

## *Scholarship Essay Do's & Don'ts*

<b>Do</b>	<b>Don't</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cluster the scholarship applications by common topic, but also create a calendar of their due dates</li> <li>2. Brainstorm!               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Freewrite</li> <li>b) List</li> <li>c) Cluster, map, web</li> <li>d) Who, what, when, where, how, why</li> <li>e) Talk to everyone who really cares about you and your ambitions—let them help you remember the important things about you that connect to the scholarship question</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Research each scholarship—understand the values and key words/ideas—connect to them in your essays</li> <li>4. Hook the reader in your introduction with a fascinating claim, a deep question, or fact that helps you stand out</li> <li>5. Be organized—think about how the question can help you outline the essay; if there are no real tips there, then have a specific arrangement (three reasons, three ideas, three experiences, etc).</li> <li>6. Use active voice (if you don't know what that is, look it up in your campus style guide, <u>EasyWriter</u>)</li> <li>7. Imbed a story—give them a vivid sense of your experience—let them get a sense of you—what you stand for, how you've lived, the importance of your ideas and goals</li> <li>8. Include transitions between paragraphs—set up ideas in the very first sentence of each paragraph, letting readers in on <i>how</i> you are thinking (in addition, consequently, however, etc)</li> <li>9. Conclude with your <u>best</u> reason, idea, or experience that wins you the \$</li> <li>10. Write precisely—cut unneeded words (“In my opinion,” “I think that”)</li> <li>11. Follow length and format requirements precisely</li> <li>12. Have others read your drafts not only for editing (sentence-level problems), but ideas—the moments when the writing goes flat or bores.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Procrastinate</li> <li>2. Write the essays without help and feedback</li> <li>3. Let parents, teachers, or friends get so involved that the essay stops being about you.</li> <li>4. Think that one essay will fit <i>every</i> application</li> <li>5. Rely on clichés to make your point</li> <li>6. Use verb phrases when you can use a single verb</li> <li>7. Use mechanical thesis statements (In this essay I will discuss...)</li> <li>8. Say “it has been said...”</li> <li>9. Use filler like “a lot” or “things”—avoid vague abstract nouns (society).</li> <li>10. Try to be Mr. or Ms. Witty, saying something that says nothing about what's important to you.</li> <li>11. Never rely solely on a spellchecker.</li> </ol>
	<p><b>Obey Basic Comma Commandments!</b></p> <p><b>Comma after an Introductory Element</b></p> <p>Ex: <i>First of all</i>, the students must understand the basic comma rules.</p> <p><b>Comma in a Compound Sentence</b></p> <p>Ex: The student used commas well, <i>so</i> the scholarship committee showered her with money.</p> <p><b>Comma in a Series</b></p> <p>Ex: I like gold, jewels and scholarship money.</p>

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