

WRITING A GOOD SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY

Important Points To Remember:

- 1) The scholarship essay is often underestimated by students in regards to its' significance in the scholarship selection process. The essay is oftentimes "the most important piece" in determining scholarship recipients.
- 2) Strong grades, and test scores are very important, however, you are often competing against other students that have similar grades and test scores.
- 3) The scholarship essay is the best means that you have to distinguish yourself from everyone else that is applying for that scholarship.
- 4) Try to avoid a purely pragmatic essay, where one lists, my GPA is....; my test scores are.....; my activities are..... Remember this is unlikely to differentiate you from others that are applying.
- 5) The first step to writing a good essay is to sit back and think. Reflect on what makes you unique. What factors in your life are specific to you?
- 6) Think of how you can present your uniqueness in a compelling story. Remember this not so much about what you've done, but "who you are".
- 7) Think about essay structure. The first paragraph should have something compelling that the reader can say, "wow, this is interesting". Remember scholarship committee members are likely reading one scholarship essay after another. You need to "wake them up".
- 8) Spend a few minutes thinking about the organization that is sponsoring the scholarship. What do you think that they're looking for? How can you represent yourself as being what they're looking for?
- 9) Think about the most important people in your life, obstacles or circumstances that you have overcome. Challenges or dreams that you look forward to. Books that have affected how you view the world.

- 10) When it comes to activities don't just list them. Talk about what it was that drove you to participate in them, and why you continue to take part in them.
- 11) Fortunately, most scholarship essay requirements are similar, so that you can often use the base scholarship essay that you create and simply fine tune it for other scholarship applications.
- 12) Proofread your essay. Use spell check. Let someone else such as a teacher or parent read your essay. It should be someone that you feel will provide constructive criticism.
- 13) If the essay has a specific word, or page limit, stay within the guidelines that the scholarship provider has given you.
- 14) Concluding paragraphs should re-emphasize the main point, but you do not need to summarize what was in the body of the essay. Generally, scholarship essays are too short to need a re-cap.