**10 Tips for Writing 160 Character Descriptions**

1. **Use the Title Space** to state your role, without repeating it in the description. Instead of: T: School Newspaper. D: I am the editor for the school newspaper. Try: T: Editor of Miner Press, School Newspaper D: Responsible for brainstorming, revising, and submitting articles for my column.
2. **Use Numbers and Specifics** Whom did your activity help? How many people? How much money did you raise? Emphasize your tangible, measurable impact.  Instead of: Raised money for children in Africa. Try: Raised $3,000 to provide three uniforms and scholarships for students attending the Joseph Waweru Home School in Kenya.
3. **Use active words to explain. Think if it as listing your tasks.** Instead of: Worked at a clinic doing different things. Try: Organized patient diagnosis notes, sterilized tools for surgeries, assisted with x-ray analysis.
4. **To fit in more tasks, cut full sentences down.** Instead of: I raised money to donate to a school in Ghana in Africa by selling t-shirts and bracelets. Try: Arranged advertising events, organized fundraisers, and gave presentations at school meetings.
5. **Use the present tense if it’s something you still do.** Try: I give campus tours, providing info on school history, student activities, boarding life.
6. **Aim for variety in your list.** Instead of: Instructing, helping, teaching children tennis (how are these three different?) Try: Instructing in proper technique, while imparting lessons in sportsmanship, health and integrity.
7. **Include responsibilities you had and leadership skills demonstrated.** Instead of: I swim on the swim team. Try: Responsible for leading swim practices, planning fundraising events; assisting in recruiting process.
8. **What if there isn’t much to say, or it was a one-time event?** Explain the significance of the activity. Who did the event matter to and why? Instead of: Tutored students. Try: Provided support to fourth graders with particularly difficult math concepts.
9. **Avoid extreme language**.  Instead of: to end poverty in the world Try: to aid in the fight against global poverty
10. **Use bigger words.** Try: Develop, brainstorm, advertised, marketed, responsible for, provide, organized, presented, researched, instruct, studied, received, volunteer, help, in charge, worked, translated, led, assisted, learn, played, compete, recorded, managed, …

# Sample Descriptions (by Category)

**Educational Prep Programs**

1. AVID

Developed study skills, received mentorship, offered tutoring in math and received tutoring in critical reading.

2. National Youth Leadership Forum (Stanford)

Studied medicine at medical simulation center, received hands-on training in medical procedures, experienced life as a medical student.

3. Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP)

Received academic and financial guidance in preparation for college.

**Volunteer & Community Service**

1. Intern at Children’s Institute Otis Booth Campus

Brainstormed ideas for after school programs for teens, created surveys, presented data to supervisor

2. Member of Civics Committee

Provide mentorship support to ninth graders; responsible for assigning tutors, coordinating events.

3. Street Soccer Program

Volunteer for County Fair fundraising committee supporting underprivileged kids playing street soccer.

4. AWWA

Volunteered to support Centre for Caregivers events; Model Caregivers Awards. Helped write government proposals and helped get performers backstage ready.

5. Global Partner for International Orientation

I help new international students with registration and adjustment to the new school environment.

**Work Experience**

1. Administrative Assistant at Shingari's School of Rhythm

In charge of customer service, managing financial accounts, recording attendance, managing inventory, and all other administrative aspects

2. Childcare (Paid)

Worked 3-5 days a week taking care of two children, ages 1 and 3. Responsibilities included feeding, changing and regulating bed times.

3. Manager, Student Store

Developed student store policies, reviewed resumes and hired accordingly and worked part time as a cashier.

4. Coach and Technical Analyst, LA County Intramural Basketball

Led fitness sessions, trained others in technical fundamentals; also helped with video analysis.

5. Korean Compassion: Korean-to-English Letter Translator

Translated letters sent by supporters to impoverished children in Asian and African countries.

**Awards & Honors**

1. Speech and Debate

Academic All-American Award, NFL Tournament Qualifier ('11, '12), Rupe Scholar, Stanford Invitational Semi-finalist, Harker Invitational Semi-finalist

2. Player of the Tournament

Was named Best Player in the local Lincoln Heights Invitational.

3. Highest Scorer

Highest scorer in annual Carl Schubert trophy between Singapore and Malaysia's under-23 team.

4. “Iron Man” Award

Given for "outstanding athletic performance in keeping with the physical mission of the Naval Academy.

5. White Water Kayaking Nationals (5th place)

Competed at the 2013 United States Slalom National Competition in Bryson City (placed 5th). Paddled Class 5 rapids. Swift Water rescue certified

**Extracurricular Activities**

1. Founder and President of Model United Nations

Organize meetings, coach students for conferences, raise money and awareness for UNICEF causes, awarded "Outstanding Delegate" at every conference attended

2. Intern at the Los Angeles Superior Court

Assisted a Los Angeles District Attorney by researching relevant case laws, drafting briefs, and assisting with client interviews

3. Research Assistant at the UCLA Psychology Department

Assisted Dr. Negin Ghavemi with a study exploring the relationship between gender, age, and sexual identity in elementary and middle school

4.Indian Classical and Bollywood Dancer

SSR Scholarship, VMASC 1st Place Cinematic Dance, KCCNA 3rd pl. in folk, VMASC 1st Pl. Classical Dance, KALA Kalolsavam 1st Pl. Group Dance

5. Strings Orchestra

Played as a cellist in the school orchestra in various evening concerts and performances throughout the year.

**Courses other than A-G or Additional Info section:**

1. Yosemite Backpacking Excursion

Learned basic survival skills and took part in team leadership training and development activities.

2. Narrative Writing Workshop

Attended a writing workshop during the summer after my junior that focused on the narrative and descriptive writing.

3. Independent Study: Researched, presented thesis as Interim Semester project on the state of the aging population in Singapore and government stance on the issue

**Sample Activities**

You have more to include than you think….

****Job Shadow, TA, Senior Project

****ASB Officer/Class Officer

****Club Officer or member – FFA, Interact, Art, HOSA

****Committee Member or Chair – Homecoming, float making, FFA dinner auction

****Drama or Band – what role, did you help with production, did you create marketing materials, did you sell tickets, were you first trumpet, clarinet etc.? Did you play for a parade, at a senior center, community event. Have taught music or mentored someone else.

****School sport team - captain, coach’s rep, league champions, section champions, all league, all tourney, state level qualifier

****Martial Arts/Dance Cheer/Gymnastics/Swim Team/Rodeo/Club Sports/Motocross – what level, have you coached, mentored or taught?

****Athletes Committed

Foreign Exchange student or host – either long term or short term

****Art – Have you participated in community art exhibits? Have you sold your art? Has your art been displayed for events? Have you painted window for community businesses? Have you created promotional flyers/posters/signs?

****Fish Count or riparian restoration

****Cessation Peer Educator

Working at the drive thru flu clinic, Working the election polls

****Rescue Ranch

****Miner Power/Community Fundraiser – setup/cleanup

Ag Awareness Day, Blood Drive – help with coordination

****Sport Referee

****Family Resource Center

****Senior Buddy, Leader for Freshmen Edge Orientation/Activity

Health careers clinical experience, HIV/Tobacco Peer Educator

****YMCA Youth Council

Camp Ford/LEAD counselor/camper

****French Creek Outdoor School counselor

****4-H Junior Leader

Livestock Exhibitor /Caring for school farm livestock

****Junior Fair Board

****Student rep to WASC or other school committee

****Peer Tutor official (arranged by school) or unofficial on your own to help others

****Upward Bound/ETS/College OPTIONS/GEAR UP – participant, assist with freshmen orientation, SAT/ACT test prep, workshops, field trip promotion

****Summer College Programs/Camps (not sport camps)

****Siskiyou Central Credit Union student worker

****Fall Rake n Run

****Chris Lopez cross country race – did you help with course set up, refreshments, awards?

****Snack Shack – did you work at football or basketball games?

****Classroom aid, operate clock for basketball, keep stats

****Assist with every 15 minutes

****Work for pay – could include formal school year/summer job, odd jobs like babysitting, yard work, irrigating, washing cars, cleaning houses, etc.

****Volunteer Work – helping neighbors with tasks, fire wood, yard work. shoveling snow, car repair etc.

****Church – youth group, helping with AWANA, CCD, altar boy, worship team/vocal performance, community service projects, mission trips, preparing serving food.

****Soup Kitchen – helping prepare, serve, take food to homebound folks

****Giving Tree- collecting food, items for those in need

Coaching youth sports, working at sport clinics

****Parking cars at the fair

****Translating for family or others

****Filling in as parent (cooking, cleaning, laundry, driving) when parents work nights or are gone for long periods of time. Caring for older family members

****Mediator for Boy’s Square/Girl’s Circle

****Karuk Language Classes/Youth Activities

****Assistant at Karuk Math and Science Camp during summer

****Participation in cultural ceremonies, events

****McConnell Nature Bridge Program

****Camp RYLA

****Boy’s/Girl’s State

****Poetry Out loud

****Beef Ambassador/Lions Club Speech/Rotary Speech

****FFA competitions (judging teams, speaking contests, parli pro)

****FFA degrees – Greenhand, Chapter Farmer, State Farmer

4-H Star Ranks – bronze, silver, gold, all-star, emerald star

****Yearbook/School

Newspaper – Editor, photographer, selling ads, writer

****Graphic Design, Web Design

Computer Programming

****Satellite project for YHS physics

****Girl Scouts/Boy Scouts/Eagle Scout

****Explorer (youth law enforcement)

****Youth Conservation Crew

****Helping Hands Equine Therapy, Stable Hands

****Singing national anthem for events (parades, games, veteran’s events)

****Industrial Art – building items for community organizations or to raise funds for school department