Yale Law School Admissions Office
Personal Statement Tip Sheet

What should your P.S. accomplish?
• Help us identify why law school is the next right step
  o YLS does not require a Why Yale Statement
• Tells us who you are (for better or for worse)
  o Authenticity matters

What should you avoid?
• Standing Out
  o Fancy/dramatic vs. solid
• Heavy curation vs. Effective editing
  o Substance vs. Form
• Subject matter vs. Tone
  o Trauma
• Excuses vs. Explanation
• Hyperbole vs. Powerful language
• Extended Metaphors; Themes; Titles
• Forgetting your audience
  o Personal details
  o Font and spacing!
  o Proofread
  o Footnotes; hyperlinks; poems, pictures, and highlighting
  o Word choice, jargon, plain English!

Topics:
• Past Focused
  o Delve into background and identity
• Present focused
  o Current work and interests
• Future Focused
  o Type of law that interests you and/or type of lawyer you want to be
• Movement focused
  o Touch on more than one of the above
  o How your past drives your future goals or present work inspires your law studies
• Always provide what is asked of you
  o Open ended vs. more specific P.S. prompts

Getting Started:
JUST WRITE SOMETHING DOWN! Have loved ones and colleagues interview you. Re-work and refine!

*Helpful resource