4. Balance | Curiosity | | |
| 5. Self-Discipline | Self-Discipline | | |
| 6. Patience | | | |
| 7. Curiosity | | | |
| 8. Leadership | | | |
| 9. Competition | | | |
| 10. Vulnerability | | | |

21 Details

Instructions: Click [here](#) to begin the activity. Record your answers below.

My 21 Details

1. I'm a sucker for romantic movies like *The Notebook* and I'm overdue for a rewatching of it.
2. I tend to overlook my victories and accomplishments by hastingly setting even higher goals.
3. I used to read so much it became dangerous. I would even read while walking and climbing stairs
4. As much as I say I love Disney, I've never watched any Lion king movie
5. I have an unexplainable disturbance with starbucks
6. Although I play various musical instruments, namely the oboe and saxophone, I cannot sight read
7. 'Jupiter Bringer of Jollity' is my favorite planet in Gustav Holst's the planets second to Mars the bringer of war
8. I take being called normal as an insult
9. One of my proudest moments is being accidently called dad by my younger brother
10. I prefer to do anything school related barefoot because I feel shoes and socks block my creativity.
11. After 13 years of experimenting, I've finally found a haircut to match me accordingly
12. One of my flaws is that I will care more about others than I do myself
13. I have an obsession with knowledge, and a passion for math and science
14. K-pop metal is one of my all time favorite internet discoveries
15. I have uncontrollable random laughing fits that have gotten me into more trouble than I can remember
16. I've almost drowned three times, and I didn't learn to swim until I was 14; yet my life is now centered in water



17. I've attempted suicide, but never told anyone. Now I want to help anyone I can going through anything similar.
18. Auto-correct has ruined my spelling
19. I have a love/hate relationship with pineapple
20. My biggest obstacle in High School was learning to accept and look for help when I drastically needed it.
21. I've yet to have a pair of glasses last me more than a year

The "Everything I Want Colleges to Know About Me" List

Instructions: Click [here](#) to begin the activity. Depending on how you choose to complete the assignment, record your answers below. We'll work together to figure out where to include these in your application.

The Top 10 Things I Want Colleges To Know About Me

- 1) I was born in Mexico, Mexico City
- 2) My mom, grandma, dad, older brother, and I immigrated to the USA when I was about 4 years old
- 3) My first English word was tree, and I'll never forget it
- 4) I was bullied in Elementary for having trouble speaking English, being behind on math and science, and being weak
- 5) My passion for reading was ignited by J.K Rowling
- 6) I started tutoring other kids and neighbors circa 5th grade in math, followed by English soon after (Still doing it today but in various other subjects!)
- 7) My favorite book is *A Solitary Blue* by Cynthia Voigt because of how connected I feel to the protagonist
- 8) My dad was arrested and deported when I was 6 for domestic violence against my family
- 9) Aside from tutoring, my first 'real' job was helping put up flyers for a nearby laundromat when I was about 11 years old
- 10) I started working construction when I was 14 to help pay bills at home, and cover my own expenses.
- 11) After my dad was gone, my older brother and I stepped up and took over various responsibilities at home to make life easier for one another and to help our mom.
- 12) When my little brother was born, my older brother and I took a big part in raising and taking care of him.
- 13) My grandma was deported when I was about 9 years old, leaving just my mom, my brothers, and I in the US



- 14) Being an illegal immigrant has been pretty scary. Growing up I felt alienated from my classmates, being left out of field trips, camp trips, and other free programs because my mom was afraid of anyone finding out we were undocumented.
- 15) My grades began to drop from 8th grade to the first semester of my high school sophomore year because I felt as an Immigrant college apps would be impossible, and finding a stable job would be even harder
- 16) I was planning to drop out my sophomore year, and continue working construction to support my family
- 17) I've been captain of my high school swim team and water polo team, breaking a swim record and being nominated for the All American in water polo to (Just to name a few accomplishments)
- 18) I revived my school's California Scholarship Federation charter as its president for 2 years, and helped various classmates through their college apps in the process
- 19) I was the first student to pass the AP Physics 1 exam at my school as well as the first student of two to take AP Physics 2 and be the only one at my school to pass the exam as of now.
- 20) I had the highest SAT Score of my class
- 21) I play various instruments, mainly the oboe and tenor saxophone
- 22) I was awarded number one male athlete of my high school class as well as student athlete
- 23) I ran a successful coloring book drive for a children's hospital collecting nearly 700 coloring books and about 300 packs of colors (crayons and pencils)
- 24) I have an insatiable hunger for knowledge that only seems to expand as I continue to learn more and more.

The Feelings and Needs Exercise

Instructions: Click [here](#) to watch the *Feelings and Needs Exercise*. As you listen, you can complete the exercise below OR, if you prefer, do it on a piece of paper, take a photo, and upload it below. (On the Toolbar above, click Insert > Image)

Challenges	Effects	Feelings	Needed	What I did	What I learned
Family being separated because of domestic violence twice	Mom had to take up two jobs.	Confused, yet understanding	Order	Started working to help with bills	I taught myself to learn
	Dad was deported	Anxious	Autonomy	I took charge of myself and my little brother	To move on
	Brother and I took bigger responsibilities at	Worried	Reassurance		Strength
		Relieved	Growth		Gained purpose



	home, and with our little brother	Alone			
Grandma was deported	Lost a big part of my family Made me realize our position as immigrants	Lost Vulnerable Lonely	Safety Understanding Empathy	Found a way to stay connected with my family across the border Looked to make connection with people going through something similar	Distance can be conquered I was not alone
Being/realizing I am an undocumented immigrant	My grades slipped Lost my drive I couldn't travel far Certain disadvantages like not being able to find work as easily.	Disconnected Alone Heartbroken Ashamed Disillusioned	Hope Support Self-acceptance	Researched exactly how my status affected me I've begun to take steps that may lead to me gaining citizenship I sought hope in the endeavours of other undocumented students	Understand what I can and can't do That my status does and will not affect my abilities I can accomplish just as much as anyone else.

Adrian's Application

Main Personal Statement

At six years old, I stood locked away in the restroom. I held tightly to a tube of toothpaste because I'd been sent to brush my teeth to distract me from the commotion. Regardless, I knew what was happening: my dad was being put under arrest for domestic abuse. He'd hurt my mom physically and mentally, and my brother Jose and I had shared the mental strain. It's what had to be done.

Living without a father meant money was tight, mom worked two jobs, and my brother and I took care of each other when she worked. For a brief period of time the quality of our lives



slowly started to improve as our soon-to-be step-dad became an integral part of our family. He paid attention to the needs of my mom, my brother, and me. But our prosperity was short-lived as my step dad's chronic alcoholism became more and more recurrent. When I was eight, my younger brother Fernando's birth complicated things even further. As my step-dad slipped away, my mom continued working, and Fernando's care was left to Jose and me. I cooked, Jose cleaned, I dressed Fernando, Jose put him to bed. We did what we had to do.

As undocumented immigrants and with little to no family around us, we had to rely on each other. Fearing that any disclosure of our status would risk deportation, we kept to ourselves when dealing with any financial and medical issues. I avoided going on certain school trips, and at times I was discouraged to even meet new people. I felt isolated and at times disillusioned; my grades started to slip.

Over time, however, I grew determined to improve the quality of life for my family and myself.

Without a father figure to teach me the things a father could, I became my own teacher. I learned how to fix a bike, how to swim, and even how to talk to girls. I became resourceful, fixing shoes with strips of duct tape, and I even found a job to help pay bills. I became as independent as I could to lessen the time and money mom had to spend raising me.

I also worked to apply myself constructively in other ways. I worked hard and took my grades from Bs and Cs to consecutive straight A's. I shattered my school's 100M breaststroke record, and learned how to play the clarinet, saxophone, and the oboe. Plus, I not only became the first student in my school to pass the AP Physics 1 exam, I'm currently pioneering my school's first AP Physics 2 course ever.

These changes inspired me to help others. I became president of the California Scholarship Federation, providing students with information to prepare them for college, while creating opportunities for my peers to play a bigger part in our community. I began tutoring kids, teens, and adults on a variety of subjects ranging from basic English to home improvement and even Calculus. As the captain of the water polo and swim team I've led practices crafted to individually push my comrades to their limits, and I've counseled friends through circumstances similar to mine. I've done tons, and I can finally say I'm proud of that.

But I'm excited to say that there's so much I have yet to do. I haven't danced the tango, solved a Rubix Cube, explored how perpetual motion might fuel space exploration, or seen the World Trade Center. And I have yet to see the person that Fernando will become.

I'll do as much as I can from now on. Not because I have to. Because I choose to.



Adrian's Extracurricular Activities List (Final)

(1) President, California Scholarship Federation (CSF)

Planned meet-ings, re-cruited mem-bers, advocated for college readiness, provided information on college applications; part of a statewide honors society.

(2) Captain of the Varsity Swim Team

I lead practice routines to individually match needs of my comrades. Motivate teammates to push themselves to their limits. Rigorous solo training over summer

(3) Social Media Account Manager

Edit documents, run various social media pages, research new methods to promote growth of online traffic and convert traffic into sales or potential customers.

(4) Water Polo Varsity (9,10,12) Captain for 12

Play as goalie, participate in fundraisers, lead practices, lead during games alongside our coach, prepare/cleanup pool on game days.

(5) Chemistry Club (12)

Dis-cuss col-lege-level chem-istry on topics that include: sto-i-chiom-e-try, or-ganic chem-istry, and quan-tum me-chan-ics. Ran a com-mu-nity water qual-ity lab.

(6) Providing Academic Support to K-12 Students

Topics have included: simple math, calculus, APUSH, AP Chemistry, English, physics, and computer integrated operations

(7) Advanced Band/Orchestra (10)

First oboe in Ad-vanced Band and Or-ches-tra. Per-formed at LAUSD Arts Festival, Received superior rating at LAUSD "Let's Celebrate" Festival

(8) Construction and Remodeling

Helped local residents in repairing, renovating, and maintaining apartments. Duties include demolition, painting, landscaping, and installing floors.



(9) Engineering club (11)

Brainstormed and planned out an event to showcase Panorama HS's science department to Local Middle School Students

(10) Wrestling Varsity (11)

Learned to maintain weight, wrestled at 152 LBs. Participated and planned fundraisers. Taught basic wrestling skills to beginners

Adrian's Additional Info Section (Final)

(11) Could not finish wrestling season.

- Mom and older brother were caught in a car accident
- Responsibilities at home stacked up and I was also working at the time to pay bills, so I was unable to stay for practice

(11) Water Polo: Could not get a team going

- Returned from summer without coach or lifeguard
- Worked with Swim Coach to find a lifeguard and coach
- By the time we had them in place, we had to forfeit the season

(11-12) Summer Courses

- Tried to take college courses during the summer but I could not afford the classes and there was an issue regarding my residency

(10) Learned oboe to play in Advanced Band and Orchestra during second semester of sophomore year.

- Although I was in the Beginning Instruments (Advanced Band conflicted with Swimming during 6th period) I practiced the advanced music on my own and performed with the advanced section.

AP Physics I

- I was the first student at my school to ever pass the AP Physics I exam.



-There were two issues during the test: 1) the test began late because the previous test (AP Spanish) ran long and 2) during the AP Physics I exam, the fire alarms went off and continued for about an hour (the second half of the test). Unfortunately, this was the only time the test was offered and I was nonetheless proud of my score.

Calculus BC Explanation

After taking Calculus AB in my Junior year I wanted to take Calculus BC in my senior year. Unfortunately, my teacher felt he wouldn't be able to teach the class, and he lacked the knowledge/training to teach it. Instead I took up a second science, AP Physics II, during my senior year. I am one of the first students to take this course at my school.

Swimming

I've swam on a county team. During the summer I would practice at a park about 12 miles away, and travel either the same or farther to compete. Competed at LA84. Most Valuable Swimmer, Scored most points at swim meets, shattered school record in 100M Breaststroke, and qualified for city section on multiple occasions.

Student Athlete of the Year, Varsity Wrestling

Given to the student with the high-est GPA on the wrestling team. Courseload was also the most rigorous on the team, and I earned straight As.

Highest SAT Score in My Class

Scored a 1910 on old SAT (570 CR, 730 Math, 610 WR), which was the highest overall test score in my grade.

Nominated for the USA All-American Award, Water Polo

Recognizes outstanding athletes that have exemplary performance and sportsmanship. Requires athlete maintain a GPA of 3.5 or more

League Champions Water Polo

Went un-de-feated in our league for the Fall Water Polo Sea-son of 2013. Played as goalie. Required excellent team coordination.



Supplemental Essays & Short Answers for Stanford

Briefly elaborate on one of your extracurricular activities or work experiences. (150 word limit)

Our school's CSF chapter, was originally founded as an honor's society designed to help students find scholarship opportunities. But two years ago the club's engagement was at an all-time low. I saw an opportunity to make a difference, so I ran for President of the club, and won.

As President, I ran membership drives, presented the organization in different classrooms, and reached out to students during lunch, growing membership from 15 to almost 70. At the time, members were concerned that our school lacked adequate college preparation, so I turned the club's attention to preparing students for college. We created presentations focusing on requirements for state universities, brought in guest speakers, and created opportunities for students to become more involved in our community through fundraisers like car washes and toy giveaways.

Our aim has become clear: to help students get to the college of their dreams.

Name your favorite books, authors, films, and/or artists. (50 word limit)

Books: A Solitary Blue, House of the Scorpion, Harry Potter Series, Heart of Darkness, This Is for the Mara Salvatrucha: Inside the MS-13

Films: The Butterfly Effect, Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy

Documentaries: The World According to Monsanto,

Artists: Avenged Sevenfold, The Strokes, Paul Halley, George Gershwin, Weezer, The Architects

What newspapers, magazines, and/or websites do you enjoy? (50 word limit)

Websites: BBC World News, StoryVault, Crunchyroll

What is the most significant challenge that society faces today? (50 word limit)

We're going too fast. Society emphasizes fast cars, fast service, fast food, and of course fast communication. But if we go too fast, we miss out on the opportunity to think through decisions before making them. Particularly at this point in history, it's imperative we think through our decisions meticulously.

How did you spend your last two summers? (50 word limit)

Swimming training at El Cariso, where I ended up competing for my county, working construction

What were your favorite events (e.g., performances, exhibits, competitions, conferences, etc.) in recent years? (50 word limit)

200 yard Individual medley

100 yard Backstroke

Chicano Youth Leadership Conference

My little brother's drill team recital

What historical moment or event do you wish you could have witnessed? (50 words)

The Christmas truce of World War 1914 on the Western Front. An act of humanity amidst war and turmoil; just thinking about it leaves me speechless.



What five words best describe you? (10 words max)

Busy, geeky, introspective, assiduous, Fish.

Stanford students possess an intellectual vitality. Reflect on an idea or experience that has been important to your intellectual development. (250)

While most students and even some adults cower in fear at the utterance of the word “calculus,” I quake with excitement.

Want to know how fast that falling object is accelerating? You can derive it with calculus. Need to know the rate of decay for an unstable compound? Just take the derivative. Need to find the volume of a peculiar shape? There’s a chance a simple integral can help you out. You get the point.

It’s simple: One plus one is two, two times two is four, the derivative of x is one, and the integral of one is x plus c . Calculus, like any other form of math, is the language of logic.

I’ve reached a point where my life has begun to revolve around math. When I can, I drop in on my old math teacher’s class to tutor students in precalculus or calculus. I’ve spent nights discussing weird equations, all sorts of problems, and different applications of mathematical concepts with my older brother.

I’ve also started to seek ways to apply math to the rest of my life, and it’s become a part of my philosophy. Everything scattered in the world and universe is bound together by an underlying force. I believe we can represent this force through math, just as Euler attempted to in his famous equation: $e^{i\pi} + 1 = 0$ by combining 4 fundamental constants into one beautiful identity.

I haven’t decided on my major yet, but you can bet it’ll be math heavy.

Virtually all of Stanford's undergraduates live on campus. Write a note to your future roommate that reveals something about you or that will help your roommate -- and us -- know you better. (250)

Hi Roommate!

I am extrovertly introverted, but definitely not the other way around. That means I tend to keep to myself while I work, but when I need a break I look for ways to indulge myself in the company of others. In fact, after my morning run a couple days ago at the park near my house, I was delighted to meet an older gentleman who will soon be a father. We had an insightful conversation over the state of the nation.

At home, whether I’m experimenting in the kitchen, organizing my work area, or studying a mind-boggling concept, know that there will be music playing--anything from pop to country, metal to classic, and even K-pop. If you’re not a fan, don’t worry I have these awesome headphones, that light up by the way.

I should mention that I prefer a neat room (I call it “modernistic decor”), to keep things organized and simple.

Most of all, I have an undeniable passion for deep, pensive, lively conversations on a myriad of topics. It’s these conversations that keep my point of view and mind from becoming static. I expect to learn just as much from my classes as I will from the diverse student body at Stanford, especially you.



What matters to you, and why? (250)

Five years ago I took up a demolition job from a couple of neighbors so that I could help my mom pay bills around the house. I did a good enough job the first time that my neighbors told me that, if I wanted, I could continue working with them on other construction projects.

It has been a demanding job and I made numerous mistakes at first, like using the wrong tools for different tasks or the wrong size screw. On occasion, I was scolded for my mistakes and I felt incompetent, as I wasn't able to complete tasks as fast as my co-workers. There were even days that I considered quitting, but I stuck with it.

Since then, I've built, repaired, and remodeled numerous homes for family, friends, neighbors, and even strangers. I've removed and replaced carpets; broken down walls as well as driveways; installed cabinets, lights, both wood and tile flooring; and painted room after room.

Working in construction has made me feel like a bigger part of society, because I'm shaping the buildings and offices my community uses. Although I don't make the choices in design, my workmanship is reflected in every job I've done. Because of this, my most memorable projects are those that I've taken on by myself.

But this is not what I will do the rest of my life.

What matters to me is supporting my family. But there are other ways I can help. Getting a degree is the next step.



Three Ways to Find Your Potential “Super” Topics

A. Look to your Activities List.

B. Find inspiration in the UC Personal Insight Question Prompts, which are:

1. Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes, or contributed to group efforts over time.
2. Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.
3. What would you say is your greatest talent or skill? How have you developed and demonstrated that talent over time?
4. Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity or worked to overcome an educational barrier you have faced.
5. Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to overcome this challenge. How has this challenge affected your academic achievement?
6. Think about an academic subject that inspires you. Describe how you have furthered this interest inside and/or outside of the classroom.
7. What have you done to make your school or your community a better place?
8. Beyond what has already been shared in your application, what do you believe makes you stand out as a strong candidate for admissions to the University of California?

Examples of “four potential topics” (i.e. topics) from 10 past students who applied to the UCs:

- Surfing, overcoming challenges related to dad’s cancer, Red Cross volunteering, love of reading
- Officer Cadet School, computer programming, overcoming challenge of being overweight, internship at Accenture
- Robotics Club, drumming, developing an app, gardening
- English tutoring, working professionally as an actor, love of Chemistry, working in a restaurant as a server
- Model United Nations, Leadership class, spreading awareness about disaster preparedness, experiencing three very different educational systems
- Science Olympiad, how art has shaped me, taking care of brother, love of Biology
- Volunteering for American Youth Soccer Organization, how fashion has shaped me, love of History & Film, being undocumented
- Improv comedy, ice skating, teaching science to middle schoolers, being an amazing cook
- Being vegetarian, internship at local hospital, acapella singing, advocating for worker’s rights
- Love of writing, professional voiceover work, experiences attending 13 different schools, lessons from leading a camp at Burning Man for the past few years (this one’s me)
- Adrian chose: Overcoming the challenge of being undocumented, Math (academic side), California Scholarship Federation (leadership), Working construction (hard-working + differentiator)



C. Additional questions:

- What's the most responsibility you've ever had?
- What activity do you do that makes you feel most like yourself?
- What is your actual superpower? How and where do you express it?
- What's the toughest decision you've ever made?
- What's a rockstar accomplishment you've had--either in or out of school?
- What are your "two truths and a lie"?