

Tips for Writing Strong Scholarship and College Application Essays

- **Strive for depth rather than breadth!** Narrow your focus to one or two major themes rather than trying to cover too much.
 - **Gather your thoughts!** Start by completing a self-assessment form to help you brainstorm your unique strengths and qualities.
 - **Begin writing early!** Before applications are due, write several essays based on some common essay prompts so that you do not need to start from scratch each time.
 - **Be original!** Write your essay in a way that provides scholarship committees and admissions officers with insight into your character and goals. Find a way to differentiate yourself from other qualified applicants.
 - **Don't state; evaluate!** For example, rather than telling me that you value volunteering in the community, illustrate that concept through a story in which you were a volunteer.
 - **Bring it to life!** Get creative in the opening remarks. Bring the reader in with a captivating start and end with a powerful conclusion. Make sure to keep the interest going throughout your essay.
 - **Steer clear!** When writing about world events or social issues, remember to be as objective as possible. Avoid controversial topics, because you do not want to risk offending the reader.
- Do your research!** Make sure to research the college or scholarship organization you are applying to and cater your essay accordingly.
- **Follow instructions!** If the scholarship application is seeking information or asking you particular questions, make sure to answer them fully. Many times you are rated on your ability to directly answer their questions.
 - **Be positive!** The essay writing process is your opportunity for you the essay reader to get to know you. Consider an addendum to explain deficiencies or blemishes.

Things to Consider:

Don't Do

too short or too long
list your accomplishments
clichés (be original)
errors (grammatical, spelling)
don't complain or whine
no structure/flow
information that is not relevant
not typed

Should Do

answer the question/address the topic
proof-read for errors
strong goals that are within reach
use examples/stories
enticing introduction and strong conclusion
be yourself, not the "ideal" candidate
explain abbreviations
be professional

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