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Brainstorm Your Ideas

A strong scholarship or college essay is **anecdotal** (an essay that describes an interesting event from an autobiographical perspective). Since you only have the attention of the college admissions officer for approximately 500 words, you should focus on a specific event and what that event revealed to you, rather than explain multiple events.

A Which events in your life would make strong anecdotes? In column “A” below, jot down brief descriptions of recent events that connect to each concept or idea.

B Reread your ideas and identify key words. What is the message of the text? How can I address this idea in an interesting and personal way?

C Review each of the events you indicated. Think about how important each event was to you and why it was important. In column “C” answer the following questions: How did this event change you? How did you initially react? How were some of your views challenged? What was the new understanding of the world you gained from this event?

A. CONCEPT/IDEA	B. KEY WORDS	C. REFLECTION
A significant experience, achievement, risk you have taken, or ethical dilemma you have faced and its impact on you is:		
A person who has had a significant influence on you is:		
A character in fiction, a historical figure, or a creative work (as in art, music, science, etc.) that has had an influence on you is:		
An issue of personal, local, national, or international concern and its importance to you is:		
Describe an event or experience that had a positive influence on the way that you approach financial management. Outline the most helpful thing you learned and how it led to the development of specific skills.		

TIPS: Regardless of what you are writing about, you want to remember that you are trying to show how you will be a valuable member of your desired college's community. Remember: Avoid repeating information already listed on your scholarship or college application; clarify anything you wish to explain further; address any particular hardships or difficulties you have overcome in high school.