

The *Scholar Budget*

**Winning Scholarships:
A Student's Guide to Writing
Essays that Win!**

Rockell Bartoli

Winning Scholarships: A Student's Guide to Writing Essays that Win!

Copyright © 2020. Rockell Bartoli. All Rights Reserved.
No part of this document may be reproduced or shared
without express, written consent from the author.

Chapter 1

Don't Let This Happen to You!

Don't Let This Happen to You!

You know who pushed me to go to college? I did! Other than my grandmother, I didn't really have anyone on my case about going to college and getting a degree. I guess my family assumed I would go, so it was rarely spoken about. I navigated the whole college process on my own as a first-generation college student and I successfully graduated with:

#1 bachelor's degree in elementary education

#2 master's degree in school counseling

#3 a whole lot of student debt!

Don't let #3 happen to you!!!!

Fast forward to today. Every time I have to make a payment towards my student loan, I cringe. I wish I could go back in time and choose another school, not take out loans and make the time to apply for scholarships. Now that I get to work first hand with college-bound students and students already in college, it's my goal to help them not have this same feeling of regret and frustration with student loans. After you graduate from college and land your dream job, I want you to be able to keep that \$200, \$500, and \$700 payment for yourself, instead of giving it to your student loan.

Chapter 2

I Want to Help You

I Want to Help You

Hello future scholarship recipient,

Thank you for purchasing this eBook. By the time you're done reading and implementing what you've learned, you will:

- understand the importance of your scholarship essay response
- be able to easily organize your essay
- write an essay that shines bright and positions you to win multiple scholarships
- understand how to spend less time writing future essays

This will lead to you to scoring scholarship dollars and that's pretty important especially because the average college student graduates with close to \$30,000 in student loan debt. Do you know what you can do with \$30,000? Buy a car, start a business, purchase a house or live your best life.

Now applying for scholarships is no easy task, but if you're willing to take the time and put in the work, it will be worth it in the end. Imagine what it's going to be like when you receive \$500, \$1,000 or \$20,000 to pay for your college experience. Even better than that is to imagine how great you're going to feel when you get paid from your job and you don't have to give a single penny towards a student loan.

Chapter 3

Why Is Your Essay So Important?

Why Is Your Essay So Important?

I conducted a survey asking high school seniors and undergraduate students about their biggest challenges when it comes to applying for scholarships and some of the common responses were

#1 Not knowing what to write for the essay or short question responses

#2 Not finding the right scholarships

#3 Not having the time to apply for multiple scholarships

#4 Not having guidance to apply effectively

Some scholarships only receive a handful of application responses while others can receive hundreds. No matter the number, your goal is to get your application seen and accepted, not frowned upon and rejected.

Consider this, before you go on a date with someone for the first time, you typically want to know as much about them as possible before saying “yes”. Why? Well, you want to make sure that this person is a good fit, has a nice personality, and is an overall good human being. On the other hand, the person waiting for you to accept this date will most likely try to put their best foot forward and show you why they deserve to be chosen.

In the same way, the judge or judges that read your essay want to know about you before choosing to give you money to pay for your education. They want to make sure you’re a good fit. Your essay is your shot to put your best foot forward and show them why you deserve to be chosen. Keep in mind that sometimes you’re competing with 5-15 people and sometimes it can be hundreds. What can you say that’s going to make the judges want to choose you?

Chapter 4

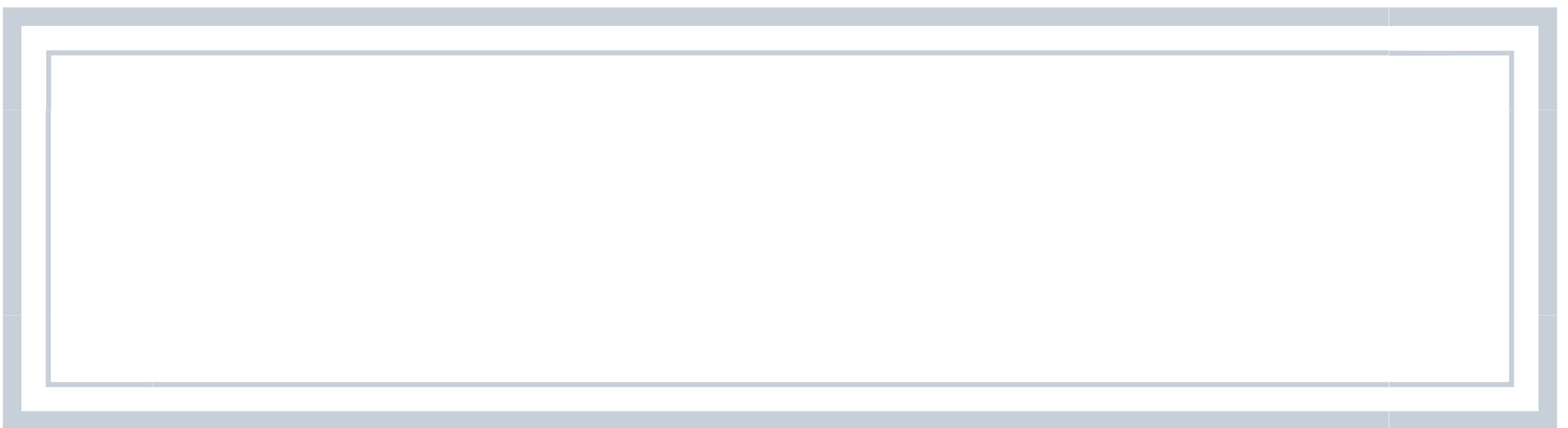
Getting All Your Thoughts Together

Getting All Your Thoughts Together

Before you start writing that essay, it's very important that you organize your thoughts and identify the key details that are going to support your response to the scholarship question or questions.

Use the first box to write your main idea and the additional boxes for supporting details and stories.

Getting All Your Thoughts Together



Chapter 5

This Is How We Do It

This Is How We Do It

Now comes the fun stuff. Let's put all your organized thoughts together and create an epic essay that will stand out and shine bright. You deserve to win!

Right now, I'm going to need you to put on your creative writing hat. Your goal is to not sound like everybody else, be authentic and infuse your story into your response. The very first couple of sentences in your essay can engage and lock in your reader. If you can do this, they'll want to read more of your story and that's a good thing!

Let's take a look at what I mean. Take for instance this scholarship question.

What's the most difficult challenge you've faced? How did you handle it?

There are two ways to start responding to this question. Take a look and choose the one that you think has the best ability to capture the attention of the reader.

Response #1: The most difficult challenge I've faced started when I was born. My mother told me I was due on March 6th but I was actually born three months early and that's when all the challenges came rushing through the floodgate.

Response #2: When a child is born, parents are typically filled with joy and excitement. Imagine being the parent that's filled with fear and anxiety. Well, that was my parents. My most difficult challenge began the minute I was born. I still had three more months to go but this ill-prepared baby arrived early.

This Is How We Do It

Here's another example:

Why do you want to go to college?

Response #1: Honestly, I never thought that I was good enough to go to college. Everyone around me believed in me but I failed to believe in myself. I felt like I wasn't good enough and I almost allowed those limiting beliefs to stop me from turning my dreams into a reality. I came across a quote one day that said, "When I'm left on my own, I'm my own worst enemy", and boy was that true for me. I had to work on changing my mindset and thankfully I did! Today, I want to go to college because I know I can become whatever I want to become, I'm ready to make my dreams a reality.

Response #2: At first it was a battle, a struggle, a fight. I didn't see it in myself and that's why I built up this wall. I refused to believe that I could be whatever I wanted to be, I refused to believe that I could reach for the stars and make my dreams a reality. However, one day I picked up my phone to check my Instagram account and the first thing I saw was a quote by Ronnie Wood that said, "When I'm left on my own, I'm my own worst enemy", and it clicked for me! I was my own enemy. I was the one making myself feel like I wasn't worthy enough when in reality I've always been good enough. Today, I want to go to college because I know I can become whatever I want to become, I'm ready to make my dreams a reality.

This Is How We Do It

Your ability to be authentic and use storytelling in your essay response will take you very far!

Then we have the body of your essay which is filled with all the supporting details you jotted down in your organizer. A few things to remember as you continue writing

- don't go off on a tangent, make sure you're responding to the question or questions
- use real-life examples so the reader can see what you're saying
- include additional stories in your response if they help to support your main point
- tell them what they want to hear (as long as it's true). If the scholarship/organization is all about community service then tell them about the great community service projects you participated in, how it impacted your life, the life of those you served and how it ties into your reason for going to college, if applicable. If the scholarship/organization focuses on leadership then include your story about leadership.

Example: The crazy thing is the doctors didn't think I was going to live a long life and my mom tells me all the time about how she clasped her hands together and prayed day and night begging God to give me a fighting chance. After the countless hospital visits and long stay in the NICU, I can see why the doctors thought the way they did. As I got older my health conditions improved but I was still limited. For a very long time, I could not play sports and I was taking medications every day to help with my condition. This often made me depressed and even angry. Until one day my mom took me on a 5k walk for children with pediatric cancer and boy did that experience change my perspective. After seeing all those parents and families walking to raise money for children suffering from cancer, I realized how lucky I was.

This Is How We Do It

I enjoyed volunteering at this event so much that we continued to volunteer for more and I'm so grateful that I did. These experiences along with my own, helped to shape my decision to become a pediatric doctor.

As we get to the end of your essay, you better believe that your closing is just as important too. It's like wrapping a gift and tying it with a big red shiny bow.

Like the beginning of your essay, you want to leave the reader or judge with a good reason why they should choose you.

Here are two examples of how to close the essay for the question, **What's the most difficult challenge you've faced and how did you handle it?** Which one stands out to you and why?

Response #1 My most difficult challenge in life led me to become the person I am today and one of the main reasons I'm attending college. I've decided to become one of the best pediatric doctors serving my community.

Response #2 Who would have known that those shallow breaths, numerous surgeries, and a tiny resuscitated heart would lead me to become the person I am today? My challenge has become one of my main reasons for pursuing my passion and to become one of the best pediatric doctors serving my community.

This Is How We Do It

The last thing you **must** do before submitting your essay is to have someone else proofread and edit to make sure it's clean and crisp! You can ask your English teacher or someone you know who can assist you with editing and fine-tuning your response. You can also visit websites like www.fiverr.com and www.upwork.com to hire a freelancer to clean up your grammar and sentence flow.

Start strong

Give good supporting details

Close strong

Clean it up!

Chapter 6

But Wait There's More

But Wait There's More

So, there you have it!

I hope you're feeling more equipped to jump into your next scholarship application and write an essay that helps you shine bright and position you to win, win, win!

Your hard work will pay off. Keep applying. Don't give up.

Use the strategies I discussed in this eBook to take your essay to the next level.

I'd love to hear back from you. If you found this to be helpful or you have any suggestions, please connect with me at

thescholarbudget@gmail.com

Tag me when you're working on your scholarship

@thescholarbudget

Bonus: Still stumped on how to start? Here are a few sentence ideas to help you create the beginning of your authentic storytelling essay

Little did I know my life would turn out this way....

They say when life gives you lemons we should learn how to make lemonade

I never signed up for this but somehow it found me...

For so long I lived my life...

As I sit here writing this....

Did you know that someone can fail one hundred times and still get back up...