

Scholarship Essay Do's & Don'ts

Do	Don't
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cluster the scholarship applications by common topic, but also create a calendar of their due dates 2. Brainstorm! <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Freewrite b) List c) Cluster, map, web d) Who, what, when, where, how, why 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 3. Research each scholarship—understand the values and key words/ideas—connect to them in your essays 4. Hook the reader in your introduction with a fascinating claim, a deep question, or fact that helps you stand out 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). 6. Use active voice (if you don't know what that is, look it up in your campus style guide, <u>EasyWriter</u>) 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 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) 9. Conclude with your <u>best</u> reason, idea, or experience that wins you the \$ 10. Write precisely—cut unneeded words (“In my opinion,” “I think that”) 11. Follow length and format requirements precisely 12. Have others read your drafts not only for editing (sentence-level problems), but ideas—the moments when the writing goes flat or bores. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Procrastinate 2. Write the essays without help and feedback 3. Let parents, teachers, or friends get so involved that the essay stops being about you. 4. Think that one essay will fit <i>every</i> application 5. Rely on clichés to make your point 6. Use verb phrases when you can use a single verb 7. Use mechanical thesis statements (In this essay I will discuss...) 8. Say “it has been said...” 9. Use filler like “a lot” or “things”—avoid vague abstract nouns (society). 10. Try to be Mr. or Ms. Witty, saying something that says nothing about what's important to you. 11. Never rely solely on a spellchecker.
	<p>Obey Basic Comma Commandments!</p> <p>Comma after an Introductory Element Ex: <i>First of all</i>, the students must understand the basic comma rules.</p> <p>Comma in a Compound Sentence Ex: The student used commas well, <i>so</i> the scholarship committee showered her with money.</p> <p>Comma in a Series Ex: I like gold, jewels and scholarship money.</p>

Scholarship Essay Do's & Don'ts