**College Board Critique**

**College Application Essay 1**

**The Critique**

Admission officials consider how you write your essay, not just what you write about.

**The Introduction**

The introduction seems to have a lack of focus: Where's the writer going with this paragraph? Where's the writer going with this essay? Also, the writer needs to tighten the phrasing (e.g., "while halftime occurred" to "at halftime" or "From first sight" to "Immediately").

**The Body**

There is a very abrupt transition from the first paragraph to the second: How did we get from Michigan's diversity to the writer's clubs? The second paragraph also includes general statements with little evidence: How did these activities reveal career paths?

Can the writer be more specific? What does "participated in two blood banks" mean? Did he drive volunteers from across town, sign people in all day on three Saturdays every month except August or spend 15 minutes one Thursday afternoon in the nurse's office giving blood?

In the third paragraph, we have to ask: What does the writer do at Maas Brothers? "Interact" needs definition. What here shows that the writer has thought about the time spent at Maas Brothers? Also in this paragraph, there is a misspelling of different ("diffrent"): The writer did not proofread thoroughly.

The information in the fourth paragraph (as well as the previous two paragraphs) appears elsewhere in the application. Essays that simply run down your accomplishments don't add to your application. And does the reader need to know that "the girls played teams from other parts of Florida"?

The writer would be better off focusing on one of the things discussed in this essay, such as working with the girls' soccer team. What he did to make Jennifer and Gretchen and Courtney enjoy soccer even though they won only three of their games would be more vivid and focused than a lot of talk about passing things on to future generations.

**The Conclusion**

The conclusion returns to the earlier idea of diversity at Michigan, but this idea was not developed in the body of the essay. It's not necessary to mention "the great reputation of this fine school." Instead, the writer should give specific, programmatic reasons Michigan offers the kind of education he needs.

**Overall**

This essay seems full of information and demonstrates basic essay organization, but it lacks focus and proof. The reader gets a laundry list of activities rather than a clear sense of who the writer is and what he cares and thinks about.

The writer also repeats some phrases. He mentions the “University of Michigan” six times and repeats “academic and non-academic” twice.