**Writing a Scholarship Essay**

**Lesson 1**

**Scholarships**

**1**. Work in pairs and think about scholarships, what they are and their importance. Then complete the word map below.

**2**. Watch a short video about scholarships. How is the information similar and/or different from your ideas in Exercise 1.

http://www.cies.org/article/fulbright-connects

**Scholarship Programs**

**3.** Check the information about an immersion scholarship program in the following link.

http://fulbright.edu.ar/becas/otras-becas/universitarios-ingles/

**4**. Make a list of the different sections you find. What information do they include?

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**5**. Look for other international immersion scholarship programs on line. Choose the one that most suits your educational and professional needs. Share your findings with the class.

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**Scholarship Application Form**

Below is an example of an application form. The information required is personal data, academic and professional background, work experience, awards, etc.

**6**. Read the application form and check its format.

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| **U.S. Embassy Argentina**  **Future Leaders Scholarship**  **English Language Immersion Program for Undergraduate Students**  **APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION**  **a) Personal information**  Full name : John Doe  Date and place of birth: 11 of June 1992 San Pedro, Misiones  Nationality :Argentinean  I.D. (DNI): XXXXX  Passport No.: Processing stage  Address: XXXX, Oberá, Misiones Argentina  ZIP code: 3360  Telephone: XXXXXXXXX  Cell phone :XXXXXXXXX E-mail: [XXXXXXa@gmail.com](mailto:XXXXXXa@gmail.com)  **b) Academic and professional background**  University studies:  I am a fifth-year student in industrial engineering  Overall GPA: 8.4  University institution: Facultad de Ingeniería Universidad Nacional de Misiones.  Expected graduation date: July 2015  Scholarships:  I currently have two paid scholarships:  \* Programa Nacional de Becas Bicentenario  \* Research Intern Scholarship at the University  **Awards or recognitions:**  I have been selected as “student observer” for three open competitive selection process for Faculty members in the following subjects:  Maquinas Eléctricas  Mecánica de los fluidos y Maquinas  Físico-Matemática Aplicada 1  **Career-related job experience:**  I have been working since June 2014 as part of a modeling program for the analysis of the efficiency of a production line at Envasando S.R.L and I am the student leader of an investigation team at my university.  **Special interests**  I like playing football. I am in the football team of my University. I also love traveling and meeting new people from all over the world.  **Are you a member of an NGO, club or association?**  Yes, I am an active member of AREII which is an organization of industrial engineering students from Argentina whose goal is to share university learning experiences, and I am also a member of TECHO, which is an NGO whose goal is to build houses to improve life conditions of the homeless.  **English proficiency: Please mark with an “X” your level of English.**    If you hold any English level certificate (test score of TOEFL, IELTS, CELT, First Certificate, Proficiency, any other Cambridge exam or a certificate from institution where you studied saying how many years, how many hours per week and at what level), please attach. If you are pre-selected your English will be evaluated by telephone.  **Have you ever visited the United States or any other country?**  I have been to Brazil and Paraguay several times because I live near both borders.  I have never been to U.S.A or any other oversea countries.  **What kind of job would you like to do in the future?**  I would like to have a job that allows me to grow up as a professional and as a person, and that helps me to improve my weaknesses and to take advantage of my potentials. |

**7**. Read the tips on how to complete an application form.

The way you fill out scholarship applications can make or break your chances of getting a scholarship. Leave yourself enough time to fill out applications well before the deadline dates arrive. Here are some tips.

Step 1

Read the entire scholarship application and make sure that you’re actually eligible for the proposed scholarship.

Step 2

Research the background, history and goals of the scholarship and the organization presenting it. This may aid you in completing the scholarship application and essay in a way that makes you more likely to get the scholarship.

Step 3

Make a copy of the scholarship application. Prepare an initial rough draft or practice application. You’ll fill out the information on this rough draft and then transfer it neatly to the actual application later.

Step 4

Don’t leave any spaces blank when you fill out the application. Fill out the entire scholarship application and write “not applicable” where appropriate.

Step 5

Detail your academic achievements when asked. Draw attention to things like your good GPA, any academic honors and other scholarly accomplishments. List your other hobbies, volunteer work and relevant successes on your scholarship application.

Step 6

Check for typographical and grammatical errors on your rough-draft scholarship application. Ask a friend who is proficient in English to proofread. Transfer your error-free information from the rough draft onto your original application.

**8.** Now it´s time to complete your own application form.

**Lesson 2**

**Scholarship Essay**

An important requirement in the process of applying for a scholarship is the submission of an essay. Scholarships, particularly highly competitive academic ones, often require essays outlining the reasons applicants deserve this scholarship. This is your opportunity to let your unique talents shine through in a clear, well-written essay. An essay on why you deserve a scholarship should focus on the achievements you've had that are relevant to the scholarship. It should also highlight the talents you bring to a program and the ways in which choosing you can benefit the school or program you've selected.

**1**. Below is an example of a scholarship essay. Read and discuss its parts.

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| Please, describe in not more than 500 words, why you would like to take this course and how do you think it will help you both personally and professionally (in English).  **The Reasons Why I Would Like To Win The Scholarship**  I am John Doe from Argentina, and I am currently attending last year of the industrial engineering study program at Universidad Nacional de Misiones. I would like to win this scholarship to improve my proficiency in English as this language is really important in an international labor environment. Because of that, it is really necessary to develop my communicative skills to work as an active member of a multinational work team.  I have been studying English for several years. I attended English classes at high school, and in addition, I had classes at a private institute at the same time. I also had two ninety-hour English subjects at university, and took an extracurricular course to improve my oral skills. However, I have not had the chance yet to stay in a country where English is the official language. Therefore, this scholarship would give me the opportunity of, for the first time, interacting directly with a completely new speech community, practicing the skills acquired over the years and enhancing my English language competence.  With the increasing globalization process which countries are going through, English has become the “lingua franca” of the world. As a result, it is relevant that, as the professional I intend to become, I can speak the language fluently which will allow me to work in an international atmosphere without language limitations. Besides, in this way, I might be able to contribute more significantly to the development of my country.  Issues like the development of alternative energy sources and raising awareness on the environment cannot be solved in isolation. These problems can only be solved with multidisciplinary work and with the integration of professionals from different countries, working together as a team with a common goal. According to my short experience in research as a member of a research group at university, I have noticed that most scientific works are published in English, and that only a few are translated into Spanish.  The United States has become a leader country during the last two centuries, achieving an industrial development that has been an example and source of inspiration for many other countries of the world. In this context and due to my orientation as a student of engineering, the opportunity to have a direct contact with the country will allow me to take a closer look at this industrial development, providing me another view of the industry and will help me enhance the necessary skills to become a leader in my community.  In addition to improving my communicative skills, this scholarship will give me the possibility to improve my cultural awareness by interacting with other students from different places, with different cultures in a different context. Hopefully, this experience will let me understand other points of view and interchange ideas and thoughts about common concerns. It will also help me grow up as a professional and as a person, standing back from myself becoming aware of other people’s cultural values, beliefs and perceptions. |

**Essay Writing**

Writing involves a process. So, do not panic. Take a step at a time. Let´s work with the following tasks:

1. Brainstorming
2. Thesis statement elaboration
3. Outline organization

**Brainstorming**

Make a list of topics, a flow chart whatever helps you organize possible ideas.

Here are some questions to get you started.

• What are some of your major accomplishments? These do not have to be formal awards; they can be anything meaningful to you. Why do you consider them major accomplishments?

• Besides academics, what else have you done that shows strong character? Why is it important to you?

• Have you had a particularly difficult time in your life? How did you change because of it?

• What distinguishes you from others? Talents, qualities, etc.

• Have you ever struggled or fought for something? Did you succeed or fail? How did you grow because of it?

**Thesis statement**

All essays, including scholarship essays, need a thesis statement outlining your main argument. A thesis will help you keep your essay focused, and for scholarship essays, your thesis might argue that you deserve the scholarship because of prior academic achievement or because of the ways in which the scholarship will enable you to continue a program. Every sentence and paragraph in your essay should relate to your thesis. Avoid veering into off-topic discussions.

Your thesis statement will have two parts. The first part states the topic. The second part states the point of the essay by simply listing the main ideas you will discuss. You can start with a strong umbrella statement outlining your goals, and indicating the main categories you will be discussing in your essay.

Example: My academic achievements, my work experience, and my community service have all helped me to work towards my goals.

**Outline**

The purpose of an outline or diagram is to put your ideas about the topic on paper, in a moderately organized format. The structure you create here may still change before the essay is complete, so don't agonize over this.

Begin your outline by writing your topic at the top of the page. Next, write the main ideas that you have about your topic, or the main points that you want to make. Finally, write the facts or information that supports that main idea.

Topic:

I. Main idea

A. supporting idea

B. supporting idea

II. Main idea

A. supporting idea

III. Main idea

A. supporting idea

B. supporting idea

C. supporting idea

**2**. Now it is your turn to begin with the process of scholarship essay writing.

Brainstorm your ideas, write your thesis statement and organize your outline.

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| **Lesson 3**  **Writing the Body of the Scholarship essay** | http://images.clipartpanda.com/pencil-coloring-pages-notepad-and-pencil-coloring-page.jpg |

In the body of the essay, all the preparation up to this point comes to fruition. The topic you have chosen must now be explained, described, or argued.

Each main idea that you wrote down in your diagram or outline will become one of the body paragraphs. If you had three or four main ideas, you will have three or four body paragraphs. Plan to devote one paragraph to each of these sections and introduce each section with a clear topic sentence indicating which area you plan to discuss.

Example:

a- I have always chosen challenging courses, and have a very good academic record.

b- I have developed strong leadership skills, and have learned to interact with a wide variety of people while working several different jobs.

c- I also have a good record of community service.

Make sure each paragraph flows nicely into the next. Using good transitions can help. This includes transition words, repeating key phrases, etc. And remember; make sure your paragraphs support your main point, or thesis.

You must stress how your experience helped you to develop the kinds of skills and qualities that selection committees are looking for in a good candidate. Some of these skills and qualities are:

Knowledge of chosen field, carefulness of work

Motivation, enthusiasm, seriousness of purpose

Creativity, originality, ingenuity in problem-solving

Ability to plan and carry out research, organization

Ability to express thought in speech and writing

Maturity, emotional stability, ability to withstand stress and face challenges

Leadership

Self-reliance, initiative, independence, adaptability

Responsibility, ability to make sound judgments

Effectiveness with people, tact, ability to work with others, communicate effectively

Community service, volunteerism

The challenge of the scholarship essay is to make sure that you stress a constant theme: that many of your past experiences have helped to prepare you to be a good candidate for the scholarship.

Choice of words is important. You must be modest and yet ‘brag’ about your abilities at the same time. Use words like ‘good candidate,’ ‘well-prepared,’ ‘good leaderships skills’ and other terms that remain modest while demonstrating your abilities. Avoid exaggerated terms like ‘fantastic background,’ ‘my eternal passion for learning,’ ‘my exceptional skills,’ ‘my outstanding leadership ability’. Instead, let the evidence speak for itself.

Now, for your scholarship essay writing you should elaborate your body paragraphs by writing the main points and the sub points.

1. Start by writing down one of your main ideas, in sentence form.
2. Next, write down each of your supporting points for that main idea, but leave four or five lines in between each point.
3. In the space under each point, write down some elaboration for that point. Elaboration can be further description or explanation or discussion.

**Lesson 4**

**Writing the Introduction and Conclusion of the Scholarship Essay**

Your essay lacks only two paragraphs now: the introduction and the conclusion. These paragraphs will give the reader a point of entry to and a point of exit from your essay.

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| **Introduction** | http://tbmw.org/wp-content/uploads/graphics/Org%20Chart.jpg |

Consider the people who are reading your essay. They could be reading hundreds of essays! If you want to get their attention, you have to do it in the introduction. How can you spark their interest so they want to read on? You can do this by beginning with an attention grabber (startling information, anecdote, summary information, etc). In other words, the introduction should be designed to attract the reader's attention and give her/him an idea of the essay's focus.

The introduction should be about four sentences long including the attention grabber and sentences that will lead the reader from your opening to your thesis statement. The introduction paragraph should finish with your thesis statement.

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| **Conclusion** | http://writemyessayonline.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/end.jpg |

The conclusion brings closure to the reader, summing up your points or providing a final perspective on your topic. All the conclusion needs is three or four strong sentences which do not need to follow any set formula. Simply review the main points (being careful not to restate them exactly) or briefly describe your feelings about the topic. Even an [anecdote](http://lklivingston.tripod.com/essay/intro.html#anecdote) can end your essay in a useful way.

Your conclusion is your last chance to show why you deserve this scholarship—but don’t summarize everything you have just said. Often the scholarship essay is short, so do not keep repeating things you just said a paragraph ago.

The introduction and conclusion complete the paragraphs of your essay.   
Don't stop just yet! One more step remains before your essay is truly finished.

Now write the introduction and conclusion paragraph of your scholarship essay.

Once you have finished, check with your partner. Does the introduction paragraph catch your attention? Does the conclusion paragraph end the topic correctly? What suggestion could you provide to improve these paragraphs?

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| **Lesson 5**  **Revision and Final Editing** | http://www.danondisease.org/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderpictures/PaperReportFigure.jpg |

You have now completed all of the paragraphs of your essay. Before you can consider this a finished product, however, you must give some thought to the formatting of your paper.

There's no room for grammatical or spelling errors in a scholarship essay, so check and double-check your paper and have someone else review it. Your structure should be clear and well-organized, with a logical flow. While your paper should avoid overly casual language and slang, it should also be fun to read. Don't use dry, academic language; instead write in a way that displays your personality.

Check the order of your paragraphs.Look at your paragraphs. Which one is the strongest? You might want to start with the strongest paragraph, end with the second strongest, and put the weakest in the middle. Whatever order you decide on, be sure it makes sense.

Have someone else read over your essay to make sure that you have not made any exaggerated claims, but have clearly given enough detail to indicate your skills fully and accurately, your thoughts are well articulated, and it is easy to follow.

Sometime it helps to not look at your essay for a couple of days and then come back to it with fresh eyes. You will catch more mistakes this way. Give yourself time to do this.

Now check your writing. Review what you have done, to improve weak points

* Does it make logical sense?  
  Leave it for a few hours and then read it again. Does it still make logical sense?
* Do the sentences flow smoothly from one another?  
  If not, try to add some words and phrases to help connect them. Transition words, such as "therefore" or "however," sometimes help. Also, you might refer in one sentence to a thought in the previous sentence. This is especially useful when you move from one paragraph to another.
* Have you run a spell checker or a grammar checker?  
  These aids cannot catch every error, but they might catch errors that you have missed.

Once you have checked your work and perfected your formatting,   
your scholarship essay is finished.

**Sources**

How to fill out a Scholarship Application

From: http://classroom.synonym.com/fill-out-scholarship-applications-4434.html

Scholarship Essay

From: http://www.umflint.edu/finaid/personal-statement

How to Write a Scholarship Essay

http://sandiegocalsoap.com/star/docs/Scholarship/Writing%20Scholarship%20Essays.pdf

Guide to writing a Basic Essay

From: http://lklivingston.tripod.com/essay/finish.html

How to write: Why I deserve this scholarship Essay

http://classroom.synonym.com/write-why-deserve-scholarship-essay-1239.html

Purdue online Writing Lab

From: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>