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.