

## **Considering the Audience**

Whenever you write, you need to consider your audience.

*“Who will be reading what I write? “*

This is the person you should be having a conversation with in your essay.

### **The University of California (and other large institutions):**

The reader here wants to know factual information about you: specific things you have done with your time, why you chose these things, what life experiences have shaped you, what family circumstances have influenced you . . . things that help to understand you/ what diversity of thought or background you will bring to the campus, in the context of their applicant pool. This reader doesn't have much other information about you than your application and resume, grades and scores. Your essay is the chance to fill him or her in with the kind of student you will be: active, passive, athletic, artistic, studious, etc. Your personality/"voice" is not the critical thing. So, your writing can be factual and straightforward.

### **Private Colleges:**

The audience here, for the most part, is reading your essay in the context of much more information about you. He knows, of course, about your grades, courses, and scores. But she also has letters of recommendation, a full resume, and sometimes a portfolio or audition or coach's referral. Now he wants to know who you are; he knows what you have done. The essay for this reader is therefore of necessity a piece that gives insight into your personality, your values, your feelings about things, what motivates you, and what you care about. The reflective essay with a strong personal voice is very important. Imagine you are speaking directly to this admissions person as you write.