

## Personal Essay

Maximum 1500 words

All entries are original and unpublished.

Score out of 100	Personal Essay
_/5	<b>Format:</b> Double-spaced, Left-aligned, 1-inch margins, Times New Roman, 12
_/10	<b>Hook:</b> Title and introduction engage the reader immediately. A strong lead sets up the purpose, direction, and theme of the piece.
_/10	<b>Voice/Style:</b> Unique personality on the page. Imaginative, confident, and refreshing. Examples: dramatic, lyrical, scholarly, compassionate, urgent, etc.
_/20	<b>Organization and Development:</b> The work is unified, with one major theme or focus. It is well organized, with a clear beginning, middle, and end. There is a strong rhythm and flow of language. Sentences, paragraphs, and transitions flow smoothly from one thought or idea to the next. Scenes and thematic concepts are adequately developed and essential to the work. Examples, anecdotes, facts, dialogue, etc. expand and explain an idea. The writer is emotionally invested in the story's progression, meaning, and outcome.
_/10	<b>Word and Sentence Creativity:</b> Strong, vivid vocabulary and descriptions. Use of the five senses show rather than tell. Figurative language, such as simile and metaphor, add layers of meaning. Idioms, slang, or fragments, if used, are written purposefully and effectively. Vocabulary is rich and varied, rather than words being repeated. Sentences are varied in length and structure to enhance rhythm.
_/10	<b>Mechanics:</b> Writer has strong control of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and sentence structure. Any incorrect grammar is used purposefully (e.g., quoting a character).
_/20	<b>Personal Aspect:</b> Describes a true experience that changed the writer in a significant way. A pivotal moment is clearly defined and described, and the reader can see how the writer has been changed. Emotion is clearly shown. Applicable to readers' lives.
_/10	<b>Conclusion:</b> The work holds the reader's interest to the end. Provides a powerful and satisfying inspirational experience.
_/5	<b>Overall impression:</b> Overall impressions. A polished essay. Adheres to word count.