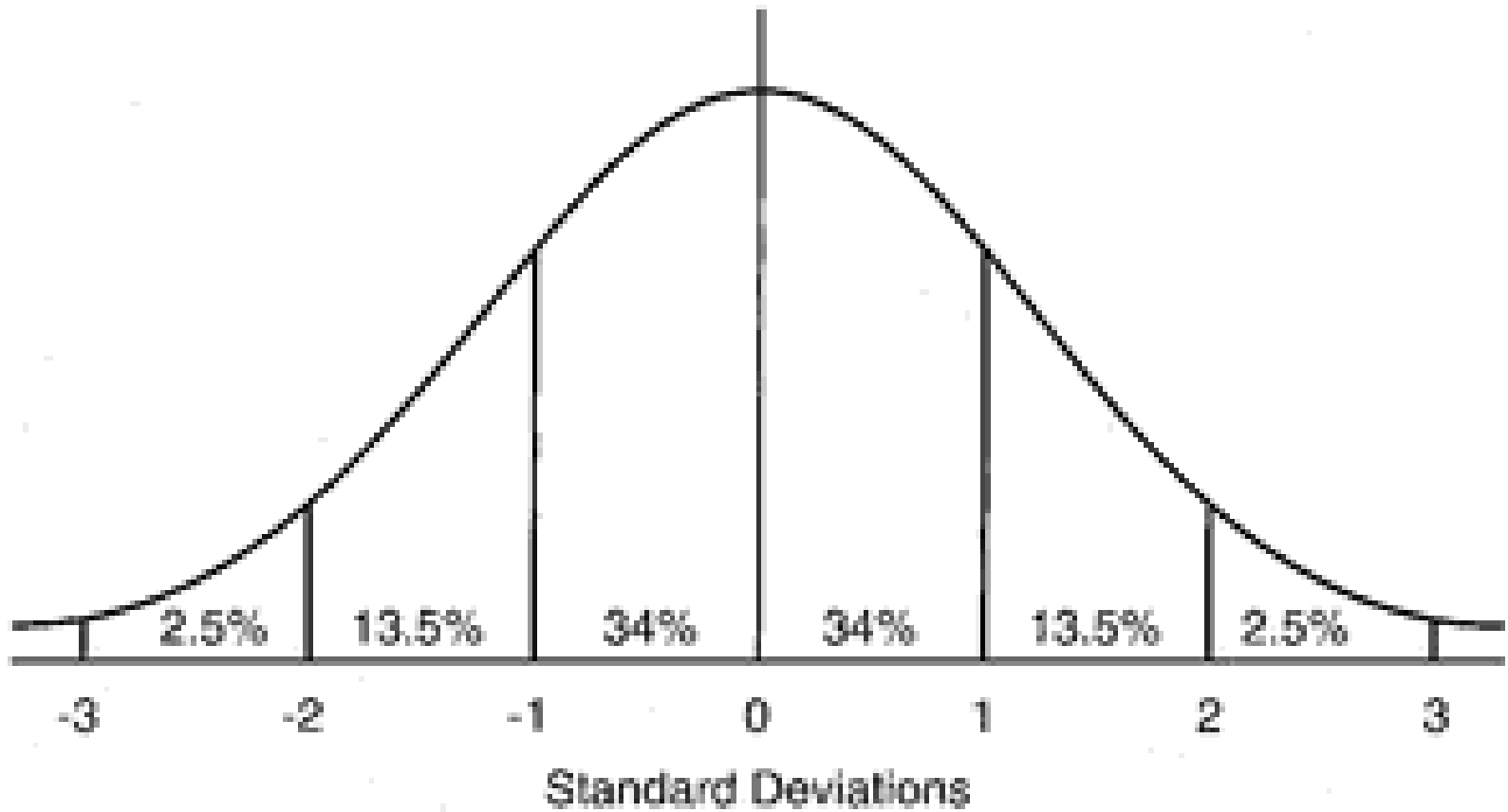




THE ESSAY

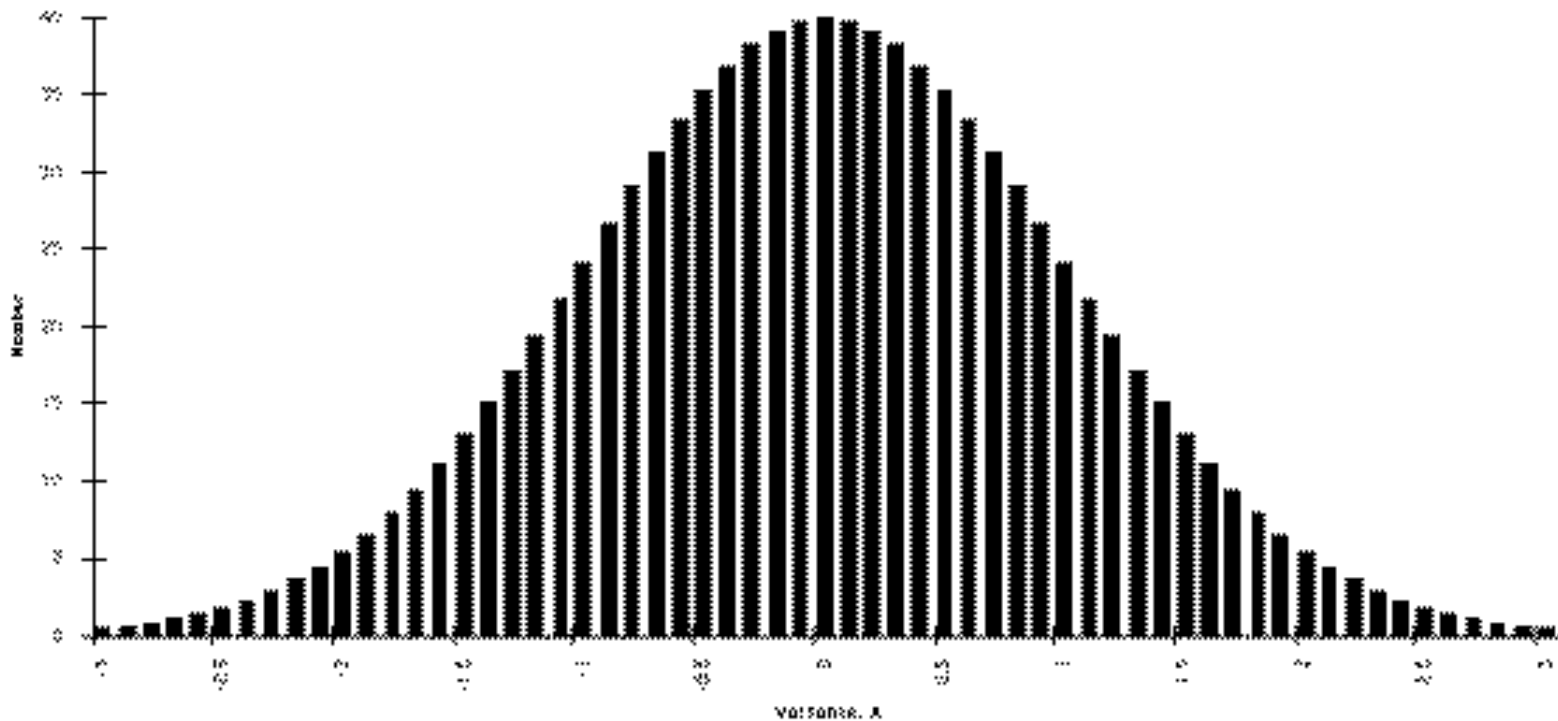


V



Gaussian Distribution

Gaussian (Bell-Shaped) Distribution - Low variability



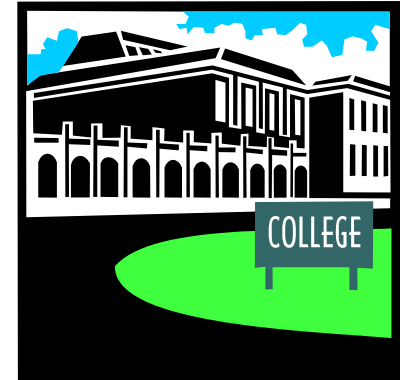
What can the essay do for you?

- Introduce you.
- Show your passions.
and your strengths.
- Make you into a real, living, breathing *interesting* person.
- Help you stand out from the crowd.



How do you get started?

- Consider the colleges on your list.
- Study their websites. What makes them special?
- Copy all essay prompts to one document and get familiar with them.
- Look for similarities and overlaps in prompts.
- You will likely have to write more than one essay, but, ideally, not more than 2 or 3 + short answers.



Who's your audience?

- Admission Officers
- Youngish
- Overworked
- Underpaid
- Overwhelmed



How do you wake them up?

- Be interesting.
- Be entertaining.
- Be appealing.
- Be different.
- But most of all. . .



Be Authentic!

What should you tell them?



A story from your life—

- An epiphany that changed you.
- A period of challenge and growth you endured.
- A success of which you're immensely proud.
- A mistake you can now laugh about.
- *Something that no one else will tell them.*



*When should
the story have occurred?*



Preferably
since you started high school. . .
Or at least continuing
during high school.

Recent is better than long ago.

What should admissions learn about you from your essay?

- Who you are
- What's your personality like
- What you care about
- Why you're a good fit for them
- Why you will succeed



Show v. Tell

- *Catch their attention*, then
- Tell them a story
- Show them
 - Who you are
 - What you care about
 - Why you will succeed





What should your essay do?

- Make them laugh. . . But only if you're genuinely funny
- Make them cry. . . But only if you have a truly sad story to tell
- Make them smile. . . You want them to like you
- Make them think. . . But don't make them run to the dictionary
- Make them want to get to know you, to learn more about who you are.
- But, above all, don't put them to sleep: DON'T BE BORING!!!

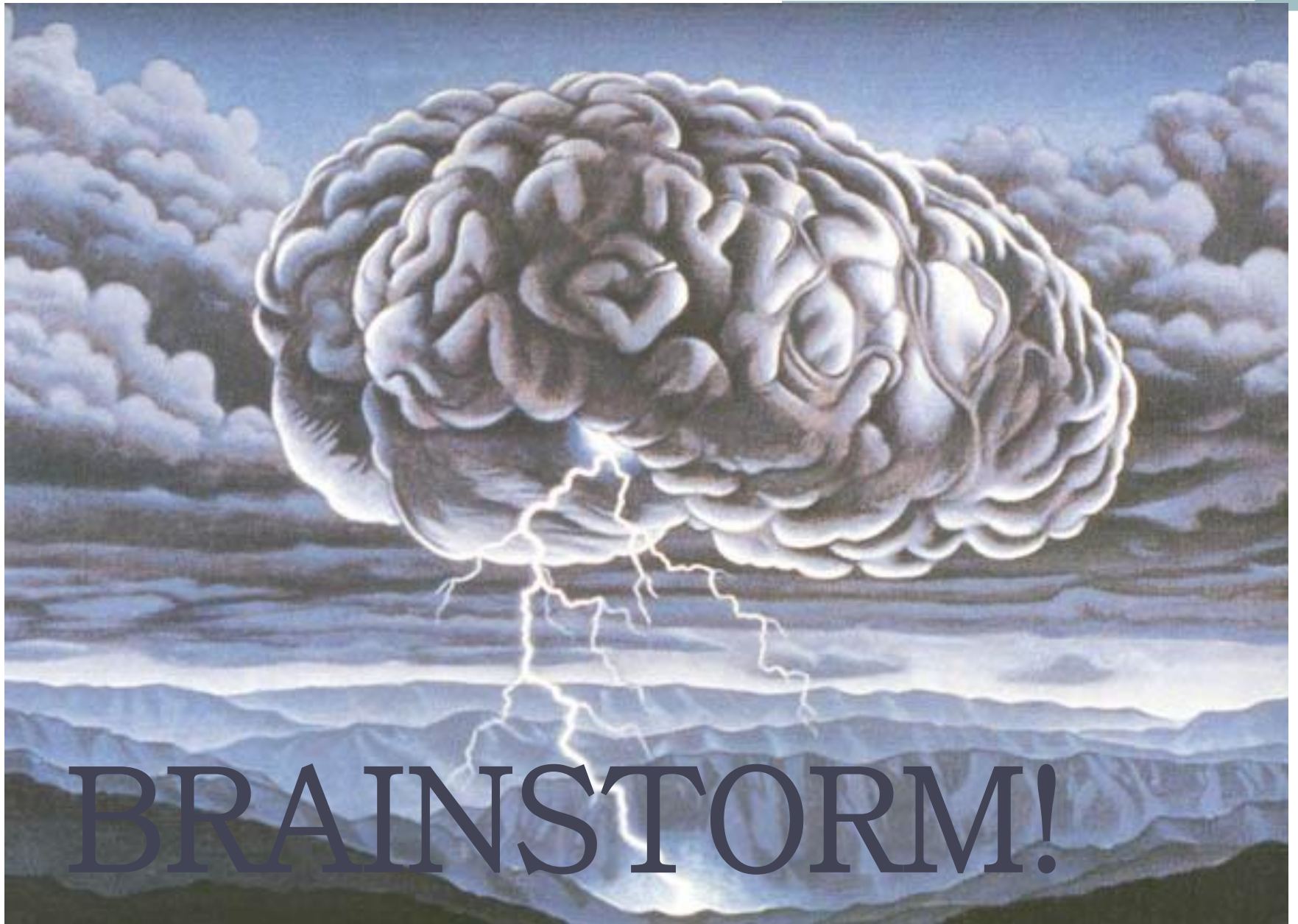
Getting Started

- What makes you different?
- What will make you succeed?
- What will you bring to your college that differs from what others will bring?
- What do the admissions officers need to know about you?
- List 4 or 5 things and keep them handy.



Now, what story do you want to share?

- Your passions
- The hardest thing you've done.
- A failure, and what you learned from it.
- An accomplishment you're especially proud of.
- Who you admire and why.
- The most important thing you've learned about yourself.



BRAINSTORM!

And then?

- When you find you're excited by the story you're telling, you've found a subject.
- Tell the whole story to someone—even to yourself. Just think it all the way through.
- Then look back at the list of what you want to show—Can them out?
- Look at your prompts; where does your story fit?
- Make a brief outline of what you want to cover/include.

And then??

Pour it out!

Let it flow from your brain to your paper. Forget about structure and grammar; tell the story like you're talking to a friend.

Then go back. Make sure you're grabbing their attention; fix the writing



*And once it's all down on paper
and you think you could be done.*

• •

- Read it aloud to your mom, dad or best friend.
- Read it aloud to an acquaintance. What does it show someone who doesn't know you well?
- Read it aloud to yourself.
- Read it and check it against the list of things you want the college to know about you.
- Read for typos, grammatical glitches, and flow.

Ask everyone:

- Is this your voice?
- Does it sound natural?
- Do you sound like someone they'd like to know?
- What does it tell them about you? (Check your list again.)

When you think it's perfect. . .

- Have one or two people whom you believe have a great command of the English language read it for typos, errors, etc. (DON'T let them change your voice.)
- Then pronounce yourself “DONE!”
- Paste it in the RIGHT place. (Double and triple check this.)
- Read it one more time to make sure it uploaded correctly.

Send it in!

