Tips for Writing Winning Scholarship Essays

Know Your Audience
Do your research on the organization offering the scholarship. What is their mission? What is the purpose of the scholarship? Make sure that your narrative fits what the organization is looking for.

Create a Thesis
What are you trying to convey in your essay? You should be able to express the point of your essay in one sentence. Your essay should revolve around supporting your thesis.

Brag a Little
Scholarships are awarded based on merit, so don't be afraid to highlight your accomplishments as they relate to your thesis and the scholarship. While it's important to boast, never lie or embellish.

Stand Out
Write an essay that a judge will remember. You want to stand out from the rest of the crowd. Describe what makes you unique. The reader should be able to get a real sense of your personality from your essay without ever meeting you.

Every Word Counts
Make sure everything you say in your essay serves a purpose. Present yourself clearly and concisely. Avoid general statements. Grammar and spelling always count. Judges will look poorly on sloppy work. Proofread multiple times and have someone else take a look!

Words of Caution
Avoid the "woe is me" essay about how much you need financial support. Scholarship judges do not want to read a sob story. They want to hear about what you've accomplished despite your challenges and about your potential to do great things with scholarship support!

Other Tips
- Always type your essay
- Did you answer the essay prompt?
- Never plagiarize someone else's work
- Adhere to word limits
- Have someone proofread and give you feedback.

Have More Questions?
Contact us:
Scholarships Resource Center
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The State of California requires that you be told the following: Federal student loans are available to most students regardless of income and provide a range of repayment options including income-based repayment plans and loan forgiveness benefits, which other education loans are not required to provide.