

Scholarship Essays

College applications, and sometimes job applications, often require you to write an essay on suggested topics. It is important for you to be prepared to either write by hand or use a computer to complete these essays. This means you will need to think about your life experiences, strengths, challenges, and dreams and put your thoughts on paper.

Here is a list of essay topics that are commonly used on college applications. To be prepared, you should think about responses to each one, begin writing ideas for each one, and write an essay response to each topic. Then, you should regularly review each topic and your writing so that you will have something in place when it comes time to actually use these essays in the future.

Common Essay Topics for College Application

1. Describe an activity, issue, or idea about which you are passionate and explain why it means so much to you.
2. Review a book that has special significance for you. It should not be a book that you read for school, but rather something you read on your own. In your review, please explain what attracted you to the book and why you would recommend it to a friend.
3. Describe examples of your leadership experience, in or out of school, in which you significantly influenced others, helped resolve disputes or contributed to group efforts over time.
4. Describe a challenge you have faced, how you met it, and its effect on you.
5. Describe an event and the significance it has had in your life.
6. What are your academic/professional goals?
7. A person, event or circumstance that has influenced you, and how it impacted your life. This may include a rewarding or unforgettable experience. **(This may be the most used essay topic.)**
8. Why are you interested in the college to which you are applying? Why do you want to come here?
9. Local, national or international issue and why it is important to you.
10. Favorite teacher, or class, and why.
11. How would you describe yourself as a human being?
12. Do you believe there's a generation gap? Describe the differences between your generation and others.
13. What does a college education mean to you? What do you plan to do with your college degree?
14. How would your friends characterize you? Look at yourself from the outside.
15. Choose a prominent person (living, deceased, or fictional) that you would like to interview and explain why.
16. What is a major achievement in your life? Who and what assisted you in reaching your aim?
17. What are the most important extracurricular or community activities? What made you join these activities?

Sample Scholarship Essay

Below is an example of a real essay from an 18 year old female who has Attention Deficit Disorder, Anxiety, Depression, Central Auditory Processing Disorder, and Visual Processing Disorder. She applied for several scholarships and did receive one where she used this as her actual essay (no edits have been made).

Higher Education: It's Effect on My Own Life and the Lives of Others

Higher education will have a great influence on my own life because it will give me the education and the skills I need to become successful. Ann Landers once said that "it is not what you do for your children but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings." I think of higher education in a similar way. It is not what higher education does for students that will make us successful, but what the pursuit of higher education teaches us.

By obtaining a higher education, I will have the ability and opportunity to influence my society by becoming a teacher. My drama coach has influenced my life far beyond teaching me acting skills. She has taught me how to come alongside a younger student to encourage and mentor them, helping them to understand that they are valued highly exactly as they are. Entering my 9th grade year, I felt alone and that I had no friends. Because my drama coach had mentored the students who were seniors at that time to accept all students as unique individuals who bring gifts of many types, I finally felt accepted and empowered to be the person I was supposed to be. Each year of high school I continued to gain skills in acting, but even more importantly learned the art of mentoring other students and loving them just as they were. Now as a senior in high school, I realize this process has brought me to a place where I, too, want to empower high school students to share the gifts and skills they have for the enjoyment of others through theater. I also look forward to the opportunity to model and coach high school students to encourage one another in the way that I was encouraged.

As a teacher, my role will include being a coach, motivator, mentor, and friend. As a coach, I will instruct and direct the students toward enlightenment. I will also motivate the students to work hard, encourage them to continue to stay in school, and empower the students to be successful. When mentoring the students, I will set an example on how to live and act. My role will also be to befriend the students and help them become the best they can be.

I look forward to the academic wisdom I will gain attending the University of Central Oklahoma as well as the life skills I can learn from the experience of completing my college education. I believe that experiencing college life will teach me far more than just the skills necessary to receive a certificate to teach. It will teach me even greater perseverance and the value of not giving up so that I may influence and empower the leaders of tomorrow.