

## Personal Statement Directions

Your personal statement is designed to be used in a variety of settings. You can take information from this to include in college entrance essays or job applications. It is imperative that you follow directions precisely. This piece should not be longer than ten paragraphs or 1,000 words. Rely on your best essay writing techniques to create a concise statement that accurately reflects your specific talents, interests, and qualities. *The majority of information should be related to your high school experience; however, some portions may require reflecting on past memories.* This must be typed in MLA format; excellent spelling and grammar is expected. Avoid clichés, quotes, and ambiguity. Do not go into a philosophical discussion of your life or write a descriptively gaudy narrative- More reality, less rambling!!! Be sure to

### **-Background and environment-**

#### **Describe the environment where you grew up and its impact on your personality**

*Paragraph 1 (75-100 words):* Brief detail of area, consider: population, culture, poverty, affluence, rural, urban, diversity, lack of post-secondary choices, lack of college educated adults, first generation college student, AP/Honors options, four-year university available, quality of education, etc.

*Paragraph 2 (100-150 words):* Explain how your surroundings influenced your upbringing and values. What are the POSITIVE effects? How have you adapted or positively changed due to the environmental influences? What did you DO to improve your surroundings? Think about activities that you have been drawn to and the variety of interests you have developed because of these environmental influences.

### **-Defining moment or important mentor-**

#### **Describe a moment in your life that significantly impacted you or explain how an important person in your life made a notable impression on you.**

*Paragraph 3 (75-100 words):* Describe an incident or individual that made a lasting impression on you. Consider the significance of this event or mentor. This could be a work or volunteer experience. Detail thoughtfully.

*Paragraph 4 (100-150 words):* Clearly relate the person or incident to your life now. How did it/him/her positively impact your growth as a person? Consider fundamental qualities like leadership, honesty, integrity, dedication, commitment, diligence, perseverance, etc. What UNIQUE quality did you gain from this influential person or moment? Focus on what you learned.

### **-Qualities beyond your transcripts-**

#### **What specific attributes or abilities do you possess that set you apart from other students?**

*Paragraph 5 (75-100 words):* Briefly detail your personal attributes. What are your strongest personality traits and how are you applying these. Consider interests, hobbies, sports, activities, charities, jobs, etc. that you are or have been involved in throughout your life. ONLY focus on long-term involvement and positions of leadership. Think about substantial participation that demonstrates a right to compete in the real world (lead in play, published poem, president of club, captain of team).

*Paragraph 6 (100-150 words):* Select the most impressive characteristic or ability and prove how you are using this trait in a meaningful way. Do you have a special talent and what do you plan to do with that skill? What have you done to cultivate this attribute? How does this make you a worthy competitor in the real world? Think about the application of this skill and your future plans.

**-Adversity-**

**Consider a time in your life in which you suffered through and ultimately endured a notable difficulty.**

*Paragraph 7 (75-100 words):* Describe a tough time in your life when you persevered through an unusual challenge (learning disability, physical disability, illness, family hardship, financial issue, loss, significant decline in grades). Reflect on past or present challenges, hardships, or a catastrophic event that required the strength of character to overcome.

*Paragraph 8 (100-150 words):* Clearly explain the results of this adversity. What did you learn? How have you changed for the better? What are you doing to continue persevering? Acknowledge short term and long term effects. What knowledge did you earn and how do you plan to employ it in the future?

**-Focusing on the future-**

**What are your plans for the future? What do you plan to accomplish or pursue during college? How have you academically prepared for this endeavor?**

*Paragraph 9 (75-100 words):* Describe what specific interests you plan to pursue during college and after. Mention specifics like a career, program, sport, or educational opportunity.

*Paragraph 10 (100-150 words):* Why are you worthy of or ready for this pursuit? What have you done to prepare for being successful in the specified endeavor? Think about classes, extracurricular involvement, enrichment programs, camps, training seminars, and/or summer programs. What did you learn from this and how will you benefit you in your future decisions?