

Writing Requirements

CSSSA WRITING REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS – 2025

The Writing Department welcomes all eligible applicants who are interested in writing creatively in an inspiring and supportive environment. All classes are accessible to all skill levels.

We want to hear your voice. We are not looking for perfection. We want to read your writing in your language about your world, not a vocab list arranged in a way that mimics another writer. More important than grammar and spelling is your own unique relationship to language and the courage to be yourself on the page.

That said, prepare your application with thoughtful attention. Take your time. Be certain that what we see on the page is what you want us to see.

Assignments

All assignments must be typed or neatly hand-written, and on separate pages. All entries must be typed in 12 pt. font, with 1-inch margins. No fancy fonts. Include your name and the proper assignment letter (A, B, C, or D) on each page.

A. What Writing Means to You: Write a short reflective piece on the role writing plays in your life. Why do you write? What kind of writing excites you most? Who are some pieces of writing that have inspired you? What are your favorite forms (short stories, novels, poetry, comic books, film/tv) and why? (Limit: 500 words/double-spaced.)

B. Original Writing: Choose one, and only one, of the following prompts:

- 1. Prose Fiction:** Think about something you yearn for. Imagine a character who wants the same thing, but for different reasons. Write a short story about this character trying — and risking — to get what they want. Do they get what they want? What do they learn along the way? How does the experience change them? (Limit: 700 words/double-spaced.)
- 2. Dramatic Writing (screenplay, play, comic book script):** Think of someone in your life who you can't relate to. Imagine a character based on that person. Write a scene in which you and this imagined character must work together to solve a problem. (Limit: 3 pages, single-spaced)
- 3. Spoken Word Poetry:** Record the performance of a spoken word piece that expresses who you are. (Limit: 2 minutes)
- 4. Poetry:** Imagine each room of your house and the details that make it unique. These can range from the way it smells to any memories you may have of it or how it looks at a certain time of day. Write a poem that includes each room in your house using these images. (Limit: 2 pages/single-spaced)

C. Writing Sample: Share a piece you wrote on your own. The work can be fiction, dramatic writing (play, screenplay, or comic book script), spoken word poetry, or poetry. Excerpts from longer works are acceptable. Do not include school assignments. (Limit: 3 pages/double-spaced for prose, single spaced for poetry or screenplay/play format.)

RETURNING STUDENTS ONLY:

E. Returning Student Statement: If you previously attended CSSSA, please respond to the following questions: What did you learn from your time at CSSSA? How and in what ways has your writing grown since leaving CSSSA? What do you plan to do with your four weeks if you return?

ALL STUDENTS, PLEASE NOTE:

Parents and teachers are not to edit or collaborate with the writer.

Assignments must be uploaded to submit the application. Please save your assignments with your first initial and last name followed by the appropriate letter for each of the submissions. For example, John Smith would save his work as follows:

jsmith_A

jsmith_B

jsmith_C