

# ESSAY WRITING TIPS

## Presenters

Samuel Pennisi

Assistant Director of Admissions

University of Chicago

Deyo Olorunnisola

Director of Admissions

Schreyer Honors College

Penn State University

# The plan

- Introduction of adults - 2 minutes
- Meet your neighbor - 5 minutes
- Why are essays important? - 6 minutes
- Overview of theme for essay - 2 minutes
- Theme topics - 8 minutes per topic, 40 minutes
- Identify strengths/focus - 5 minutes
- Select a topic and free write - 30 minutes
- Call back together - remaining 15 minutes



# College Application Essay Workshop



# 5 Things Admissions Officers Look For in an Application Essay

- ▶ What does the essay say about the applicant?
- ▶ Are there deep, personal reflections?
- ▶ What will the applicant bring to the community?
- ▶ Use the essay to tell them what your application can't.
- ▶ Can the applicant write?



## It reveals the PERSON behind the statistics

- ▶ Reveals something important about you that your grades and test scores can't—your personality.
- ▶ Can give admission officers a sense of who you are, as well as showcasing your writing skills.
- ▶ Treat it as a tool for standing out!





# What does your college require?

## APPLY TEXAS

- [www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org)
  - Preview 2017-2018
  - Admissions Information

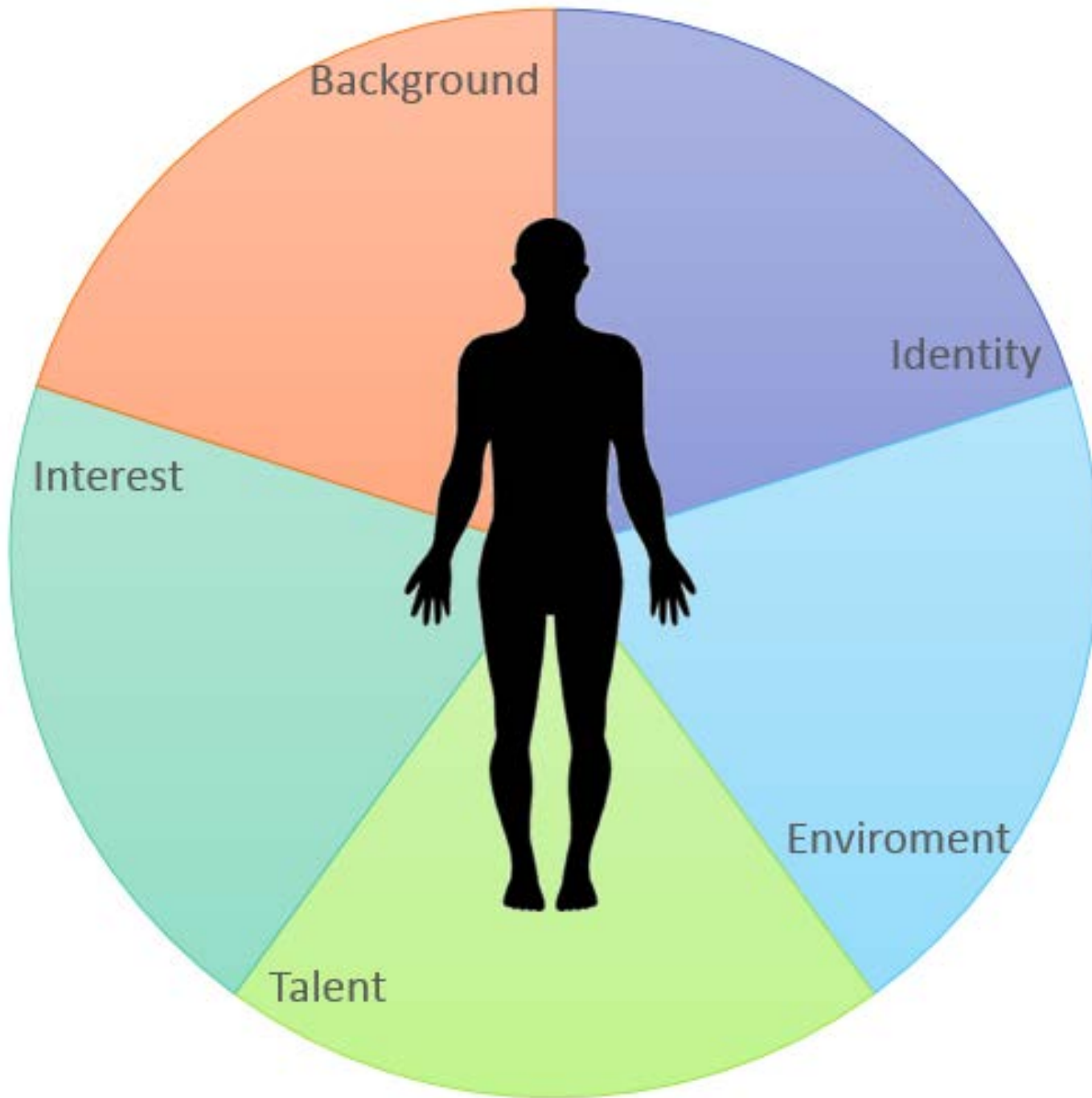
## COMMON APPLICATION

[www.commonapp.org/requirements\\_grid.pdf](http://www.commonapp.org/requirements_grid.pdf)

## COALITION APPLICATION

<http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/students.html>





# Background

Childhood  
influences

Educational  
influences

Family  
history

Personal  
successes  
and  
challenges

Things that  
were  
important  
to you in  
the past



# Identity

Spiritual  
Identity

Gender  
Identity

Racial  
Identity

Cultural  
Identity

Familial  
Identity

# Environment

## Family

- Number
- Type
- Changes
- Marriages
- Births
- Deaths
- Benefits and drawbacks
- Language
- Religion
- Culture

## Home

- Type
- Duration
- Moves
- Living Arrangements
- Public Spaces
- Private Spaces
- Favorite Spaces
- Benefits and drawbacks

## Neighborhood

- Type
- Duration
- Demographics
- Reputations
- Misconceptions
- Traditions
- Benefits and drawbacks

# Talent

Artistic

Academic

Athletic

## Other:

- Debate
- Multilingual
- Web Design
- Robotics
- Graphic design
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- 
- 
-

# Interest

Music

Books

Podcasts

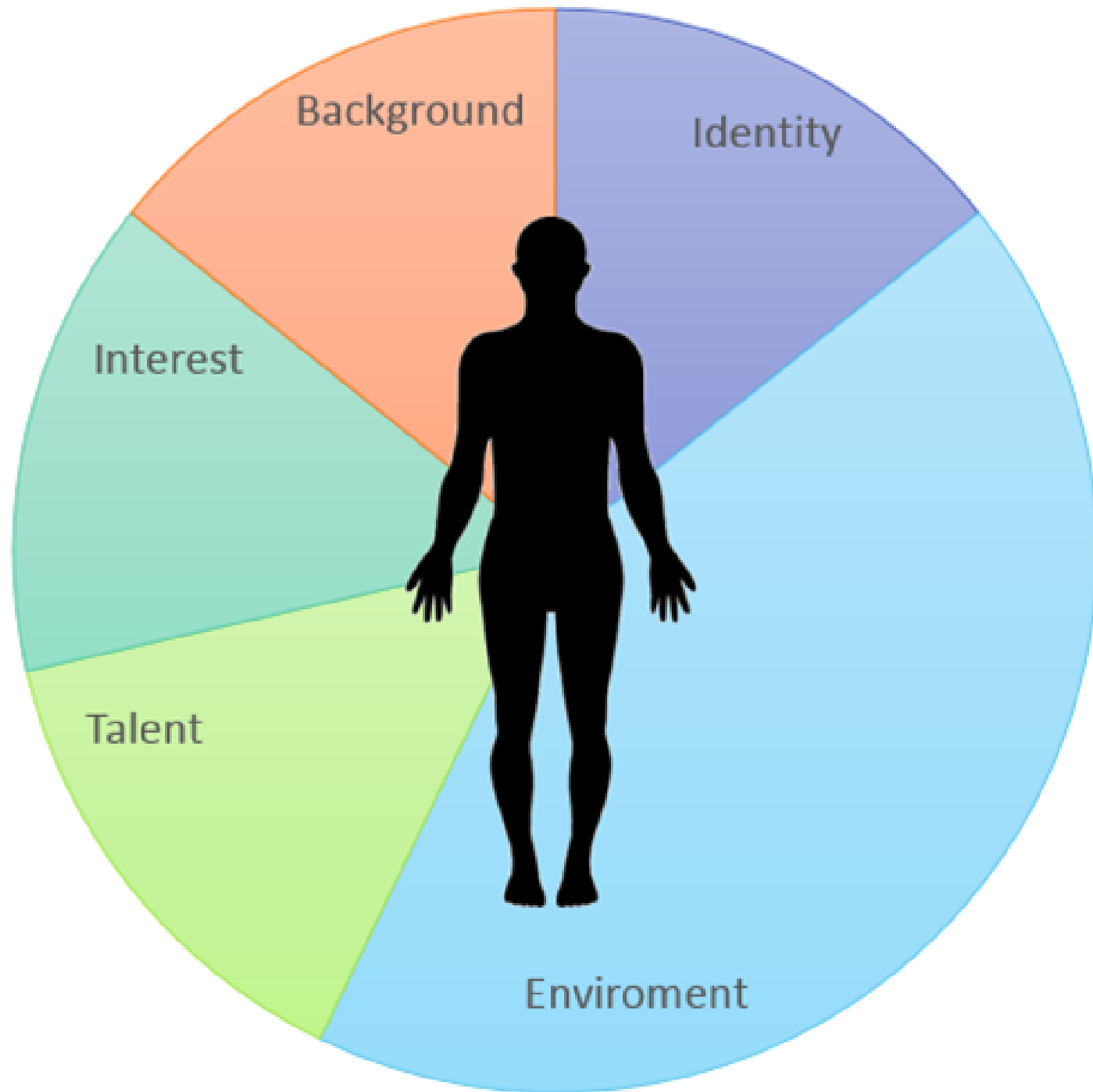
Technology

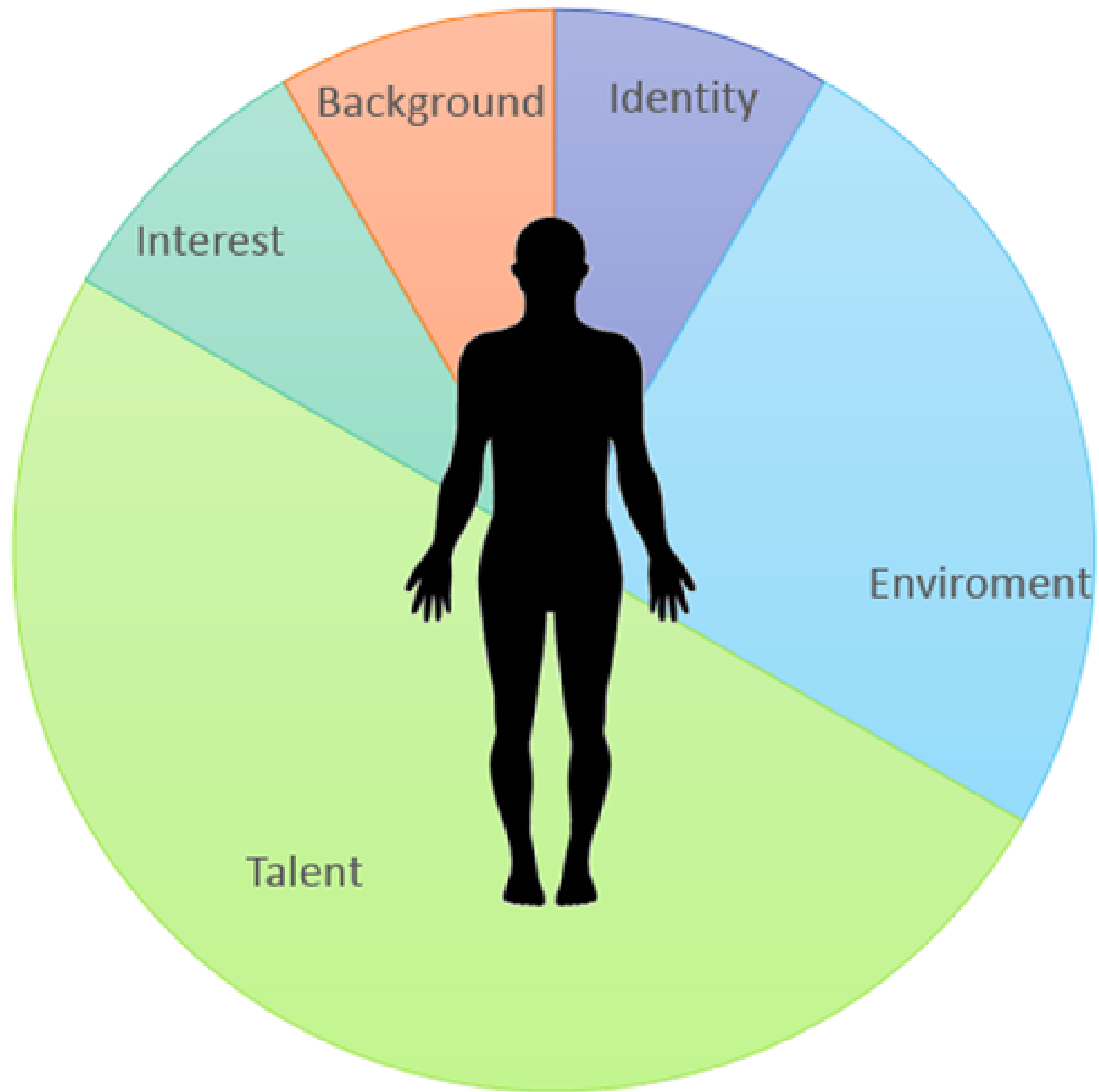
Activities

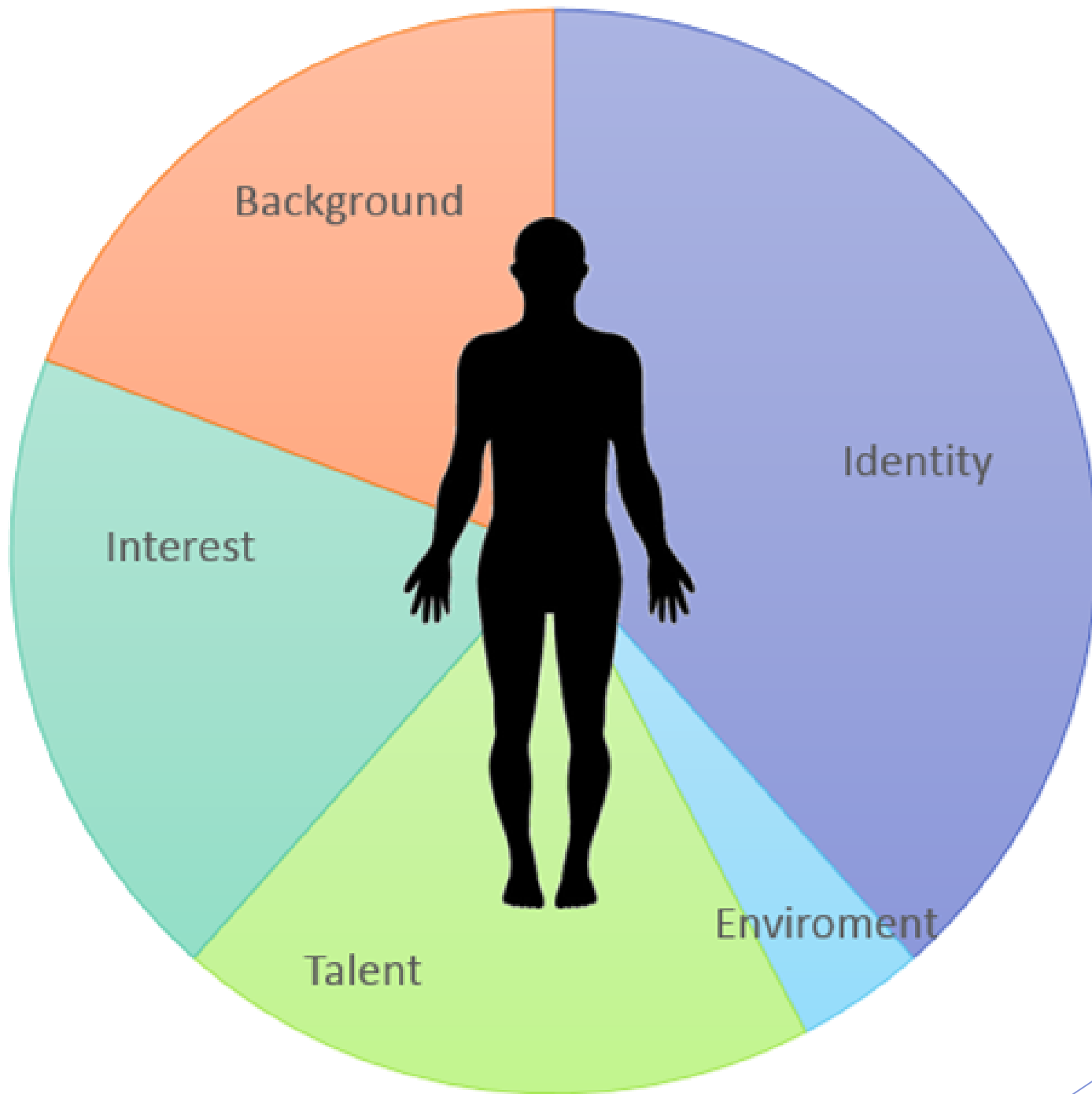
Hobbies

Political  
Causes /  
Political  
Causes

Volunteer  
Activities







# 2018 Apply Texas Questions

**Essay A:** What was the environment in which you were raised? Describe your family, home, neighborhood, or community, and explain how it has shaped you as a person.

**Essay B:** Most students have an identity, an interest, or a talent that defines them in an essential way. Tell us about yourself.

**Essay C:** You've got a ticket in your hand - Where will you go? What will you do? What will happen when you get there?





Common App Essay Questions

Coalition App Essay Questions

The clock was remarkably slow as I sat, legs tightly crossed, squirming at my desk. "Just raise your hand," my mind pleaded, "ask." But despite my urgent need to visit the restroom, I remained seated, begging time to move faster. You see, I was that type of kid to eat French Fries dry because I couldn't confront the McDonalds cashier for some Heinz packets. I was also the type to sit crying in front of school instead of asking the office if it could check on my late ride. Essentially, I chose to struggle through a problem if the solution involved speaking out against it.

As a kid I was always curious. I was unafraid to ask questions and didn't worry how dumb they would make me sound. In second grade I enrolled in a summer science program and built a solar-powered oven that baked real cookies. I remember obsessing over the smallest details: Should I paint the oven black to absorb more heat? What about its shape? A spherical shape would allow for more volume, but would it trap heat as well as conventional rectangular ovens? Even then I was obsessed with the details of design.

I look at the ticking, white clock: it's eleven at night, my primetime. I clear the carpet of the Sony camera charger, the faded Levi's, and last week's Statistics homework. Having prepared my work space, I pull out the big, blue box and select two 12 by 12 crème sheets of paper. The layouts of the pages are already imprinted in my mind, so I simply draw them on scratch paper. Now I can really begin.