

Personal Statement Brainstorm

Who Are You

What does a graduate school need to know about you? This should be information that makes you uniquely interesting. It may be how certain factual pieces of information come together. If you desire to explain a low entrance exam score or poor semester GPA, make that note here.

What is your history?

List 3-4 academic experiences or courses that are most relevant to the graduate programs to which you will apply. For each experience you list, write a few words that will help you remember a specific story or example of why this part of your “history” is important. Examples of stories could be a problem you solved, discovery you made, failure you learned from, someone you helped, something you created, an influential reading, an impactful assignment, etc.

Why is this an excellent fit?

Your brainstorm/answer to this question will be different for each program to which you apply! Think about faculty at the program, specialties, research opportunities, location—anything relating to your fit and match. Is there anything specific you want to do at this program?