

Personal Essay Tips & Guidelines

Panther ID # **only** should be included on your GSU essay.

Many scholarships require a personal essay or statement of purpose. Ideally, your essay should be no longer than 500 words. It is your chance to let the judges know who you are and why you deserve money more than all the other qualified applicants. The essay is how you stand out – or how you fall flat.

Writing Your Essay

- Brainstorm: Spend a few hours thinking about what you would like to include in your essay.
- Try to make your essay as unique and memorable as possible. Think about what is special about you in relation to the rest of the world.
- Answer all the questions provided by the scholarship application and follow directions
- If you are submitting a previous essay written for another scholarship, tailor it to the specific scholarship for which you are applying.



DO'S & DON'TS



For Scholarship Essays

Please DO...

- **Include your plans for the future.**
 - Judges want to award students who want to do something valuable especially if the student's direction and drive is backed up by grades and activities.
- **Intrigue judges by starting with a story.**
 - A successful essay will elaborate on an activity or experience.
- **Reflect on your gifts and talents.**
- **Create accounts so deeply true and engaging that judges will feel they have a stake in your success.**

Please DON'T ...

- **Write a sob story.**
 - Judges don't want to hear about how much you need financial support but rather how you have earned everything you have and let them know how important it is to you to get your education.
- **Submit a last minute draft.**
 - Even the best writers make the simplest mistakes.
- **Use clichés.**
 - This says to the judges that you did not put much thought into your essay.
- **Write your own question.**
 - If the topic required does not apply to you, search for other scholarships that do.