Stanford University Application Questions

# **ACTIVITIES**

## 1. Briefly elaborate on one of your extracurricular activities or work or family responsibilities. (50-150 words)

With asthma and scoliosis, any logical person interested in music would have chosen to play one of the smaller instruments: I instead fell in love with the largest members of the woodwind family, to my mother's intense protest. Starting on the puny clarinet, I quickly branched out to the bass clarinet—my major instrument—and the colossal contralto clarinet, which dwarfed me in height. In my quest to find the instrument that is the biggest pain to fit in the car, I have also picked up the alto, tenor, and baritone saxophones. Across my musical career, I have participated in a variety of programs at my school, including the concert band, jazz band, and pep band, as well as the pit orchestra for school musicals. I am also a five-year member of the Central Coast Section Honor Band, being either the principal clarinet or bass clarinet. **(144 words)**



# **SHORT QUESTIONS**

## 1. What is the most significant challenge that society faces today? (50 word limit)

While there are numerous challenges that society faces today, the most pressing issue that we currently need to address is the dramatic loss in global biodiversity caused by anthropogenic activities and climate change, as well as the ramifications associated with this loss of biodiversity. **(44 words)**

## 2. How did you spend your last two summers? (50 word limit)

Over the last summer, I volunteered as a Counselor-in-Training at Cazadero Music Camp in Sonoma County for six weeks. In 2018, I spent my summer volunteering at the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History, and I also went on a family vacation to Europe. **(44 words)**

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## 3.What historical moment or event do you wish you could have witnessed? (50 word limit)

I wish I could have accompanied John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt on their 1903 Yosemite camping trip. It would have been an amazing experience to explore the still pristine Yosemite Valley alongside its staunchest protector, listening to the conversations that changed the future of America's national parks and forests. **(49 words)**

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## 4. What five words best describe you? (5-10 words)

Proactive, flexible, inquisitive, clever, eager. **(5 words)**

## 5. When the choice is yours, what do you read, listen to, or watch? (50 word limit)

My brain has become a weaponized vault of strange and useless information thanks to the staggering number of educational videos that I watch on a daily basis. I’m capable of derailing any conversation, assaulting my victims with a barrage of oddly specific and obscure facts at a moment’s notice. **(49 words)**

## 6. Name one thing you are looking forward to experiencing at Stanford. (50 word limit)

Moving over five times, I have often been the “new kid.” At each school, playing in band was my ticket to new friendships. As a result, I can’t wait to participate in Stanford’s outrageous marching band, as it will let me connect with like-minded individuals, while doing something I love. **(50 words)**

## 7. Imagine you had an extra hour in the day — how would you spend that time? (50 word limit).

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I have nightmares about the double Windsor knot. Despite being in Model UN for four years, my pathetic ties always makes me look like a complete buffoon in committee. With all that time, I could finally perfect my wardrobe with a *crisp* tie, transforming me into an unstoppable diplomatic machine. **(50 words)**

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# **SHORT ESSAYS**

## 1. The Stanford community is deeply curious and driven to learn in and out of the classroom. Reflect on an idea or experience that makes you genuinely excited about learning. (100-250 words)

The Berkeley Model United Nations conference separates the men from the boys. Like those videos showing people being trampled on Black Friday, the weak will be culled in committee. Sorry grandma.

At the BMUN conference, one of the best ways to assert your diplomatic dominance is by writing a bomb position paper. For my first year, I got stuck representing Kazakhstan on the issue of the governance of geoengineering. Needless to say, it was extremely difficult finding enough reliable information to write a ten-page research paper on an obscure country’s views on such a specific topic. I’ll spare you the details, but I learned the hard way that the Kazakh government couldn’t care less about geoengineering, and I got a whopping 0% on the paper. Alas, I tried my best. I eventually redeemed myself, winning an award for my outstanding quality of research in a 150 person committee.

Even without attending fancy conferences, being a four-year member of my school’s Model UN club has been such a transformative experience. Not only has it encouraged me to actively follow international politics, it has also provided me with the unique experience to view and understand current events from a different culture’s perspective. While I find it highly unlikely that I will ever become a real delegate, participating in Model UN has been one of the highlights of my high school career, teaching me several important communication and leadership skills while also inspiring me to become engaged in current events. **(247 words)**

## 2. Virtually all of Stanford's undergraduates live on campus. Write a note to your future roommate that reveals something about you or that will help your roommate – and us – know you better. (100-250 words)

Howdy!

If you’re reading this, that means we both got into Stanford! Wahoo!

Out of curiosity, do you like to do any of the following things:

* Have friendly Nerf battles at the park—to the bitter end? (Blasters or swords, your pick)
* Go on a long stroll on the beach and watch the sunset with the boys?
* Crave shredded cheese at three in the morning?
* Duke it out in Minecraft Hunger Games?
* Break the fourth wall? (Hello readers!)
* Listen to an unhealthy amount of bass-boosted meme songs? (My favorite is the Wii Boxing Theme)
* Watch the Bee Movie on a daily basis?
* Play the Otamatone?
* Partake in the Seedless Watermelon vs. Catholics rivalry? (Personally I’m a diehard Seedless Watermelons Against Catholics fan, but I understand if you support the Catholics Against Seedless Watermelons)
* Live life on the edge by building Lego sets intended for ages 12-16? (You rebel)

If so, I’m sorry to say, but you just become best buds with the biggest dork on this campus. You’re about to have quite an interesting year. Sorry to bombard you with a bazillion questions, I’m just so excited to meet you!

I almost forgot…I want to warn you about something: at some unspecified time of the year, I will have to freeze my bug collection. You will open the mini fridge. You will see a bunch of dead bugs. You will scream. It will be ugly. I’m sorry, but it must happen.

Cheers!

Your Roomie,

Jack Connolly

**(245 words)**

## 3. Tell us about something that is meaningful to you and why. (100 to 250 words)

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The painted tiger moth. Duh.

First off, this bad boy is my spirit animal. While it may appear initially like your boring run-of-the-mill gray moth, when disturbed, it exposes its lower wings and abdomen, which have an extremely vibrant neon pink color to bamboozle a potential predator. I would say that this unique coloration is a perfect representation of my own personality, as I appear to most people as just your ordinary kid. Like the painted tiger moth, I’m a lot more interesting once I show my true colors.

On a more serious note, this goofy moth has likely had just as large of an impact on me as some of my favorite teachers. Like my amazing science teachers, this moth sparked my interest in insects, which I continued to develop throughout high school by making a bug collection and by becoming a certified California Naturalist.

When I first moved to Carmel, an outdoor light in October wasn’t complete without your friendly neighborhood painted tiger moth. Four years later, they have become extremely rare visitors. I’ve seen a grand total of half a moth this year, as I found it as a crushed pulp on the floor, trampled by my less observant peers. Considering how common they were in years past and how fast their numbers have declined, I am afraid that these amazing moths responsible for shaping my future may disappear entirely from my local area, with nobody noticing their decline, or even their existence in the first place. **(250 words)**

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