**Examples of Personal Statements**

(The good...and the bad)

The following are examples of personal statements that were sent to Illinois State University as part of the application process.

1.  **Show - do not tell** - don't just list your attributes.  Be specific!  For example, saying that you are helpful is not as interesting as writing about your experiences volunteering

2.  **Creativity counts** - The essay is your opportunity to show your prospective college what makes you who you are.

3.  **Check for spelling errors** - Make sure to proofread your writing, then ask a parent, teacher, or guidance counselor to look it over for spelling or grammar errors.

**  Bad Examples **

**(complete with errors....)**

****To Whom It May Concern:

     I am interested in Illinois State University.  I was glad to read that you like me know that student motivation and academic preparation are not fully revealed by a student’s high school transcript or by standardized tests.

     Highschool bored me, simply it was not challenging, highschool is no longer an institution which can provide an education sufficient to meet the challages of the modern economic situation.   A highschool diploma is no longer a document which alone will allow an indivual to attain a job which will support a family.  Also, the SAT is no longer a test which divides those who have studied and have made the effort to achieve, from those who bumble through school.  At the point books were published on how to pass the SAT, it simply became another test which doesn’t prove anything definitely.  Because of my viewpoint on highschool and the SAT I did not exert myself on either.  I was reserving myself for college.      College is the difference which makes the difference.  Of two people applying for the same job, similar in everyway except for the fact that one is the holder of a college degree and the other is not, the degree holder is far more likely to get the job.  Further, college is where I will learn the knowledge and skills I will use in the workforce of my generation.

     I am exciting to be moving into this phase of my life, and look forward to attending your august college.

****My goals is that I want to become a teacher for either mathematics or science.  I had helped my teachers explaining to their students if they could not understand.  I have experiences of understanding and be capable of helping teachers and students.  I have worked in a preschool with two other teachers.  I considering myself as a teacher aide.

****There is a person that very important to me that person is my great great grandma.  She is important to me because she gives me guides in my life.  I go visit at least two times a week to see how she is doing.  She just turned one hundred and one years old on September 6.  She likes to do everything for herself.  The doctor said she has the heart of a sixteen year old.  I go to her house to help clean up and take out the garbage.  I do whatever she wants me to do at her house when she wants me to come help she call my cell phone and I come ran because she is very important.  On her birthday the whole family comes to her house.  She doesn’t like much company but she is happy when I come by.  She is my role model in my life.  She is why I try my best in class.

**  Good Examples **

  Ever since I was little there have always been two careers that have sparked my interest and that I’ve wanted to pursue.  The first career is nursing, which I got from my Aunt who attended Illinois State University.  She really enjoyed ISU and loves her nursing job today.  We’ve always been really close and she’s inspired me to not only become a nurse, but attend ISU as well.  She is the one person in my family whom I have a lot in common with, and it would mean so much to me if I could follow in her footsteps.  It would be comforting to know that if I ever had any questions with my classes or even the campus; help from someone I was close to would be just a phone call away.

 My second career choice is to become a teacher.  Many of the teachers I’ve had in the past have made it quite clear that their job is rewarding and interesting.  My one goal in life is to just find something that I would love to do for the rest of my life and stick with it, and that would definitely be accomplished if I went into the education field.  I love working with people and could absolutely see myself as being a teacher.  Nursing and teaching are two majors that ISU is highly known for, and that is why ISU would fit my needs for a college perfectly. Not only would ISU help me accomplish my educational goals in life, but I already feel at home there.  I’ve visited ISU many times with my parents and friends, so I know my way around the campus extremely well.  This would make adjusting to a new home far easier than at any other college. I feel that the easier I adjust to my new home, the more successful I would be my freshman year.  I already follow the boy’s basketball and football teams for ISU and would love to go to the games to support them as my own school!  I already wear my ISU spirit wear proudly and can’t wait to call myself a Red Bird.  Fortunately, I already have many friends who attend ISU, and truthfully, I know I would have a great experience there.  I’ve recently visited a few different sororities, and I would be really interested in becoming an active part of one.  Fulfilling my major, being comfortable with the campus, and being involved are all things that would contribute to motivating me to work hard.  No other college compares to ISU in my mind and it is without a doubt where I would like to be next year.

I am very excited to apply to Illinois State University.  I have fallen in love with the ISU campus after seeing it first-hand in July.  The open campus is very pleasant and comfortable.  I have met many alumni from Illinois State University who have only positive things to say about the school and its courses.  My best friend is also thinking about applying at ISU.  His father, Tom Rosko, is a graduate of ISU who is encouraging me to attend the school because of its great academic curriculum.      I would like to attend ISU for many reasons.  First, I am interested in possibly majoring in education or business.  ISU excels in both of these colleges.  In addition, Illinois State University offers many classes to assist me in meeting my career goals.  ISU is also not far from my hometown, Libertyville.  I would like to attend a college close to home and one that allows me to be independent as well.  ISU is just the right size for me; the college is a good median between a large school and a small, private school.  When I visited the campus in July, I had a chance to view the dorms, which were clean and impressive.  I am also interested in being an Illinois State Athlete. I have qualified in state competitions in high jump and hope to participate in the sport at ISU.  I have met with an ISU representative and we discussed sports and possible scholarship benefits.      In addition to being a student athlete I am an employee at a retail shoe store.  My job as taught me responsibility and reliability, which are important traits to have when representing a school.  All in all, I believe Illinois State is the right school for me.  Not only does the school have great business and education colleges, but it is also the right size, right location and the right environment for me to excel.  I am looking forward to being a Redbird!

She stood there crying.  She was the only child in the room openly screaming.  I stood there thinking, that I actually chose this high school class after tutoring in middle school and working as a Sunday school teacher’s aide the year before.  I thought that I might want to be a teacher, so I signed up for “Intro to Preschool”.   She stood there scared and afraid, and little did she know, so did I.

     Kayla was her name and she was my student for the semester.  At the age of four she was timid and she did not try to fit in with the others.  She had trouble learning because of an unwillingness to participate.  As days passed, I began to earn her trust.  She started to listen and learn in a one on one setting with me, by playing interactive games and trying to read books.  I now had her interested in learning, but I know that preschool was so much about social skills as it was about the academics.  My goal was to transition her into the group before the semester ended.     We started small, asking her to share crayons and markers with her peers, requiring her to interact and socialize on a simple level.  When there was an activity planned and she told me that she did not want to play, I played and then she eventually joined in.  We transitioned from reading books one on one, to reading in a group setting.  One day to my surprise, she came into the room, said “hi” and went off to play with two other students, Jason and Taylor.  The moment I saw her interacting with the other children I felt excited for her, and fulfilled as a teacher.  I had achieved my goal a half a semester early.     I had signed up to learn the mechanics of teaching, but I had gained knowledge about myself and the whole process of learning.  I watched a little student blossom and open before my eyes.  As we stood there the last day of the semester, she stood there beaming, excited about her new preschool friends and all the possibilities ahead of her.  And again, my emotions mirrored hers; I stood there excited about the possibilities of a career in teaching and the challenges that are ahead of me.      As I move into my senior year, I continue to pursue my goal in teaching.  I will be involved in a program called TIP (Teacher Internship Program).  Through this program, I will gain more classroom experience, this time in a grammar school setting.  I know that in order to teach, I must further my education.  I have visited Illinois State University and I am excited about the courses offered.  The student body was very welcoming to an unfamiliar face.  The potential of living in a dorm setting with people of the same academic interest is appealing.  I hope to achieve my goals at ISU.

College.  Many people think about it everyday.  Right now I am surrounded by hundreds of my classmates all thinking about the same thing.  Where do I want to go?  Do I even want to go?  How do I get started?  Everyone gets so nervous, and everyone has the right to be.  We are all trying to take the next step in moving on after high school.  I have already come to a decision about the previous questions.  I know I want to go to school, and I want to attend Illinois State.     For starters, I’m not quite sure what exactly I want my essay to say.  There are so many things that I want to write about in such a short essay.  I am a really indecisive person.  I always make sure I think about everything carefully before I make a decision.  For example, I’ve been thinking about college ever since I started middle school.  It had always scared me and I wanted to make sure that I was ready.  I’d gone from thinking I would go to U of I just because a friend wanted to, to being set on going to a community college just because I knew I wouldn’t be able to afford school.  For the past year though, I have been set on going to Illinois State.  It’s the school I know I want to attend.       Since I’ve said what I want about me attending your school, I’ll tell you a little more about myself.  I’m the kind of person who has gone through a lot of change.  I went from being a shy freshman with barely any friends, to an outgoing senior that makes friends with many of the people she comes in contact with.  I’ve learned more about myself in the past couple years than I have in my entire life.  School has helped me with that.  I’ve always loved school.  I’m going to be really sad to leave high school because I have had such a good time.  I know, though, that when I graduate I will be moving on and learning new things.  I’m looking forward to it.  Another thing I will miss is tennis.  High school tennis is amazing.  It’s a big part of my life.  My mom actually got me into tennis, forced me a bit really.  Eventually, though, I started to like tennis, and then grew to love it.  So far this year my partner and I haven’t lost a match, and I have been loving it.  I made it into the state tournament my junior year.  That was my proudest moment.  I am hoping to qualify again this year.

      I do hope that throughout this essay I have been able to show you that I really want to go to Illinois State, and that some of my personality has been able to shine through.  I am ready to take the next step in my education after high school.  To me, that step is going to Illinois State.