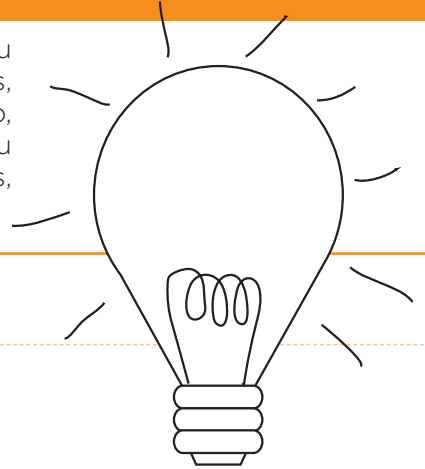


THE OBSESSION LIST

A writer needs a broad definition of what constitutes an obsession: anything you remember or that pops into your head for no good reason, that disturbs, elates, provokes, annoys, upsets, inspires, or pulls at you. In the next 7 minutes or so, try to note at least one item in each category below. Nothing is too small. If you truly draw a blank in a category, just move on. The idea here is that these ideas, or obsessions, are a great source for essay topics.



- a smell:
- a word:
- a day of the week:
- a daily ritual:
- a skill or talent you do not possess:
- a particular sound:
- a one-time dream:
- something about your name:
- a small place that has a name (the French Quarter in New Orleans, the corner of Hollywood and Vine, Straus Park):
- a non-obvious body part (skin, freckles, your uncle's ear hair, your own thumbs):
- something a friend once said:
- something you wish you had said but didn't:
- something you said but wish you hadn't:
- an ongoing or unresolved argument you have with someone in particular about something trivial (length of your hair, dirty dishes):
- your favorite (or least favorite) curse word:
- something in the natural world (ginko leaf, sparrow, acorn, quartz):
- a human-made visual (an ad, painting, graffiti):
- a song; a few words from that song:
- a piece of dialogue from a movie:
- an animal or something about an animal:
- a deficit or weakness in yourself:
- a cliché:
- something you can't wait for:
- a specific, very small moment (lasting no more than a minute) when you knew what love was:
- something about food (persimmons, Hunan sauce, jawbreakers):
- a fear, small (spiders, multiple choice tests):
- a fear, medium (heights, clowns):
- a fear, jumbo (the expanding universe):
- something you misunderstood or mispronounced for a long time:
- a time you had a hand in killing or saving something:



Pencil Tip: try using these 'obsessions' as anecdotes in your essays!