

Scholarship Essay Tips

The scholarship essay is a chance for you to shine and to set yourself apart from other scholarship applicants. Writing a good essay is key to winning a scholarship so use these tips to help you move to the top of the list.

Scholarship essays are used by providers to:

- ▶ Find students who meet certain criteria.
- ▶ Get to know you as a student and person.
- ▶ Make sure your experience and interests coincide with the organization's mission.

Keep these tips in mind when writing your scholarship essay:

- ▶ Take writing your essay seriously; remember it's key to earning the scholarship.
- ▶ Make sure your essay is honest, original, conveys your personality and captivates the reader.
- ▶ Be organized, meet all requirements, and don't rush through your essay.
- ▶ Be prepared to answer the scholarship question (sometimes called a prompt) on a variety of topics, which might include:
 - ▶ Future academic or life plans
 - ▶ Personal history
 - ▶ Current events or social issues
 - ▶ Achievements

Writing Tips:

- ▶ Read the directions carefully before you start.
- ▶ Be aware of deadlines.
- ▶ Brainstorm ideas and create an outline.
- ▶ Write a rough draft, a second draft and then a final copy.
- ▶ Start over if you finish and your work doesn't seem to fit the scholarship prompt.
- ▶ If needed, ask for help from your counselor, a teacher, or someone you know who has received a scholarship that required an essay.
- ▶ Use personal and real stories. The scholarship provider wants to know you and what makes you unique.
- ▶ Use spell check, proofread and be mindful of vocabulary and grammar. Mistakes can be costly. Make use of online grammar and writing tools.

Sample Essay Questions or Prompts:

- ▶ Describe an experience that changed your life. What did you learn? How will this experience influence you moving forward?
- ▶ Advice is sometimes easier to give than to follow. Share a piece of advice you ignored and why you should have followed it.
- ▶ Describe an innovative project you designed, the goal of your project, and the outcomes. Be prepared to provide supporting documentation.
- ▶ Write a letter explaining your need for this scholarship, your plans for higher education, and your future career goals.
- ▶ Climate change is impacting the world in dramatic ways. If you were the person tasked to find a solution to present to both the public and private sectors, where would you start and what would you recommend?
- ▶ Describe a moment that illustrates your shift from child to adult within your community or family.

