

Section 3: Personal Information Guide

Application Prompt:

WSOS values scholars who demonstrate resiliency, initiative and follow through. We know students are more likely to succeed in their program and careers when they have these qualities.

Think about a significant experience that challenged you, academically or personally.

1. What was the challenge? (3-4 sentences)
2. What did you do to overcome the challenge? (3-4 sentences)
3. Which of your skills and/or strengths helped you overcome the challenge? (3-4 sentences)

Short Answer Writing Guide:

The purpose of this section is to help WSOS understand each applicant as a whole person. It is not an evaluation of the applicant's grammar or writing style. We recommend each answer be approximately three to four sentences in length. Applicants are welcome to write more or less if that will help them convey their point. The answers to these questions should inform reviewers of the applicant's:

- Ability to overcome challenges
- Ability to navigate and utilize resources or support to overcome the challenge
- Mindsets about obstacles as growth opportunities rather than roadblocks

Sample Answers:

The following examples show just a few possible answers that would earn maximum points. Note that there are many different topics and writing styles accepted.

Example 1:

1. What was the challenge? (about 3-4 sentences)

Right after I graduated high school I got pregnant and had to postpone my plans to enroll in college. I come from a low-income family and did not have the resources to care for a new child and enroll in school at the same time. Now it is 11 years later and I want to pursue a college education to make my children proud and to be able to better support my family. Finding the money and time to enroll in college is my biggest challenge.

2. What did you do to overcome the challenge? (about 3-4 sentences)

I have started putting any money that I can into a college savings. I have worked with the school advisors to ask that they help me look for scholarships and discuss potential financial aid opportunities. I asked my family and community members with children if they would like to create a network of child care with one another.

CAREER & TECHNICAL

3. Which of your skills and/or strengths helped you overcome the challenge? (about 3-4 sentences)

The most important skill that has helped me overcome this challenge was my ability to look at this challenge from multiple angles. I can breakdown any major roadblock into many, more manageable pieces and think of many possible solutions. Having multiple strategies to overcome a problem makes me more likely to succeed.

Example 2:

1. What was the challenge? (about 3-4 sentences)

- *Writing is not my strongest subject.*
- *Composition class was really hard for me and I almost failed the class.*

2. What did you do to overcome the challenge? (about 3-4 sentences)

- *Talked to my teacher and asked for their help.*
- *Asked for resources to help improve my performance.*
- *Started a daily journal to practice my writing skills.*
- *Went to after hours tutoring sessions.*

3. Which of your skills and/or strengths helped you overcome the challenge? (about 3-4 sentences)

- *Knowing and being willing to ask for help.*
- *My determination and drive.*
- *Willingness to seek out additional resources.*

Example 3:

1. What was the challenge? (about 3-4 sentences)

In my junior year of high school, I realized one of our school's discipline policies was causing a disproportionate number of students to be suspended. This upset me because it was an unfair policy that made school even more difficult for those students and meant that they weren't able to stay on track in their classes. I decided to run for student council so that I could help change the policy, but I wasn't elected.

2. What did you do to overcome the challenge? (about 3-4 sentences)

Even though I wasn't elected, I knew I couldn't give up. I decided to organize a small group of students and together we came up with a proposal for changing the policy. We met with the assistant principal to advocate for our proposal and ultimately, we succeeded! The school administration came to a compromise and changed the policy.

3. Which of your skills and/or strengths helped you overcome the challenge? (about 3-4 sentences)

One of my greatest strengths is my ability to persevere when I feel passionate and motivated to accomplish something. I know that you will not accomplish all your goals on the first try and it is important to not let that get you down. Instead, you must look at what you learned from the first experience and be willing to try again.