TIPS

for

Effective Writing

- Read the prompt (rules and instructions)! Sounds easy but it's important. This will help you form your thoughts and know what the expectations are: How long should it be? What are you being asked to respond to? Read it through a couple of times and sit with your thoughts for a few minutes.

- Start with an outline! Not sure where to begin? Create an outline. Even if it is just a few bullet points, this can help you organize your thoughts and make sure you are hitting all of the main points of the prompt. Then you can begin stringing these thoughts together in paragraphs.

- Just start writing! Staring at a blank page can seem daunting but just start putting words onto the page. It's important to keep in mind that a first draft is always just that - a first draft. Allow yourself to write out your thoughts without worrying about word count just yet. Then go back and review: Are you missing important details? Did you include everything the prompt asked for? Are you over or under the word count? Now go through and refine it and make it better. This might take a couple of rounds and that's okay. You'll end up with a solid essay that might just win you some money!

- Express yourself! People love stories. And they will enjoy hearing yours. Stories give us a window into who you are and how you see the world. Remember that not every story needs to be big. Sometimes it's the smallest moments that we can all relate to.

- Plagiarism - If you use a quote, words, or ideas of another person to support your essay, you must make clear in your essay when you have borrowed from other sources.

- Proofread - times two! Always remember to edit and proofread your essay for grammar, structure, and flow. Read the essay out loud to yourself. Sometimes hearing it can help you identify sentences that need to be revised.

Use these writing tips to write the best essay you can, but most of all, have fun! We look forward to reading all of the great essays we receive.

Scott County Rotary Club

"Service Above Self"
Essay Contest