

PERSONAL
STATEMENT

SECRETS

Personal

Statement

Secrets

Sample Essays
(Set 3)



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Sample Essay #1
Modeled after the
“Michigan”
Template

ESSAY TEMPLATE

Compelling story of medically related experience
 (a five-year old girl begs her mom not to take her)

Transition: More information
 (The volunteer in the doctor’s office was me)

Strong Reason Why
 (I have consistently worked towards this goal...)

Compelling Story of Medically Related Experience
 (I decided to go to my aunt’s once-a-week free dental clinic)

ESSAY



In Dr. Fox’s dental office in Japan, Joyce, a five-year-old girl, begs her mom not to take her to the doctor’s office.

“Mommy, please don’t leave, please don’t leave!” Joyce shouts with fear, while holding onto her Winnie the Pooh stuffed doll. She looks around in fright while her mom holds onto her hands.

“Okay honey, you stay out here for a little bit with Dina, mommy will just go into the room and talk to Dr. Fox,” Joyce’s mom whispers into her daughter’s ear.

“Hi sweetie, are you ok? You’re a big girl huh, and you know what big girls need?” a volunteer asks Joyce who looks away persistently holding onto her doll.

“You need a gift!” the volunteer smiles as she leaves the dental office and returns with a pink flowered tiara.

“Here sweetie, you get a tiara for being such a good girl,” she enthusiastically tells Joyce. Joyce smiles and wipes the tears off of her rosy cheeks. She reaches out to get the tiara and says, “I’m sleeping Beauty!”

“Yes you are sweetheart and you know what, whenever you put that tiara on, you will fall deep into sleep just like Sleeping Beauty,” the volunteer replies. Joyce puts on the pink flowered tiara and smiles. Dr. Fox takes her in and starts to clean her teeth. She amazingly keeps still and keeps her eyes closed the whole time. She is finally done.

“I was Sleeping Beauty!” Joyce comments while holding onto her pink tiara.

“Yes you were sweetie!” the volunteer gives her a hug and in return receives a warm thank you.

The volunteer in the doctor’s office was me. The qualities required to become a dentist are ones I have exhibited since I was young: patience, compassion, the desire to help others, having skillful hands and leadership ability. I have consistently worked towards this goal, both through my volunteer work and academics.

My aunt once said “I received twelve thank you’s today, I know that’s good enough for me.” During my one-month vacation in the Philippines, I decided to go to my aunt’s once a week free dental clinic. Outside the clinic, a bunch of adorable 5th graders in their hand-me-down school uniforms waited patiently. The children were all there to get an extraction. I was not too surprised that I knew that TitaAnalie does

**Introspection/
Reflection**

(I started to ponder what I really longed for)

Transition: Shift in time

(The summer of my senior year I volunteered for the Organometallic research)

Confirmation of Motivation

(Many years of volunteering have solidified my ambition)

Destination: You want to do work that has a meaningful connection to "What's Important in Life"

(I would also like to help ameliorate the problems)

not have the complete set of tools to do other procedures. I continued to assist my aunt by calling in the next patient.

TitaAnalie was exhausted by the end of the day, but still felt blessed for her ability to help her patients without getting anything in return.

On the ride back home, I started to ponder what I really longed for, and that is to show the dentists who struggle in the Philippines how they can be more innovative regarding dental health and show them other procedures that can be done with all the new technology here in the United States.

The summer of my senior year, I volunteered for the organometallic research group with Dr. Hollis. The Hollis group's view of me was someone who was not as experienced and therefore would not contribute a lot with his research.

"I need to synthesize at least one organometallic compound!" I told RJ, my research partner. He told me that it would take a lot of hours of hard work and a lot of dedication.

"I will give it 110%," I replied. At the time, I thought of how making this organometallic compound reflected my hardships through academics, since being an undergrad was tough because I was getting zero support from my parents. However I thought of the many different ways I proved my parents wrong such as working crazy hours to survive on my own and at the same time having time to read one chapter a night for my organic chemistry class.

"Show me that you are meticulous, present your goal product to the team and show you are capable of being a leader," RJ advised.

After two weeks of hard work, I finally isolated my goal product: (COD) Palladium dichloride. The next day was the presentation. I had to prove that I was capable of being a leader, because being a leader meant being part of the whole group as well.

After the presentation, I felt a sudden relief because I had proved to myself that I was capable of being a leader just like the rest of the graduate students just as long as I had no doubts, patience and pure confidence.

Many years of volunteering in dental clinics have solidified my ambition to become a dentist. Also, the academic hardships I have encountered have prepared me for dental school

In the future, I would also like to help ameliorate the problems in the dental industry in the Philippines, either through donations or equipment or through volunteering my own time. Given the opportunity I will dedicate myself fully to succeeding in dental school and in my chosen career.

Sample Essay #2
Modeled after the
“Skillful”
Template

ESSAY TEMPLATE

Compelling story of medically related experience

(one of his young patient’s lateral incisors had been knocked out)

Transition: More Information

(The reassurance and calm demeanor I employed had a positive effect)

Introspection/ Review/Impact

(I realized that a dentist must have compassion)

Transition: Shift in Time

(During another shadowing experience)

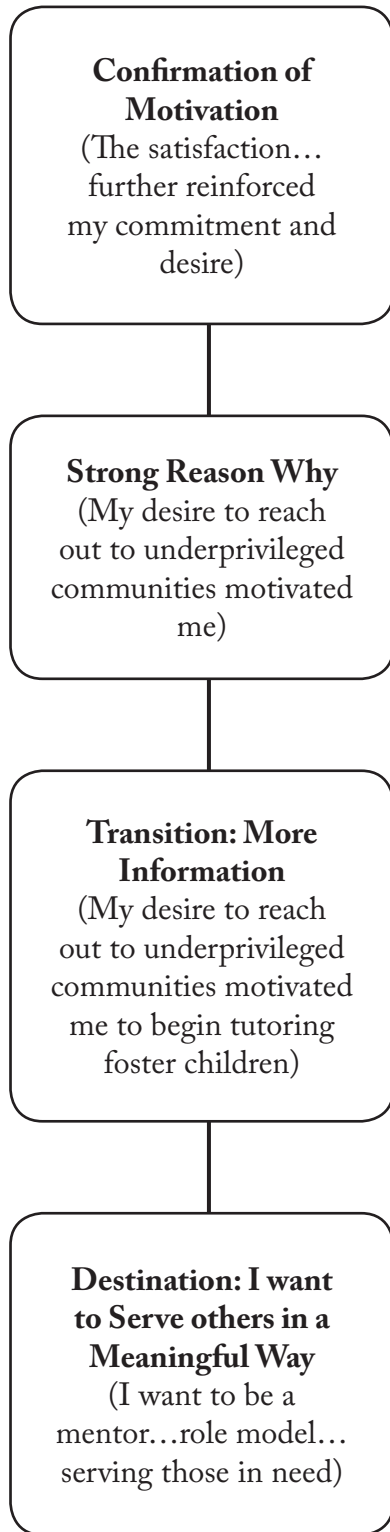
ESSAY



It was a beautiful spring day, fit for the beach, or even a baseball game. I was at home with my parents, enjoying one of the few weekends I had to myself, when studying for neuroanatomy and virology was filed in the back of my mind. As we barbequed and enjoyed each other’s company, my father received a call from a patient. My father explained that one of his young patient’s lateral incisors had been knocked out by a wild pitch during a baseball game. His mother was frantic and requested my other’s assistance. Always eager to see new procedures and learn about dentistry, I accompanied my father. When we met Jeffery and his mother, they were very worried. I calmed Jeffrey down by telling him, “the first time I got up to bat, I got hit in the head, but I kept playing.” I saw how this ease his fears about playing again as my father assured Jeffrey’s mother that all would be well.

This experience was valuable because I saw how the patient-dentist relationship must encompass care and trust. The reassurance and calm demeanor I employed had a positive effect on Jeffrey. He swore he would never play baseball again, but after I told him about my experience, he decided to give it another try. My father was also very comforting. He told Jeffrey that he had seen people with two or three teeth knocked out, and others who couldn’t have their teeth put back in place. This helped Jeffrey realized that his situation was not severe. In order to encourage Jeffrey to keep playing, we took an impression of his teeth so that he could have a mouth guard to protect his teeth during games. I learned a very important lesson this day; I realized that a dentist must have compassion for the patient, who is in a vulnerable position. I am certain that when I am a dentist I will look back on this experience and remember to put myself in the patient’s shoes, and treat him or her the way I would want to be treated. The patient should be cared for as a valued client, and not as a case or a procedure.

During another shadowing experience, I encountered Freddie. She repeatedly complained of discomfort due to her dentures and had several adjustments done. However, she was one of the most jovial patients I have ever met. I enjoyed her visits to the office because she always teased me, suggesting that I look like the actor Andy Garcia. Freddie would tell me, “You know Yahya, if I was 40 years younger I’d keep you for myself.” I would just smile and blush; after all, how do you respond to that? Her lighthearted demeanor and witty humor made it difficult to see her in distress.



The senior dentist informed her that dental implants might pose a better alternative; however, she would need a synthetic bone graft since she did not have sufficient bone to support the implants. We tried on several occasions to convince her, and finally Freddie agreed to the treatment. Several months after the bone graft, we took x-rays to make sure there was enough bone present for successful placement of the implant. We then successfully used the Replace Select Noble Biocare Implant System and did the restorative work well. A couple of weeks later, Freddie came back in to thank us because she was no longer in discomfort. She was nearly in tears as she described how she used to have trouble eating steak and apples, but now could eat anything. The satisfaction that I felt due to her comfort and happiness is one of the most significant dental experiences I have ever had. It further reinforced my commitment and desire to become a dentist, and taught me that dentists must always give patients every treatment option available and help make desired options realities.

As a dental professional, I am conscious of the fact that I must place patients' well being over profit, specifically when it comes to the underprivileged. I will carry over my philanthropic mindset from my college days to my dental career. My desire to reach out to underprivileged communities motivated me to begin tutoring foster children. Most of my students came from lower income families, and the trauma and stress that these children have endured was something I handled with sensitivity and compassion. I knew that I had to be a source of stability and a role model to these students, not just a teacher. One particular student, Yvette, was a sophomore who had the reading comprehension of a sixth grader. She was in danger of failing her classes when I began tutoring her. Since reading is the basis for all learning, I began to strongly emphasize reading skills and comprehension. By dedicating a great deal of time to Yvette I helped her to pull her grades up to a B average. This momentum carried over to the next semester, and she eventually received A's. One reason my work with Yvette was so successful was my decision to work with her on multiple subjects, thus giving her a broad base of knowledge and strategies on how to approach each subject. This is more effective than focusing on a specific subject because it allows the integration of different learning methods and critical thinking skills.

The lessons I learned working with Yvette, observing dentists, and interacting with patients helped shape the way I communicate with people in need. As a dentist, I will be a mentor and role model, and I am committed to serving as a guide to those who need it. I recognize that I must act as a professional and exemplify a strong work ethic and high moral and ethical standards.

Sample Essay #3
Modeled after the
“In the Field”
Template

ESSAY TEMPLATE

**Introspection/
 Review/Impact**
 (When we combining
 our unique gift or
 special talent)

**Technique:
 Exemplification**
 (From then, I learned
 about the need to make
 sacrifices)

**Transition: More
 Information**
 (Deepak Chopra has
 helped inspire me to
 serve humanity)

ESSAY



The Law of Dharma says that we are manifested in physical form to fulfill a purpose in life. When we combine our unique gift or special talent with service to others, the potential of a human being is realized. My purpose in life is to attend dental school and specialize in orthodontics and pediatric dentistry in order to serve my community.

When I moved from Iran to New York, I was placed in an ESL program. Despite obvious economic and social challenges such as the inability to understand English, living in a new country, and the lack of sufficient money, I overcame this disadvantage to rise to the high level of performance expected of me by my parents. My father had to repeat his pediatric residency in New York, and my mother became an acupuncturist after our immigration. From them, I learned about the need to make sacrifices for the future. I graduated from high school with the highest number of advanced placement course possible, honors every semester, and participation in the Academic Decathlon Team.

Deepak Chopra has helped inspire me to serve humanity. In his words; “The more you give, the more you will receive, because you will keep the abundance of the universe circulating in your life. In fact, anything that is of value in life only multiplies when it is given.”

Learning about mechanical physics and the principles of motion and force fascinated me, and has contributed to my interest in the dental profession. I see the field of orthodontics as an area of applied knowledge of mechanical physics for the treatment of patients. At the same time, my internship with a pediatric dentist has shown me the rewards of patient contact. He is constantly challenged by the need to alleviate his patients’ fears about visiting the dentist. I remember when Nancy came to the clinic, looking very apprehensive from being separate from her mother and being brought into a room filled with unknown devices and instruments. Dr. Brown promised her that if she behaved he would give her a sticker and a necklace, and Nancy was very quiet throughout the dental visit. I want to combine my interest in physics as a member of the branch of dentistry that uses mechanical forces to correct malocclusions of the teeth and to beautify the smile. I find myself constantly daydreaming of being an orthodontist and being the type of person that Dr. Brown was to Nancy.

Compelling medically related story

(I remember when Nancy came into the clinic)

Transition: More Information: Technical Proficiency

(I have honed my manual dexterity while learning)

Destination: I want to combine my compassion for others with my desire to serve

(Volunteering at CML has motivated me to aid others who lack social and economic resources; ...desire to interact with patients and learn more about behavior)

As a volunteer at the UCLA Stereotactic Laboratory, I have honed my manual dexterity while learning about epileptic seizures and the neural malfunctioning associated with these patients. This can be controlled using signal transducers implanted in the brain. To create them, a band of fine wires must be separated, followed by detailed cuts in the wires to produce specific lengths of conduction. At the tip, the copper must be exposed and split for conduction. The copper must be soldered to produce an even tip, and then formed into loops to allow for connections. My experience making these devices has developed my manual skills, which are essential in dentistry.

Volunteering at CML Medical Center has motivated me to aid others who lack social and economic resources. Assisting the elderly patients to their examination rooms, carrying blood and specimen samples, and helping to set up pension plans for employees at the medical center has instilled in me the desire to serve the community. As an orthodontist I will make certain that my patients' rights to receive outstanding dental care are carried out regardless of their economic circumstances.

My academic accomplishments in the field of psychobiology have provided me with a firm appreciation and grasp of the sciences that I will apply to dentistry. My research in the field of psychoneuroimmunology has centered on the relationship between the brain and the immune system via chemical messengers. This experience has made me determined to continue conducting scientific research in the field of dentistry. From my psychobiology courses I have learned about the localization of functions in the human brain, meaning that specific locations in the brain carry out specific functions. Learning about these functions and their effects on behavior has motivated me to pursue dentistry in order to satisfy my desire to interact with patients and learn more about behavior.

Sample Essay #4
Modeled after the
“Communication”
Template

ESSAY TEMPLATE

Compelling story of non-medically related experience using analogy

(In many ways shaping a surfboard is like shaping a tooth)

Strong Reason Why

(It is that commitment that drives me)

Emotionally significant story

(One morning a woman came in wincing)

Compelling Story of Medically Related Experience

(I also volunteered for three years at Hoag Hospital)

ESSAY



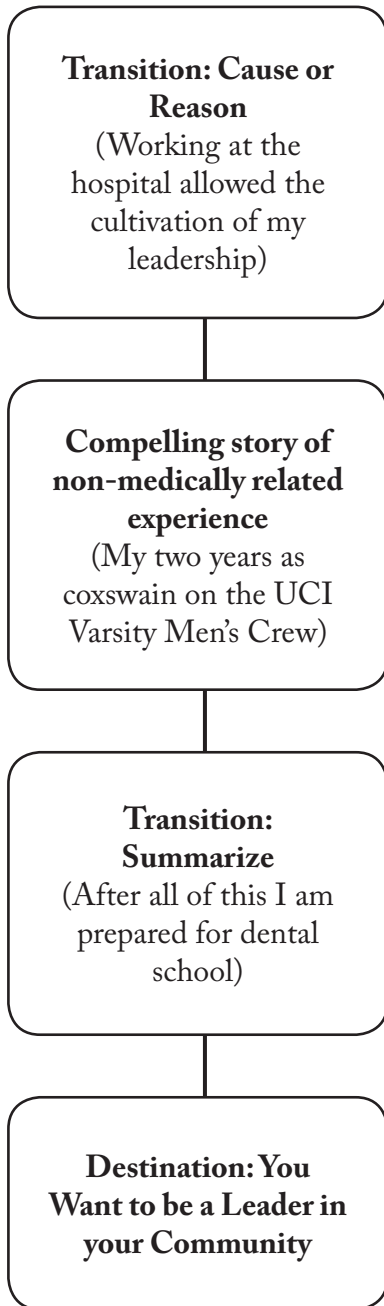
“Smooth surfaces make sharp edges.” This is the fundamental principle that my stepfather shared with me when he introduced me to the art of shaping surfboards. The performance of the board can be greatly affected by the sandpaper rubbing against the foam with too much force or with the wrong curvature of your hand. In many ways, shaping a surfboard is like shaping a tooth; finesse, patience and a steady hand are all vital.

My title at the Share Our Selves free dental clinics is dental assistant, which means I set up trays and assist the dentists. However, a title cannot convey the sincerity and commitment I have for every patient’s health. It is that commitment that drives me to treat every patient as a special person who has an ailment that I can aid in repairing.

One morning a woman came in wincing and grunting, covering her mouth with the palm of her hand. I do not know much Spanish and the bilingual staff had not yet arrived, but I had studied in Italy for four months. Luckily Spanish and Italian are similar enough that I was able to understand that the origin of her pain was her second molar. The dentist performed the extraction and Maria was on her way to recovery. A letter of appreciation arrived in the mail about two weeks later. It is rewarding to know that patients appreciate my commitment to their health. During my two years at Share Our Selves, patients consistently told me that my cheerful attitude and smile made them a bit more relaxed.

In addition to the dental clinic, I also volunteered for three years at Hoag Hospital where I served on the Junior Auxiliary Board and had the opportunity to establish and chair the nutrition committee. In conversation with cafeteria workers, it became apparent that due to lack of staff they needed assistance in creating menus to accommodate patient’s diets. After being trained by the lead nutritionist, I organized a committee of seven volunteers and taught them to read patients’ charts, communicate with nurses and ensure the patients were getting a proper diet. Working at the hospital allowed the cultivation of my leadership skills by identifying inefficiencies and creating workable solutions.

A leader must keep unity in a group by keeping people on task. I had the chance to practice this during my two years as coxswain on the UCI men’s varsity crew team. A coxswain is in charge of the entire boat, from setting the boat in the



water to crossing the finish line. Along with the coach, I worked to lead 5 a.m. practices and ensure a winning team. The way to stroke the boat is to have all eight oars synchronized at the catch and finish. If someone sets their oar in the water too early or leans too far to either side, the rhythm of the boat is disrupted. My coach always said, "Stroke, by stroke, by stroke...that is the way we win races, me." I know now that it is not only applicable to crew, but to most things in life. Taking things one-step at a time and not losing sight of my ultimate goal has been my path to success.

Neither of my parents went to college, so planning for my higher education was left up to me. They had the best of intentions, but not the scholastic experience necessary to guide me. I took it upon myself to research schools, financial aid, entrance exams and everything else required to be successful. In addition to this research and my classes, I also held a part-time job working twenty hours per week.

After all this, I am now prepared for dental school. I have heard the stories of late nights in the library, long hours in class, difficult exams, and even more difficult patients. It is these challenges that push me further to achieve excellence. Being a dentist has been a goal and passion of mine for many years now. I have sat in on lectures at a dental school and spoke with students working in the clinic. I am confident that I can embrace the academic challenge and contribute to the field of dentistry. When I was five, my parents and I came to the United States from Canada because my father was transferred for work. A few months after arriving, my father left us and my mother was faced with the responsibility of being my sole provider. Although she was an accountant in Canada, she did not have authorization to work in America so she was forced to clean houses to put food on the table. I can remember my first grade teacher bringing over food every once in a while to help us out. Through perseverance my family is now well establish, and because of this I can relate to those less fortunate. That is why I am committed to volunteering my skills as a dentist while making a difference in my community.

Sample Essay #5
Modeled after the
“Hybrid”
Template

ESSAY TEMPLATE

Emotionally vulnerable story
 (all I want is a chance to make something of myself)

Strong Reason Why
 (a few simple things have shaped my life)

Emotionally Vulnerable Story Continued
 (My father never missed a single soccer game)

Compelling story of medically related experience
 (As a terrified six year old, I had a tonsillectomy)

ESSAY



“Please mom, all I want is a chance to make something of myself,” cried the poor teenage immigrant to his mother over thirty-nine years ago. With a hundred dollars and one-way airfare, my father left Iran, worked as a waiter twelve hours a day and earned his doctorate from New York University School of Engineering. Twenty-one years later, he took a chance and opened up a corporation with my mother. Too poor to drive to work, they saw my brother and myself off to school and walked a two and a half mile journey to work. After fifteen years of total dedication to work and home, my father has built an empire at his work place and dwelling grounds.

Through all the rough times, a few simple things have shaped my life: love, determination, and athletics. I began playing soccer as a four-year-old dreamer and have turned into a twenty three year old doer. My father never missed a single soccer game, baseball game, or music concert. He taught me at a young age, that if you want something bad enough, you must constantly work to achieve it. When I was eleven years old, I wrote a contract to myself, promising that once I begin something, I will “never quit” at trying to achieve my goal. That contract has had much impact on my life.

As a terrified six year old, I had a tonsillectomy. Comforted by a young Dr. Ozzunian, I knew I wanted to be a physician. As a confused eight year old, I had my first filling. Eased by an experience Dr. McGavin, I knew I wanted to be a dentist. As a twelve-year-old kid afraid to show his imperfect teeth, I had to get braces. Uplifted by Dr. Savage, my elderly orthodontist, I knew I wanted to become a children’s orthodontist. For the past eleven years, the goal still remains the same, opening up my own children’s’ orthodontic office to comfort, ease, and uplift the terrified and unsure children of the community. I have been blessed with receipt, now it is my time to give back.

As a high school athlete who doubled as a peer counselor for emotionally troubled as well as delinquent students, I learned an unprecedented amount about those around me. Things are not always what they seems to be. As an All American football player, an all county soccer player, and an all-state sprinter, I graduated high school with high honors and accepted a full football scholarship to the University of Hawaii at Manoa. After suffering a fractured vertebrae and a fractured ischium,

Strong Reason Why
(I have been blessed with receipt, now it is my time to give back)

Transition: More Information
(As a high school athlete who doubled as a peer counselor)

Destination: I have a love of science and I want to help in a meaningful way
(I am excited about the privilege to further my education, and I hope to further the field as well)

I proudly left the University as a three-time Western Athletic Conference first team scholar athlete. Over the next two years, I was the captain of the men’s soccer team and men’s track team at the California State University of Stanislaus. I worked as a chemistry tutor and served as an office manager at one of the country’s largest veterinary research laboratories.

Over the past few summers, my days as a student have been spent working full time and maintaining a high GPA at my University. By nightfall, I was leading work out sessions for fellow soccer players and track athletes. Through the rigors of my loaded schedule with hardly enough time to catch my breath, I excitedly think about the long journey ahead of me. I have always been intrigued by teeth and the notion that the makeup of a persons oral region will help determine how the person feels about themselves. Over the next year I will attempt to work in a dental office to further expand my knowledge prior to entry into dental school. I look forward to dental school and the opportunity to help the citizens of my community improve their oral health, as well as their overall health. All the trials and tribulations of my life have given me the aptitude and inclination to offer ethical and professional dental care to anybody. I am excited about the privilege to further my education in the growing field of dentistry, and I hope to help further the field as well through independent research. I have a genuine passion for the dental field and I hope to one day broadened my horizons as an orthodontist. The manual dexterity instilled in me is perfect for micro-scale treatment. I take nothing for granted and I have worked hard for everything in life. I will continue to work to further my achievements and reach my goals.

As a man of faith, I have learned many valuable life long lessons. As I now concentrate my efforts on gaining admission into dental school, I allow my experiences to once again lead the way. Through my commitment and engagement in athletics, community service, and social diversity, I have accumulated a plethora of intellectual and interpersonal communication skills that will allow me to succeed.

Sample Essay #6
Modeled after the
“Newfound Insight”
Template

ESSAY TEMPLATE

Compelling story of medically related experience
 (“My whole mouth hurts!”)

Introspection/ Review/Impact
 (I realized that dentistry is not just about fixing people’s teeth)

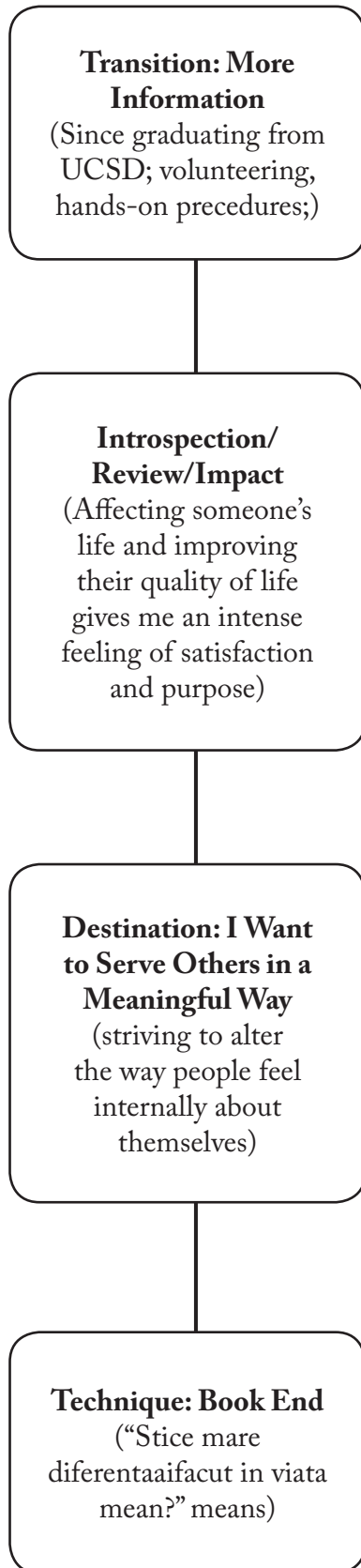
Transition: Contrast (I had the chance to fine-tune my perceptual ability; I helped create a computerized and universally available search tool)

ESSAY



“*Toatogura ma doare!*” (“My whole mouth hurts!”), exclaimed the tearful woman as she tightly clasped my hand. I met Nadia two years ago during a trip to my homeland, Romania. My aunt, a dentist, had enlisted my help in setting up dental clinics in rural communities with no access to dental care. These towns were much like a pastoral scene from an 18th century painting. In Nadia’s village, the main source of transportation was still horse-drawn carts, and the people sustained themselves simply on what they grew through farming and their uncanny ability to make everything from scratch. My aunt and I set up the dental office in the town church and the villagers formed queues outside, eagerly waiting to be cured of their ailments. I vividly recall Nadia’s case; she was diagnosed with periodontitis and suffered from rampant periodontal abscesses on her maxillary and mandibular molars. Pressure from the swelling and pus at the root tip pushed her teeth upward in their socket, making them feel high and sensitive to the slightest touch. My aunt extracted four badly decayed teeth, drained the abscesses and followed with an antibiotic treatment. When we checked on Nadia one week later, I was surprised when she pointed at me and asked “*Stice mare diferenta aifacut in viata mea?*” As I glanced over her weathered face to her grateful eyes, I suddenly understood the relief she felt after so many years of agony. Ultimately, this was the experience that reinforced my decision to become a dentist. I realized that dentistry is not just about fixing people’s teeth and owning a business, but also about a devotion and commitment to care for people from all walks of life, who are poor and struggling to make it from day to day.

In college, I became interested in psychology, especially the field of neuropsychopharmacology. My strong interest in this field led me to do research in the lab of one of my psychology professors, and part of this project required that I perform intraventricular cannulation surgeries on our rat subjects. This involved the insertion of a cannula in the left ventricle of the brain through which various drugs could be administered. Not only did I develop a talent for making the miniaturized equipment needed for the surgeries and other experiments, but I learned that I had a natural sense of coordination, receiving praise for my dexterity from my colleagues. I had the chance to fine-tune my perceptual ability through my research in the lab of my microbial genetics professor. There, I helped create a computerized and universally available search tool for the characterization of protein families. My work involved 3D computer modeling of molecular structures such as transport



proteins and DNA. With regard to the technological advances in dentistry, I can use this skill to create computer-generated models of teeth and to effectively interpret a 2d frame into the 3D world. Moreover, as a psychology major, I acquired crucial analytical skills and a clear and rational way of thinking. My well-rounded, humanistic education will serve me well as a dentist, as I believe that the interpersonal context between dentist and patient is just as important as the procedures themselves.

Since graduating from UCSD, I have been volunteering in a dental office, pursuing my interest in endodontics. As a member of the Pre-Dental Club, I took part in a mentorship program where I was matched with Dr. Martin. In his office, I had the opportunity to observe numerous root canal procedures, which sparked my interest in endodontics. I became fascinated with procedures that involve diagnosing and treating diseases and injuries that are specific to the dental nerves and pulp. With each patient, Dr. Martin described in detail the procedure being performed, giving me an up-close and sometimes hands-on preparation for dental school. Time spent in his office has shown me many aspects of the profession I hope to experience in my own career, such as development of strong relationships and friendships with employees and patients.

Affecting someone's life and improving their quality of life gives me an intense feeling of satisfaction and purpose. One of my most rewarding and memorable experiences occurred when I served as a mentor to inner-city youth. I became a friend and role model to a timid young girl name Christina. I learned that she was a talented sketch artist but needed someone to encourage her and show her what she was capable of accomplishing in life. Although the process was sometimes frustrating for both of us, gradually her self-confidence and grades improved beyond both of our expectations. The last time I saw Christine, she surprised me with a gift: a portrait she had sketched of me. It was her way of expressing her gratitude. This moment was especially meaningful to me because for the first time, I was able to see in her gaze the deep sense of self worth and determination that I worked so hard to impart to her. I reaffirmed my belief that when one becomes passionate about a goal, the impediments that limit us are insignificant and seem to disappear until the final goal is reached. This is the way I have lead my life, and I have come to understand that if I worked with my mind and heart, rewards would be endless.

I believe that the rewards of being a dentist do not lie solely in the ability to change one's physical aesthetics but in striving to alter the way people feel internally about themselves. A dentist has the power to alleviate not only physical but emotional pain, and to contribute to a patient's overall well being and happiness. Ultimately, I see myself as an educator or oral health and a benefactor to those who do not have the social or economic means to see a dentist.

"Stice mare diferentaaifacut in viata mean?" means: "Do you see how you have changed my life?"

Sample Essay #7
Modeled after the
“Wrap Up”
Template

ESSAY TEMPLATE

Compelling story of non medically related experience

(Martha’s Place is a transitional housing and recovery program for women overcoming)

Confirmation of Motivation

(Luana described exactly what I wanted to do...to nurture and mentor members of the community)

Transition: More Information

(Working at a pharmacy, I witnessed the same kind of fostering relationship)

Compelling story of medically related experience

(During one routine call)

ESSAY



A harsh burst of frosty winter wind hit me like an ice wall as I hopped out of my car. I yanked my hoodie over my head, glanced cautiously from left to right, and hurried towards the red brick building. My heart was pounding as I paced through the downtown street of Baltimore, one of the most dangerous cities in America. I eagerly knocked on the large white door of the structure and entered Martha’s Place.

Martha’s Place is a transitional housing and recovery program for women overcoming drug addiction and homelessness. As a volunteer, I prepared dinner for the women and assisted in their job search by helping them build their resumes. I did not want to treat my experience as pure business, though, as I wanted to build a relationship with these women so they could find comfort in me. Personally, I find it difficult to talk about rough experiences I had in the past, so I was touched when the women started to open up to me. Luana, the house manager, was diagnosed with HIV in 1983 and told me that she had only 18 months to live. Through her faith, she made the best of her condition and started helping other women with issues related to drugs and their adverse effects. She described working with these women as like being a mother – she nurtures and protects the women as her own children.

As I think about my own career choice, I know that what Luana described is exactly what I want to do, that is, to nurture and mentor the members of my community. Working at a pharmacy, I witnessed the same kind of fostering relationship between the pharmacist and the patients. Though my dream to go into the field of pharmacy was sparked by my admiration for my aunt who worked as a pharmacist in Korea, it was fueled by the experiences that I had working in different pharmacy settings.

It was by luck that I started working at King’s Pharmacy and Compounding Center, which makes hormones from natural ingredients, designed to target individual needs. I interviewed merely seeking experience in the pharmaceutical industry, but ended up falling in love with the core mission of supporting the unique needs of each patient. Working under the title of Patient Coordinator, I dealt with the customers directly. Every month, I placed courtesy calls to all of our hormone patients. When I first started calling, patients would express their concerns about how the medication was affecting them, but there was nothing I could do for them except transfer them to the pharmacist. I felt frustrated that I could not help them in my position.

Confirmation of motivation

(I love building close, intimate relationships and feel a great sense of fulfillment)

Destination: You Want to do Work that is Meaningful

Technique: Book End
(Remembering Luana and my patients inspires me)

During one routine call, I spoke with a patient who was due for a refill on her progesterone and estrogen creams. I assumed that she wanted a refill on both creams, but she only wanted the progesterone cream. It would have been easy to comply with her request and move on to the next patient on my list, but I knew from talking to the head pharmacist that it was crucial to take both progesterone and the estrogen together. I explained to her why this was necessary and she was thankful and impressed at how much attention I was giving her. I was happy to do my small part in making sure that each patient was more than just a different RX number.

I often felt like a number while volunteering at an inpatient pharmacy in a hospital. Although I was busy delivering medications to different parts of the hospital, the pharmacists seemed to be quite stationary. They sat in front of their computers like machines, working with the prescriptions on the screen and never with the patients face to face. This was impersonal and definitely not something I wanted to do.

Having experienced different pharmacy settings, I now know what works for me. I love building close, intimate relationships and feel a great sense of fulfillment when I can help people better their lives. The ingredients in a medication are not all that cures a person; the pharmacist, with an understanding of the patient's emotional state and how it affects their physical state, plays a central role in the holistic treatment of a patient's condition. Remembering Luana and my patients inspires me to become a pharmacist who can build relationships with the people in the community.

Sample Essay #8
Modeled after the
“Straight Shooter”
Template

ESSAY TEMPLATE

Emotionally Vulnerable Story:
 (The Khmer Rouge had taken control of Cambodia)

Transition: More Information:
 (I passed challenging tests for admittance into only one pharmacy school in Cambodia)

Emotionally Significant Personal Experience:
 (...was devastated to find my pharmacy license was not valid)

Transition: Shift in Time:
 (I decided to volunteer at a Kaiser Permanente)

ESSAY



The year was 1975; I was two years old and the Khmer Rouge had taken control of Cambodia and converted my country into the “killing fields,” where almost three million innocent Cambodians died as a result of mass executions, diseases, starvation, and overworking. Most who perished were educated because the president of the Khmer Rouge wanted to eradicate all who had been educated or worked under the previous government. As the new regime emerged, Cambodians lacked information about medicine and there were few pharmacists; people used what little medical knowledge they had. However, I have been exposed to pharmacy for many years. My parents owned a small drug store in Cambodia, and while growing up I watched how pharmacists advised patients and prepared medication. I wanted to help those who were sick get better with the right medicine, but I did not have the proper education.

In my generation, girls are discouraged from seeking higher education, and marriages are arranged. I was fortunate because my dad insisted I study hard as he encouraged me to attain higher education. My dad explained my homework and taught me how to improve my grades. During my high school years I went to my parents’ pharmacy after school and watched them compound medications. In 1988 my dad started an import/export wholesale drug company, and I learned more about pharmacy. After high school I passed challenging tests for admittance into only one pharmacy school in Cambodia that accepts thirty students each year, which I attended for six years while I worked at my parents’ pharmacy and trained at four hospitals, a drug store, an herbal medicine store, stock medicine store, and control medicine laboratory.

In 1997 I moved to the United States, and was devastated to find that my pharmacy license was not valid. I could not speak or read English, but I worked hard to learn the new language and adjust to the culture. I attended school at Delta College, where I began ESL classes. I frequented the library to learn how to read English, beginning with children’s books. I worked at the Original New York Donut where I practiced listening to improve my verbal skills. At the same time I dealt with domestic problems resulting from my arranged marriage, and soon I was left alone in a new country.

Moving to the US nevertheless helped me to become more confident as I worked hard to learn English. I decided to volunteer at a Kaiser Permanente

Compelling Story of Non-Medically Related Experience:
(Dr. Recardez suggested I tutor students)

Strong Reason Why:
(I enjoy working with the public)

Transition: Conclude
(I am motivated to pursue a pharmacy degree even though)

Destination: You Want to Combine Your Love of Science with your Desire to Express Compassion for Others Through Medicine

pharmacy in Stockton; I wanted to know the differences between pharmacy in the US and Cambodia. I was amazed by the technology (computer technology, high-risk drug monitoring, financial management). I was determined to become a pharmacist, and so I made an appointment to see a counselor. After my transcripts were evaluated I was told to apply as a foreign student, and send a bank statement to verify that I had the money to pay for school. Unfortunately, I did not have the money, and so I waited for approval of my permanent residency instead.

I am confident, independent and organized. Because of my ability to handle myself in school and work, I received scholarships from my chemistry professors, and my professor, Dr Recardez, suggested I tutor students. Anna, a tutee that I spent a lot of time with – was a slow learner, but hard working. She did poorly on the first test because she did not relate to the professor’s style; she had completed the homework, but did not understand the material. I taught her concepts the rest of the class had yet to learn so it would be easier for her to follow the discussion in class. I practiced difficult problems with her and asked her to explain the previous lecture to me before I moved on. I reviewed for tests and final exams, and finally she received a B in the class.

I enjoy working with the public and can easily handle possible explosive situations. I remember one patient who said, “I want you to do this fast. I was waiting at the clinic for two hours, and I don’t want to wait again.” I calmly replied, “I understand, but I cannot help you first because we have to serve patients who came in before you. I can ask the pharmacist how long it will take for your prescription to be done and then you can wait for your prescription if it won’t take long, or pick it up later.” I learned that it is important to treat each patient with respect and professionalism.

In Stockton there were only two Cambodian pharmacists, both of whom did not understand Cambodian well because they grew up in the US. Many Cambodians who come to the US do not understand English well, and need help in translating medication instructions. As a pharmacist, the ability to effectively communicate with patients is of utmost importance in order to minimize medication error and risks that accompany prescription usage.

Pharmacists are able to make a difference in people’s health, which is a great reward. I am motivated to pursue a pharmacy degree even though I had to start all over. It is my pleasure to give the patients the advice that is most helpful to them and help them feel better. My career goals include helping patients determine the correct medication, being a good advisor, reducing medication error and preventable adverse drug events and improving patient safety. I would also like to bring my knowledge back to my hometown of Cambodia to alleviate some of their suffering. I hope to be given the opportunity to fulfill my dream through acceptance to pharmacy school.

Sample Essay #9
Modeled after the
“Tennessee”
Template

ESSAY TEMPLATE

Compelling story of medical related experience

(There’s an operation going on right now)

Introspection/ Review/Impact

(I realized that... His manner further inspired me to become a veterinarian)

Transition: Shift in time

(...during my internship at Caltech I experienced animal research)

Compelling story of non-medically related experience

(I will always remember one cold and windy day)

ESSAY



Charlotte Chen - 1264

“There’s an operation going on right now. You should really see it,” the hospital coordinator, Rio, announced as I walked into the veterinary hospital and put my backpack down on the floor. The veterinary tech waved to me from inside the operating room and came out of the room “The veterinarian is operating a tumor on the dog’s mouth,” she said. “Let me ask him to allow you to oversee the surgery.”

After she talked to the vet, she told me to go in. I went into the operating room and stood against the wall away from the dog’s bleeding mouth. A constant soft beep came from the heart monitor. Once in a while, the beeps stopped and the vet shook the monitor. The floor of the operating room was covered in dog’s blood. The vet occasionally glanced up to make sure that I would not faint from the sight of blood. I shook my head and looked on, fascinated. The vet was not imposing, and he spoke softly. I felt comfortable with him, and I realized that the way a vet presents him or herself to clients and their pets is an important aspect of practicing veterinary medicine.

Although this was the first time I saw a veterinary surgeon at work, I was not terrified of the blood that dripped on the floor, the table, or the vet. I was fascinated by the realization that this vet held the black lab’s life in his hands and I hoped the lab would recover to enjoy a healthy life. The vet’s hand moved quickly and with certainty and his manner further inspired me to become a veterinarian.

While the veterinarian’s skillful hands and patience reinforced my desire to practice veterinary medicine, during my internship with Caltech I witnessed the application of animal research to human and animal health. I was assigned to different rooms in the lab for a few weeks at a time and I observed everything they did and learned to do some of their work. By working in different rooms, I discovered how transgenic mice are produced and used in scientific experiments. I saw the process of handing, maintaining and care of these mice and previewed what a laboratory veterinarian does. Importantly, I realized that veterinarians play a vital role in animal research. I appreciated the fact that they made sure that the animals were healthy and well taken care of. Without veterinarians, researchers would needlessly destroy numerous valuable mice if they became sick.

Throughout the internship, I observed the importance of communication. For example a principal investigator (PI) must know how many mice are necessary to continue a project, and must communicate clearly with the animal technician who must know precisely what to do with the mice. One must be concise and to the point in order to collaborate effectively to accomplish collective goals.



I continue to collaborate with others by volunteering at the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach on the weekends. I will always remember one cold and windy day at the aquarium. A few brave visitors came outside to see the shark lagoon, ray pool and seals. I was in the Baja California touching exhibit when a little boy approached me. "Can I touch?" he asked as he looked into the touch pool. "Yes, you can. Have two fingers together. Can you show me your two fingers?" I answered and demonstrated with my right hand. He showed two fingers to me "okay," – I started to point and touch a green sea anemone – "this is a sea anemone or sea flower. Gently touch the outside like me. The center is its mouth so don't touch it, okay?" He touched the tentacles and pulled his hand back. "The water's cold and it's sticky!" he exclaimed.

One of his parents touched the sea anemone and said, "he's right. Why is that?" I calmly replied, "The tentacles are covered in a poison that paralyzes fish or shrimp that swim by. The poison doesn't really affect us because our skin is too thick." I asked the little boy, "Do you want to touch the sea star or starfish?" He excitedly put his two fingers together and touched the sea star. "It's rough," he giggled. I pointed to the sea urchin, "Do you want to touch the sea urchin?" "No!" he responded and shook his head. "Why not? It won't hurt you," I said softly. "It looks sharp and spiky," he said and shook his head again. "Well what if Daddy puts his finger on the sea urchin?" the father asked the little boy. "Well, alright," he said reluctantly.

Father and son both touched the sea urchin as the mother took a picture. "If you leave your finger long enough on the sea urchin, the spines and tube feet will give your finger a hug." I demonstrated to them. "Wow, it really does stick to my fingers," exclaimed the father. One of the rays splashed against the wall and captured the little boy's attention as the parents thanked me and moved to the ray pool.

Even though that day was cold, I felt warm inside. Maybe it is the little boy's enthusiasm or an adult learning something new that makes me want to go back to the aquarium. Every time I go to the aquarium, I want to share the wonder and awe of the ocean with the public. They need to know that there is more to the ocean than sharks, whales and fish. The ocean is largely undiscovered and full of mysteries.

I want to work in veterinary medicine because I have a natural desire to understand and care for animals. I want to grow in the field of veterinary medicine and I understand that a doctor must have good communication in order to discuss treatments and the medications available for the pet. I want to integrate the use of traditional medicine and nutritional supplements and give pet owners the choice of using either or both. As with human health, I want to treat the animal holistically – not just treat the symptoms. If I can't solve a problem myself, I am not afraid to let the pet owner know there are other options. If I can help one animal, then I have made a difference.

Through a post baccalaureate program, I would enhance my knowledge to a professional level. The post baccalaureate program would support me and provide valuable guidance to enable me to get into a veterinary school. I am confident that I will receive that encouragement and research experience from a post baccalaureate program.



PERSONAL STATEMENT
SECRETS