

SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY TIPS

Your essay is your best chance to make the case for WHY you should receive the scholarship. It helps the scholarship provider learn about you and gives them a more detailed look at your school and home life.

If you use them right, those few paragraphs can help your application stand out! By following these four tips, anyone can create a standout essay.

1. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Every scholarship provider is looking for a specific student who meets unique criteria. When you get the application, look closely at the questions. Are they interested in character and community service more than grades? Emphasizing classroom performance? Looking for someone who has dealt with adversity? Paying attention to the details and tailoring your essay to the specific questions will put you ahead of other applicants.

2. PLAN FAR IN ADVANCE

Get an EARLY start for each application. Begin your research and planning a week or so before you think you should. This will give you time to craft an outline, which can help your essay stay concise and on target. Think of 2 or 3 main points you want to make in response to the essay question, add some supporting information under each of them and consider an introduction and closing sentence. Before you know it, you'll have built most of your essay!

3. MAKE IT PERSONAL & PASSIONATE

Don't forget that the main purpose of your essay is to convince the scholarship committee that you are the student they have been looking for. Answer the questions but make sure every point you make is illustrated with a specific detail that shows you care about the subject.

Don't just mention you work with disadvantaged kids, explain how your love of soccer got you into coaching those kids. Don't just tell them about your acting awards, show how the stage helped you conquer your shyness. Put your unique interests and perceptions on the page. It will go a long way toward creating a memorable essay.

4. FIND AN EDITOR

Finally, run your essay by a good editor; whether it's a parent, teacher, or grammar-nerd friend. Even a well-researched and passionately written essay can be derailed by spelling mistakes or awkward sentences. If you've spent a lot of time looking at your words, it's easy to miss basic mistakes. A few minutes of proofreading by a trusted editor can make a huge difference. Read your essay aloud to yourself as well so you can hear how it flows.