

Writing Your Scholarship Application Essay

THE BASICS

- Keep it simple
 - Don't use three words when one will do
 - Don't over write
 - Don't brag or over market
- Do tell about your accomplishments
 - Be clear
- Keep it neat
 - Type your application
 - Word process or type your essay
 - Spell check, spell check, spell check
 - Eye-ball for correct usage of words, i.e. two, to, too, it's
- Do state your need
- Organize your thoughts
- Write as though you're talking to the selection committee

Sit down quietly and think about:

Who are you?
Why are you who you are?
What are you doing?
What have you done?
Where are you now?
Where are you going?
How are you going to get there?
Why do you need a scholarship?
How will it make a difference?

Jot down notes.

The Outline

1. The Introductory Sentence (stand alone paragraph)
2. Educational Objective and Career Goals

- Your major
- Why did you choose this major?
- What will you do with it?
- What career path have you chosen?

*insert anecdote as to why you have chosen this career.

3. Brief Background

- Family
- Where you went to high school
- Challenges you've faced in your life
- Personal story
- What is important to you?

*Insert extra-curricular interests, volunteer work, awards... things that make you stand out or are unusual.

*Academic accomplishments: GPA, workload, etc.

Examples: *During my free time, I volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club in Beaverton as a Big Sister.*

Much of my free time is spent with my children, teaching them by example that education is important.

*I am taking 16 hours of school and I work three part-time jobs while maintaining a cumulative above 3.0 GPA
(This is an accomplishment!)*

4. Need

Why do you need a scholarship?

(Financial reasons, excellent students, accomplishments, award for your hard work, etc)

Examples: Even though I work two part time jobs, I find it difficult to meet the financial demands of supporting myself and paying for an education. A scholarship will allow me to continue with school in the fall.

My parents provide room and board but, because I have younger brothers and sisters, cannot help me with my school. The money I earn at the car wash part time is just enough to cover my books. A scholarship would help a great deal.

5. Conclusion

Wrap it up with a simple sentence or two. You can include how your education to date has made a difference in you. End with a “thank you for allowing me the opportunity to apply.”

Writing your ESSAY:

First Sentence

Who, What, Where, When, why?

Always preface your first sentence around the question so that your statement can stand alone with context and meaning.

Example: My name is John Doe and I am (applying, seeking, asking) for the Clackamas Community College foundation scholarships for the 2007-2008 academic year.

All my life I have always wanted to help people. Now I know exactly how I want to fulfill this goal. I am going to become a Pharmacist.

Now go back and look what you've written. Read it for form and content. At this point, it is probably too long. What can you cut; what can you incorporate?

* Make some notes, have a cup of coffee, take a nap, take a walk. Do something different, and leave it alone for a while. Overnight is good.

Rewrite and tighten it up.
Spell check.
Is it redundant? Are you too brief?
Go back and look at the outline.
Does this paper represent YOU?

Now have a friend read it.
Is it you? What do you think?
Spell check.

Caution: Don't over edit so that the paper does not sound like you anymore.

Are you done? Do you like it?
Let it sit again overnight. Re-read it (spell check).
Do you like it? Is it you?