

# COLLEGE APPLICATION ESSAY

As part of your college application, you may be asked to write a short essay or personal statement. When admission staff members read your application, they're looking for a glimpse of your personality in addition to all the facts and figures, the classes, and extracurricular activities. That's where your essay may distinguish you from other candidates for admission – this is your opportunity to stand out among other applicants. If two students have equal GPAs and test scores, your essay can help you immensely, tipping the scales in your favor. Use your essay to explain why you think the institution is a good match for you. Or convey your views on education or careers or politics or literature. Give the application reader some insight into your life, your personality, and your values. Make sure you do not, however, hurt your application by making spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors or by failing to adhere to the given word count!

Where do you start? Make sure you respond to the statement given and/or answer the question that is asked. This may seem obvious, but numerous students submit misguided application essays because they fail to take the time to truly understand the prompt. And don't forget that the essay should always be about you. If the prompt asks about "someone you admire," your essay should not be a biography of that person, but a reflection of his or her influence on your life.

Spend time on your essay, think about what's important to you, brainstorm ideas, and outline possible options. Have other people read the essay and listen to their feedback. You'll only have a few hundred words to make a lasting impression, so choose a topic that's specific, unique, and memorable. Above all, be genuine.

## 10 APPLICATION ESSAY DO'S AND DON'TS

- DO be honest, be genuine, be you!
- DO take plenty of time for brainstorming and self-reflection to come up with unique, insightful essay ideas.
- DO ask your family, friends, mentors, & anyone else who knows you well to suggest ideas or qualities you may want to incorporate in your essay.
- DO give yourself some time, at least an hour or two, between when you write & review your finished essay.
- DO read & re-read your essay, & carefully review it for errors or confusing passages.
- DON'T lie, plagiarize, recycle a school assignment, or ask someone else to write your essay for you.
- DON'T ignore word counts or page length requirements, & don't fiddle with font sizes or page margins to do so.
- DON'T use emoticons, text-message speak, or otherwise highly informal language.
- DON'T use your essay to praise the college you're applying to or criticize other schools, including your high school.
- DON'T let yourself get stressed out. The application essay is your chance to talk about what makes you special – enjoy it! (Taken from *Private Colleges & Universities*)

**BISHOP NEUMANN HIGH SCHOOL**

**Request for Release of Transcripts**

To have a transcript sent to a technical school or college, fill out the information below. Be sure to sign this form to release a formal transcript to the designated Institution, then give the form to the Counselor or Secretary.

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ (include maiden name if applicable)      Graduating Class of \_\_\_\_\_

Will you pick up this transcript?      Yes      No  
Would you like Bishop Neumann to mail this transcript?      Yes      No  
Would you like Bishop Neumann to fax this transcript?      Yes      No

Name and address of the Institution. If applicable, include the person/department whom this is to go to.

College/Institution Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

This information is provided with the written consent of the parent/graduate as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Office Use Only)

Date of Request \_\_\_\_\_ Date Sent \_\_\_\_\_ Method of Delivery: Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Hand Delivery \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of authorized person for Guidance or Records \_\_\_\_\_ 2/2006

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# LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

When you begin to apply to schools or for scholarships, many will require 1-3 letters of recommendation. The following guidelines will help you secure better recommendations:

- 1) **Start early.** Complete the **STUDENT INFORMATION SUMMARY** (next page) and make as many copies as you need. Give this to each recommender for background information.
- 2) **Choose your recommenders wisely.** It's important that the teacher, coach or counselor knows you personally. Spend time letting them get to know the real you.
- 3) **Waive your confidentiality rights.** This indicates you trust the person you ask to write about you.
- 4) **Give the recommenders the necessary materials and information:**
  - application deadlines
  - stamped, addressed envelopes if the instructions ask that recommendations be sent directly to the school, organization, etc.
- 5) **Promptly send a thank you note.** This shows “class” on your part.
- 6) Senior High Faculty **must** have your letter of recommendation requests **2 weeks prior** to mailing date.



## Letter of Recommendation Request/Student Information Summary

Name \_\_\_\_\_ GPA/Class Rank \_\_\_\_\_ Letter Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name & Title of Recipient: \_\_\_\_\_ Please mail: **YES** **NO**

Address of where letter is to be sent: \_\_\_\_\_

Who else will be writing letters on your behalf? \_\_\_\_\_

Please go into detail and “sell yourself.” Attach additional sheets as needed.

1. Future goals: (Education, career, etc.)
2. How are your goals associated with this scholarship/position you’re applying for?
3. School activities and clubs: (list years & leadership positions)
4. Non-school activities: (church, community, employment – indicate any leadership positions)
5. Awards, honors, accomplishment: (in and out of school)
6. Special interests, hobbies, talents:
7. Describe yourself – include personal characteristics, strengths, motivation, interests, future plans, etc. **Stress the things you feel are unique to you!**
8. Relate a meaningful/pivotal moment in your life.

# SAMPLE STUDENT RESUME

**Lisa M. Jones**  
2831 Smith Drive  
Wahoo, NE 68066  
(402) 443-0000  
lisajones@hotmail.com

## EDUCATION

Bishop Neumann High School; Wahoo, Nebraska  
GPA: 3.47/4.00  
Graduation Date: May 2009

## SKILLS

IBM Computer skills, WordPerfect 6.0 for Windows, Microsoft Word 6.0 for Windows, Lotus 1-2-3, Excel, dBase IV, PageMaker V, COBOL, FORTRAN, AutoCAD, spoken and written Spanish, Keyboarding (54 wpm), 10-key, data entry

## COURSE WORK

Calculus  
Computer Applications (DOS)  
Keyboarding  
Business Math  
Spanish (3 years)

## SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Student Council; Class President (2007-2009)  
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton; Treasurer (2008-2009)  
Cheerleader (2006-2009)  
Volleyball (2006-2009)

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Red Cross Volunteer (2008-2009)  
VFW Christmas Drive Volunteer (2007-2009)  
Library Volunteer (2005-2009)

## HONORS & AWARDS

Honor Roll, Fall Semester, 2006, 2007, 2008  
Honor Roll, Spring Semester, 2006, 2007, 2008  
National Honor Society

## REFERENCES

Available upon request.