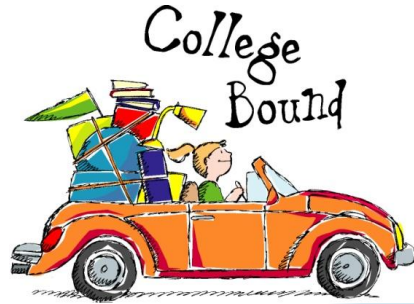


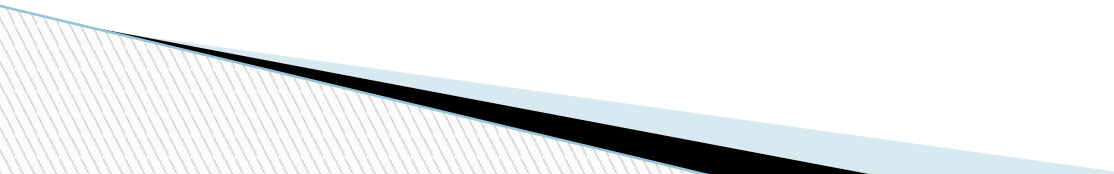
Writing a Dynamic Essay

Admissions counselors say that the best essays help them learn something about the candidate that they would never know from reading the rest of the application.



2024/25 Common App Prompts

(Choose one)

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
 2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
 3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
 4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
 5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
 6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
 7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.
- 

Typical Scholarship Prompts

- Describe your educational and career plan and why you want to pursue the field?
- Describe a time where you've used leadership skills
- What have you done in your community that is meaningful?
- Describe three traits you possess that will make you a successful student
- Explain your financial situation and how this scholarship will help you achieve your goals



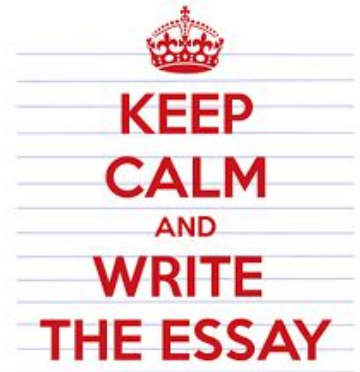
Colleges and Scholarship Committees Look For...

- Your good qualities and values
 - Desire to help others, dedication, persistence, curiosity, ambition, vision, leadership, team skills, energy...
- Where you have made your impact
- What you have learned
- Where you have grown
- Intellect



Effective essays

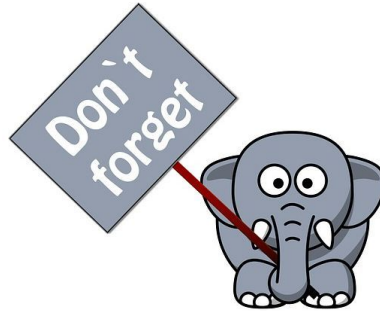
- Are positive or involve a positive outcome
- Takes the reader on your journey
- Reveals something new not included in other parts of your application
- Is interesting and easy to read
- Evokes empathy
- Is personal and digs deep into who you are



Tip: Make sure you correctly and completely answer the prompt

Prompt: Tell us about your educational plans and your career plans. Why did you choose this career path?

I want to be a mechanical engineer. Ever since I was little, I have loved creating things. Legos and building blocks filled my room. As a mechanical engineer, I will get to use my strong math and science skills. This career will allow me to use my strengths and have a career I enjoy, while making a decent living.



What's missing?

Tip: Tell Your Story

A smile can go a long way in making someone's day, and in some instances a cookie can help too. My freshman year, I was eating lunch with my friends, when I noticed a kid sitting alone. He seemed down, and I was on a mission to change that. So I bought two chocolate chip cookies, sat at his table, looked at him with a smile and said "Hey dude, you want a cookie?" For the remaining twenty minutes of lunch we talked and got to know one another. It was clear those twenty minutes meant a lot to him. I sincerely believe small action of kindness can have a large impact on someone's day. Looking out for others, staying positive, and sharing something small can make a difference in other people's lives. For these last four years of high school I've taken great initiative to help others, and have tried to be someone who looks at the positive side of a situation.

Find a hook - something that
draws the reader in



Tip: Be Engaging, Descriptive, & Understandable

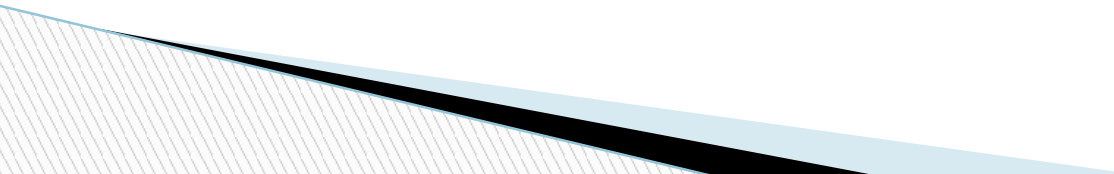
One fateful evening some months ago, a defensive linebacker mauled me, his 212 pounds indisputably alighting upon my ankle. Ergo, an abhorrent cracking of calcified tissue. At first light the next day, I awoke cognizant of a new paradigm - one sans football - promulgated by a stabbing sensation that would continue to haunt my every morning of this semester.

As I step out of bed, the pain shoots through my foot and up my leg like it has every morning since “the game.” That night, a defensive linebacker tackled me, his 212 pounds landing decidedly on my ankle. I heard the sound before I felt it. The next morning, I awoke to a new reality - one without football - announced by a stabbing sensation that would continue to haunt me every morning of this semester.

My broken ankle broke my spirit.

What does promulgated even mean? (widely known)

Tip: Sell Yourself - Be Humble, be Descriptive, DON'T be a Bragger

- As an ASB director, I have spent thousands of hours planning events. I know my role has kept ASB running and operational.
 - I've been involved in ASB.
 - There is nothing like the activity involved with planning a school dance. Identifying the music, the food, the chaperones, designing promotional materials and leading a team were all part of my responsibilities as an ASB director.
- 

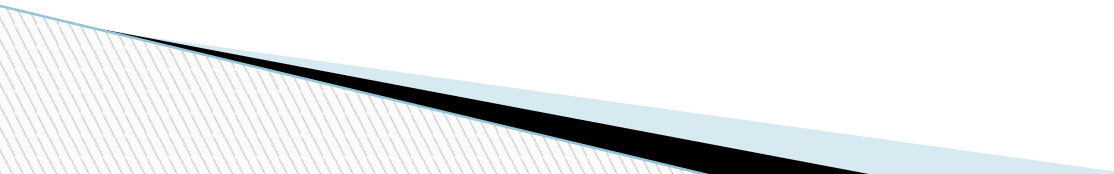
Tip: Be Personal yet Appropriate



Yo bro, I really want this scholarship!

My parents work minimum wage jobs and do not have extra money to pay for my college. Obtaining this scholarship will provide the funds for me to attend a four year university rather a local community college.

Tip: Pay Attention to Word/Character Count

- 600 words = 3-4 paragraphs
1000 characters = 1 large or 2 small paragraphs
 - Should my essay use the maximum amount of words/characters?
 - Can I go over the expected word/character account?
- 

Tip: Grammar, punctuation & spelling matter



The old man walked slowly, carrying his bag of groceries. I wonder if he knows i see him daily. I wonder if he knew how much he inspired me. to my surprise; he does.

The old man walked slowly, carrying his bag of groceries. I wonder if he knows I see him daily. I wonder if he knew how much he inspired me. To my surprise, he dies.

Spell check doesn't always work

Tip: ALWAYS have someone review your work!!!

- Trusted individual or service
 - English Teacher
 - College and Career staff
 - Parent
 - Family Friend
 - Online service - Prompt, Grammarly, Princeton Review



Give yourself plenty of time

- ▣ Plan time to develop your essay concept and write a rough draft
- ▣ Plan time for multiple revisions
- ▣ Plan time for others to review your work
- ▣ Plan for issues with submitting the application online



Getting Started

- What message are you trying to convey?
- Brainstorm ideas or personal experiences you have that relate to your message
- Think about what personality traits your story will tell
- Find a story, quote or saying that you can use as a hook
- Close your eyes and picture what you saw, heard, tasted, smelled to help you describe
- Talk it out with someone



The goal is not for your essay to be exceptional, but for it to convince people that you are exceptional.

C.S. Friedman



Upcoming Presentations

Paying for College
Mon, April 25, 2024



Tualatin High Contacts

Kathy Stallkamp

kstallkamp@ttsd.k12.or.us

503-431-5652

Jennifer Butts

jbutts@ttsd.k12.or.us

503-431-5772

