

Scholarship Essay Content Suggestions

The purpose is to write an essay usable for any scholarship. Include the following information. The order of the information may be changed, but all information needs to be addressed. The information should be appropriate to almost any scholarship application with some modifications given the requirements of a particular scholarship. A good rule of thumb is not to go over 500 words.

State/County/City of residence. Tell the reader where you live and/or where you are from. Many scholarships are crafted for someone from a particular town, county, or state.

Education. Tell the reader where you attended high school. If you attended another college, put that in also. If you were homeschooled and/or earned a GED, include that information.

GPA in college. Provide your grade point average. If you are not in college, use your high school grade point average.

Financial need. Explain briefly your financial need. This is not the place to go into details about your FAFSA, but it is where you explain if you are a one income family or a parent is on disability or a parent has had hours reduced at work or you have several siblings or.... The “need” element is often a deciding factor for committees who award scholarships. Make the need clear, but don’t dwell on adversity.

College major and future plans for education and work. Discuss what you intend to major in, what degree(s) you expect to earn, and your career goals with those degrees. Many scholarships are open to people pursuing a particular degree.

Employment (current and past). If you do not have a paying job currently, discuss a job you held in the past. Babysitting and lawn-mowing count as jobs in that they demonstrate responsibility. Some scholarships are for people working in a particular field. If you are a veteran, state that here.

Accomplishments. What have you done that you are proud of? This could be in sports, in academics, in hobbies or organizations (such as Boy Scouts—becoming an Eagle Scout). A sense of confidence, not ego, is good to demonstrate in your application. You want the committee to know their investment in you will pay off.

Community Service. What have you done for the community? Community service could have been activities through 4-H clubs, through campus groups, through your church, or through a hobby or interest group (such as Master Gardeners). If you have not been involved in any community service through any organization or on your own, leave this section out.

Clarification for any anomalies, mistakes, special information. If you have special circumstances such as an explanation of a lower grade point average, discuss that here. If there was a semester when your grades dropped because of health issues or parental issues, this is the section where you explain that briefly and focus on improving.