

“Telling Your Story” - Personal Statement Writing Exercise

Pre-Law Prep Academy 2022

STEP 1: Make Lists & Reflect

List 6-10 Personal “Identifiers” (identities, traits, characteristics, communities to which you belong, roles, etc.) that are meaningful/significant to **YOU**.

Limit yourself to one word to one phrase for each **Identifier** (e.g., Parent, Woman of Color, Military Veteran, Poor, Race/Ethnicity, Dreamer, Tribe/Nation, Researcher, Trans, Dancer, Rural, First Generation, Queer, Undocumented, Multilingual, Adopted, Disabled, Student etc.)

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

Identify 1-2 big picture ideas/“Themes” that relate to your background, personal story, and journey.

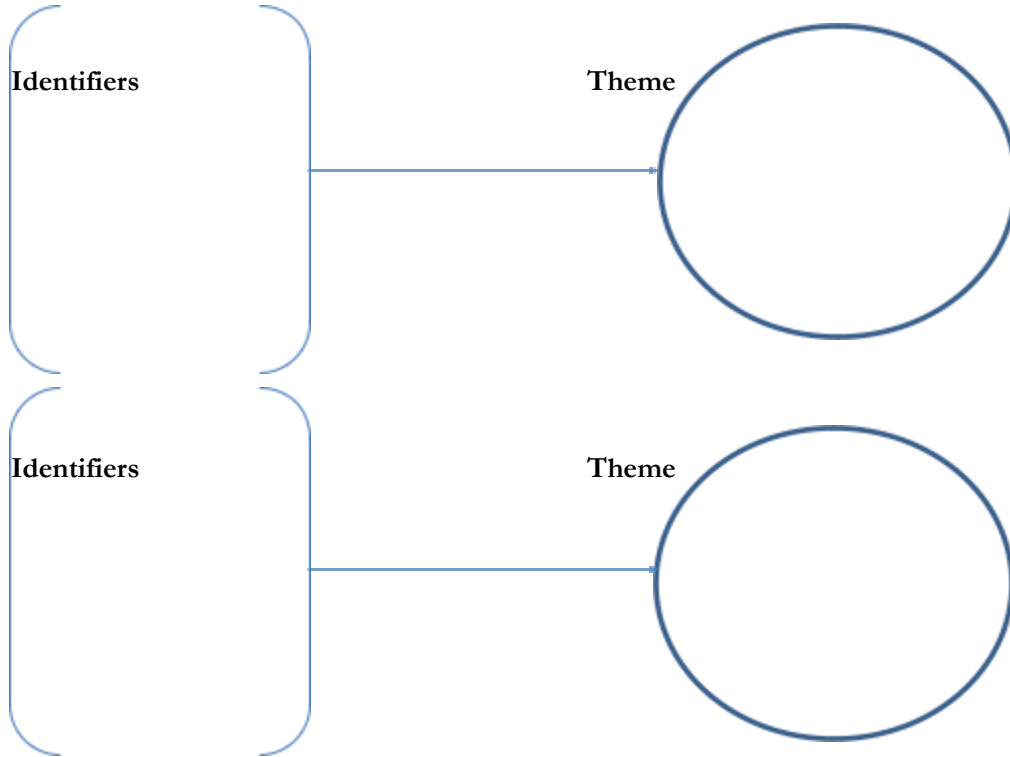
Think of these not as nouns or adjectives, but verbs (action words). For example: Translating, advocating, overcoming, defying the odds, navigating different cultures, surviving, pushing forward, exploring, traveling, creating, building, working hard, learning, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.

Reflection: *How do these themes relate to your desire to become an attorney? Do they help someone understand why law?*

STEP 2: Make connections

Assign as many of the Identifiers to the Themes as possible. It's ok if not all things fit!



List the **Identifiers** that you did not associate with Themes (if applicable) and where they will be located (Diversity Statement, Why X School Statement, LORs, Resume, etc.)

_____ → _____

_____ → _____

_____ → _____

_____ → _____

List any alternate **Themes** you considered but did not list (if applicable) and where they will be located: (Diversity Statement, Why X School Statement, LORs, Resume, etc.)

_____ → _____

_____ → _____

STEP 3: Build an Outline

Paragraph 1: Introduction of your Theme and main point. Signal where you are going or introduce (briefly) the Identifiers you will cover.

Thesis Statement (summary of your Theme):

Paragraph 2: Support your thesis/Example A

Inclusion of Identifier: _____

Paragraph 3: Example B

Inclusion of Identifier: _____

Paragraph 4: Example C

Inclusion of Identifier: _____

Paragraph 5:* Conclusion w/ restatement of thesis and connection to interest in law school/career:

*You can write a statement with more than five paragraphs, but there should be about this many for a 2 page statement. Please refer to the instructions within each school's application for guidelines about length, subject matter, and format.

OTHER STEPS:

- Multiple revisions/re-writes. Review for tone, tense, word repetition, variation in sentence length, etc.
- Feedback 1: Have an external reader review for tone, voice, authenticity. (Does it sound like you?)*
- Feedback 2: Have an external reader review for grammar, punctuation, spelling
- Review in context: Read alongside other statements such as Diversity or Why X School. Do they fit together without being repetitive? Altogether, do they share a fairly complete picture of who you are?
- Final review
- Submission

*Admissions Offices require statements to be **original work** that was written **exclusively** by you.