

# Tips for Writing and Winning Union Scholarship Essay Contests



Want to unlock troves of cash for college? Here are a few easy tips that will absolutely help your essay edge out the competition.

## Know the Rule Book Better than the Competition



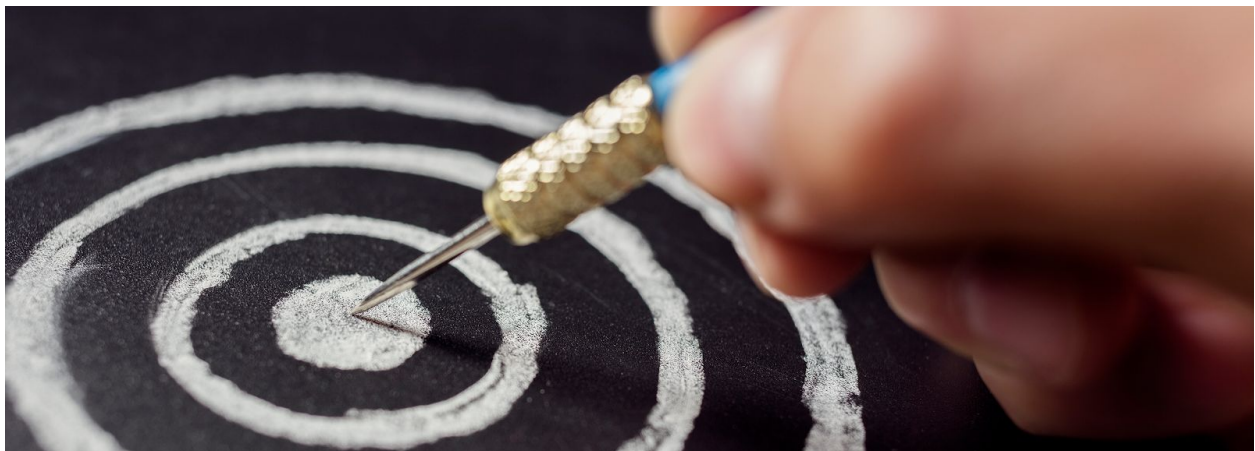
### **Playing smart is the same thing as playing well.**

Did the contest require proof of enrollment? Did you include your full contact details? Writing essays can be a lot like college football; the team that can learn the rule book has an advantage.

Each year, there are at least one or two entries that can't be awarded because of some disqualifying T that wasn't crossed or i that wasn't dotted. Double check everything, and you will have an automatic advantage right out of the gate.

For an example of what scholarship rules look like in real life, check out the [IAM141 Adolf Stutz Memorial Scholarship Contest Rules](#).

### **Keep the Focus on Your Topic**

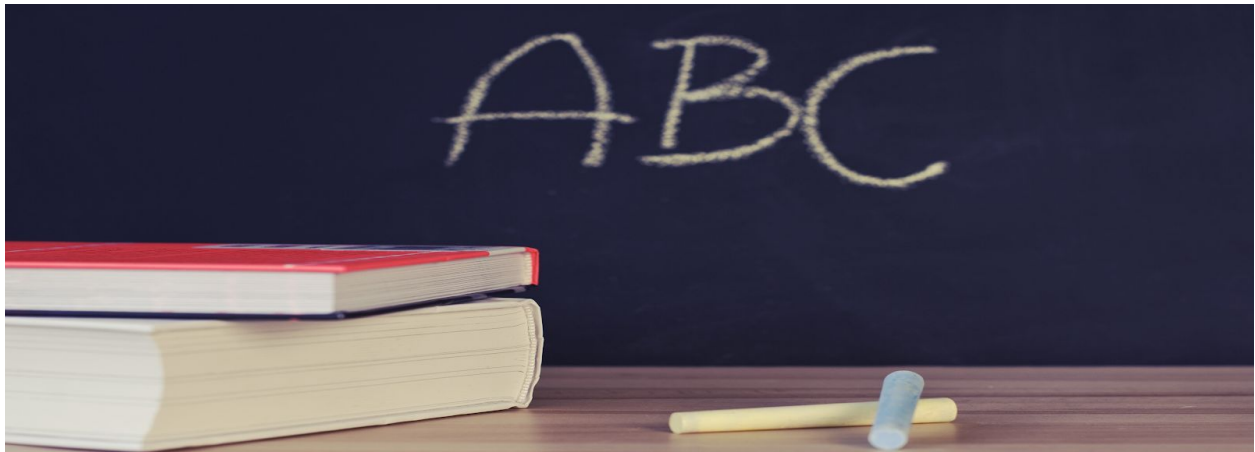


## **Shorter, simpler, better.**

Carefully identify the specific goals that your essay is trying to achieve. Throw everything else out. Distracting digressions are the enemy. Kill them.

If your topic is important and urgent to your audience, you can skip the fluff and get right to the point.

## **The Basics, Perfectly**



## **Spell checkers are great inventions. Don't waste them.**

Another tip: absolutely never let yourself think that you can proofread your own work. To win these scholarships, you will want to build a strong team behind you. Every good team has trainers and coaches. Bring in experts to help you improve your game. Draft your English teacher, tutors, and anyone else with strong written communication skills to proofread, suggest edits, and help you clean up your essay.

One other thing. If you find yourself always skipping over a particular section of your essay, it's not readable enough. Try to write clearly enough so that anyone with an 8th grade or higher reading level can understand it.

## **Just Show Up. Just in Case No One Else Does.**



**Sometimes, there's really not that much competition.**

Last year, thousands of dollars worth of scholarship money went unclaimed. And, not for any good reason. Most of it wasn't paid out just because there were more scholarship opportunities than there were applicants. Which means that at least a few thousand dollars could have been claimed by anyone hitting a keyboard and submitting the results.

**Keep checking with your local lodge to find out when the upcoming Machinists Union Scholarship Award Contests will be held.** They're held each year, but the only way to know about them is to stay involved with your local lodge.

Remember, there could be several scholarship opportunities each year. Besides the [Adolf Stutz Memorial Scholarship Essay Contest](#), the Machinists Union International Headquarters will hold its own [Annual Scholarship Contest](#), and your Local Lodge may also have one. In addition, some state and central labor councils offer scholarships for their affiliates and their families. Do check into all of them.