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**Writing the Application Essay**

**One of the Most Important Steps to Getting into College**

The feared essay! If you thought the essay part of the SAT was a nightmare, then you might want to review spelling, basic grammar, punctuation, and basic sentence structure.

**Brand Yourself**

Everyone is capable of filling in the blanks on a college application, but not everyone can apply their wits and creativity to writing the typically required essay.

Above the hard facts on your application, the essay is where you actually are lucky enough to have the opportunity to brand yourself.

Make yourself individual.

This does not mean you can go overboard with absurdity, or egotistically fluff yourself to the point of caricature, but it means that with a good topic, well organized thoughts, and actual writing, that you can show your smarts, innovation, creativity and thought process all rolled into one piece.

**Be Original**

Imagine, if you had to read thousands of applicant essays, what types of topics would stand out to you?

Try discovering an essay topic in that way. Allow your "voice" to show through. When you struggle to make the essay formal and stiff, it will lose its appeal very quickly. You want to hook the admissions person who is reviewing yours, out of a pile of others.

Some colleges will generously let you choose a topic, which is a predicament in and of itself; so make sure to take a look at our [Selecting an Essay Topic](#) page. Other schools, especially organizations administering grants, might assign a topic. There are advantages to both.

**Proofreading, Rewriting, and Editing**

A good piece of writing doesn't come easily. Well-written prose is hard work. Maintain a consistent focus in your piece. Offer enough details so that the reader is very clear what the experience, idea, or event has meant to you and what your role has been.

Rewrite and rewrite again. Often where you first started writing the essay is not the real beginning, sometimes it's a few sentences down or even a paragraph down, where you started to let your thoughts really flow. Don't be afraid to cut out the original beginning in favor of a stronger essay.

Spelling mistakes, bad sentence structure, and garbled points of view will stick out. Use spell-check. Refer to a reputable style guide, such as the MLA Style Manual or the Chicago Manual

**Top 2010 Online Grants**

You May Qualify For a Grant to Go Back To College!

[www.ClassesUSA.com](http://www.ClassesUSA.com)

**Eligible for Grants?**

"You may be eligible for Grants, Scholarships, and Student Loans."

[EducationConnection.com/Grants](http://EducationConnection.com/Grants)

**Don't pay for school**

Get A Scholarship For Free. Millions Available Each Year.

[ProgramAdvisor.com/Scholarships](http://ProgramAdvisor.com/Scholarships)

**Free Stimulus Grant Guide**

Want Uncle Sam Pay For College? Get Your Federal Grants & School Guide!

[Edu.SearchByDegree.com/Grants](http://Edu.SearchByDegree.com/Grants)



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of Style, two very widely accepted sources.

### Plagiarism

Somewhere along the way some students have gotten the idea that "borrowing" or "copying" someone else's work, especially off the internet, is an acceptable practice. A lot of people do it, and online content is plagiarized everyday, often ending up in dozens of different places.

There is no better and quicker way to getting yourself rejected from any college application process. You will be discovered. If it has been used without permission or improperly cited, it is plagiarism.

Some colleges pay custom search companies to look for plagiarism. One common academic bot is TurnItInBot. To see how easy it is to compare your writing to other content give Copyscape a try.

### Paid Services

There are plenty of paid services that will promise you an "original" essay for \$10. Colleges want to see your work, not the work of someone else. Professional editing services alone will cost over \$10, so you can guarantee that whatever is being sold for \$10 will be unoriginal and/or junk that is worth far less than the paper it is printed on.

Professional editing services might be a value, especially when you are applying for competitive graduate school programs and feel your weakest spot is writing. Keep in mind that many of the more substantive services can be quite costly.

Find the right school for you! **START HERE** ▶

classesandcareers.com/MomsGrants Arts by Google

The advertisement features a graphic of a hand holding a pen, the text 'Find the right school for you!', a button that says 'START HERE' with a right-pointing arrow, and small text at the bottom: 'classesandcareers.com/MomsGrants' and 'Arts by Google'.