Twitter Thread by Babajide Ojo, PhD



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SHORT THREAD!

Simple Writing Trick to Avoid Plagiarism when using Templates

This may be useful for anyone but the examples here are more relevant to scholarship applicants

In other words, how to avoid the copy & paste syndrome.

Kindly RT to help others.

The past week brought some concerns about plagiarism in scholarship documents. For example: https://t.co/cNgBC3NYyq

> I got a call from the recruitment office at a Canadian university today and the issue was most of the Nigerians who applied there have almost the same Statement of Purpose letters. Please show originality in your applications, use your own words.....1/3
>
> — Tosin AJ (@ajibz_tosin) January 20, 2021

Plagiarism is unacceptable at any level in academia and may lead to several undesirable outcomes, including revocation of admission offers or conferred degrees. So here is how you can prevent or rid yourself of the copy&paste syndrome

CANADA

University of Calgary can rescind master's degree over plagiarism: judge

By **Bill Graveland** · **The Canadian Press**
Posted September 19, 2018 4:44 pm



1. Don't use any template at all.
Just follow the darn instructions, or use helpful tips scattered all over the internet. Worry less about perfection.

I understand this may be hard for less experienced scholars. So if you must use a template, continue with the thread.

2. If possible, find more than one template.

This helps you identify the flow of ideas and the commonalities in the template. You can then develop your own unique document from this knowledge.

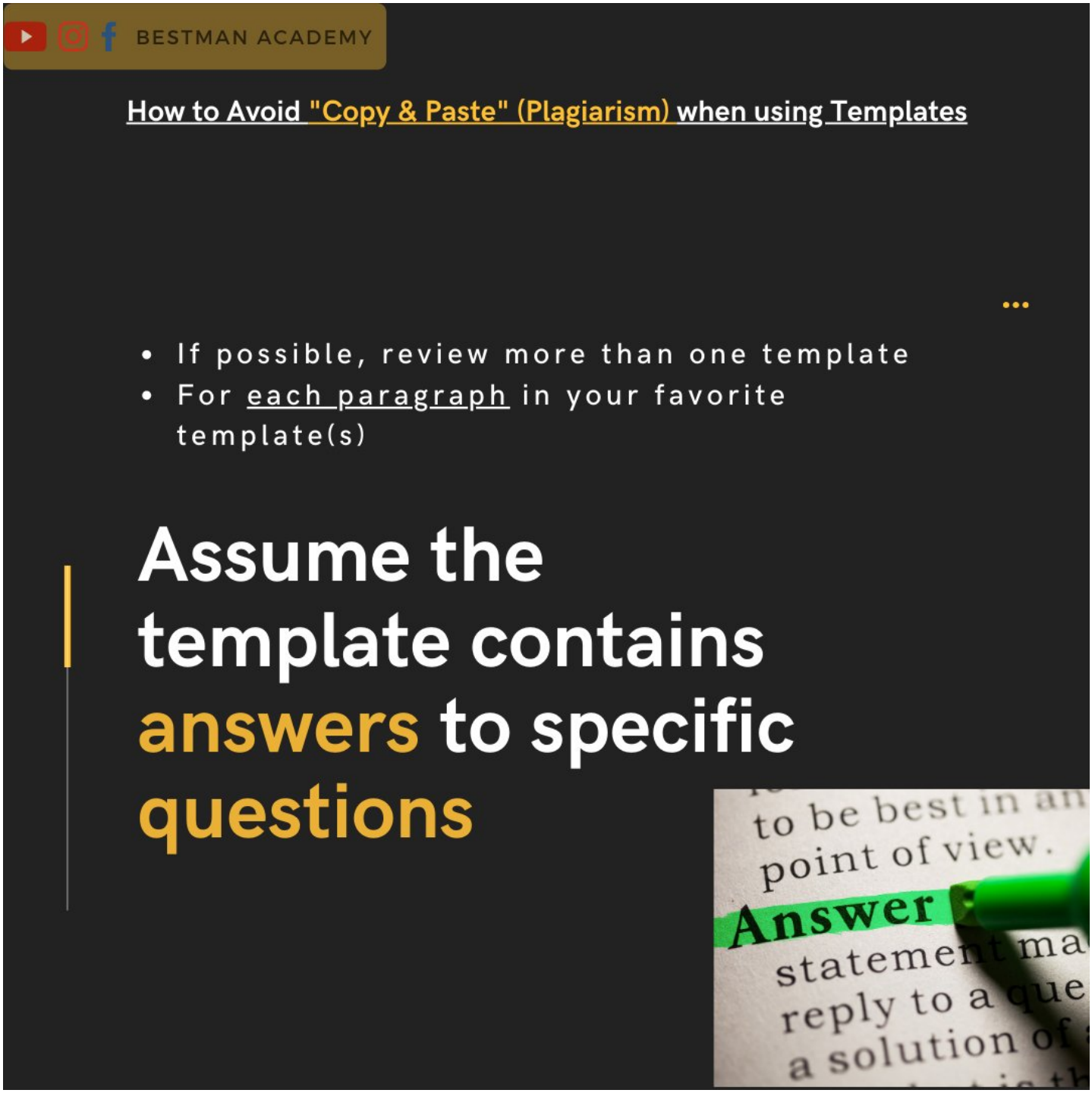
If you are still confused and must use a template, continue with the thread

3. Now you are hell-bent on using a template.

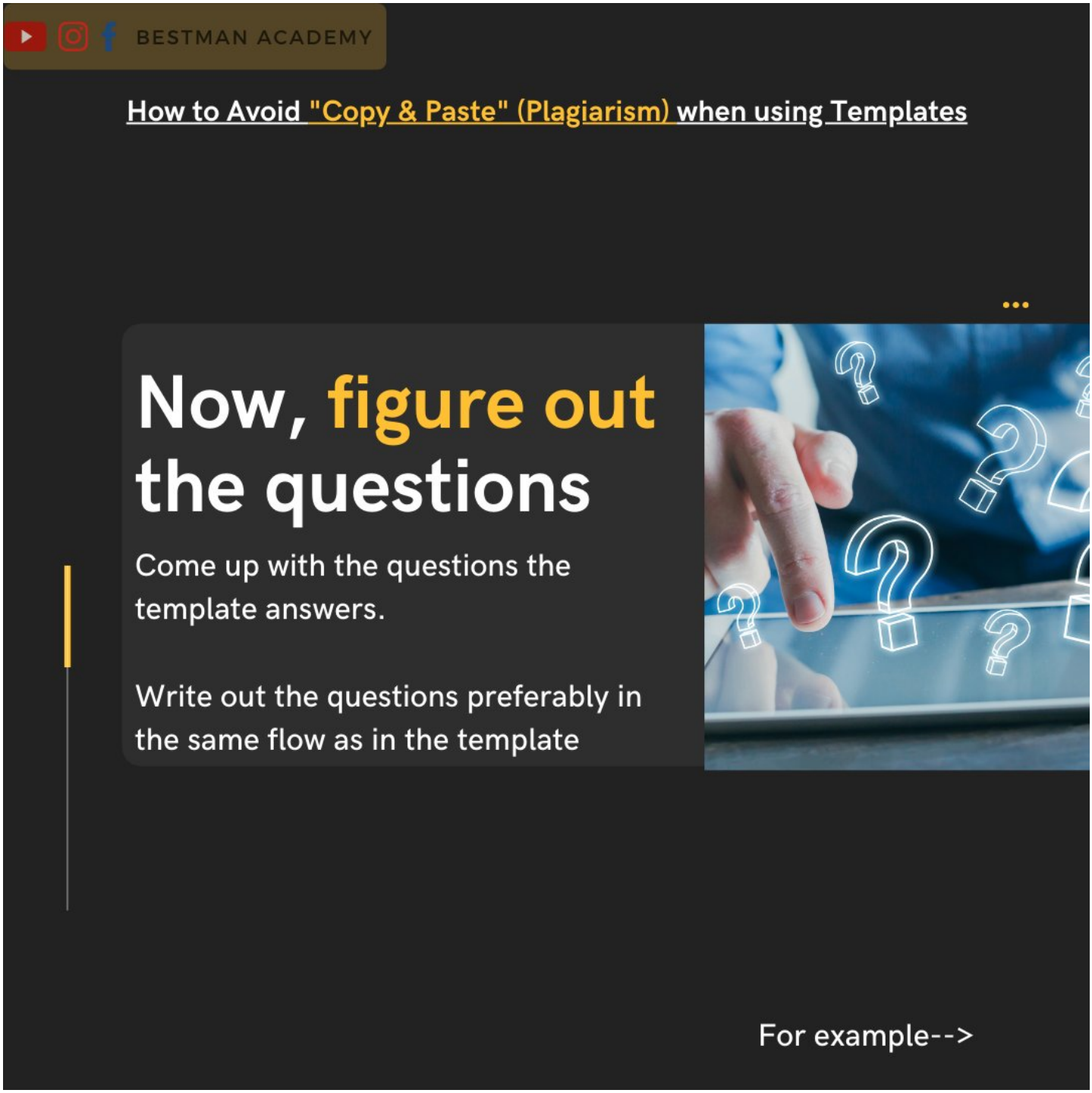
Cool.

Here is what you can do.

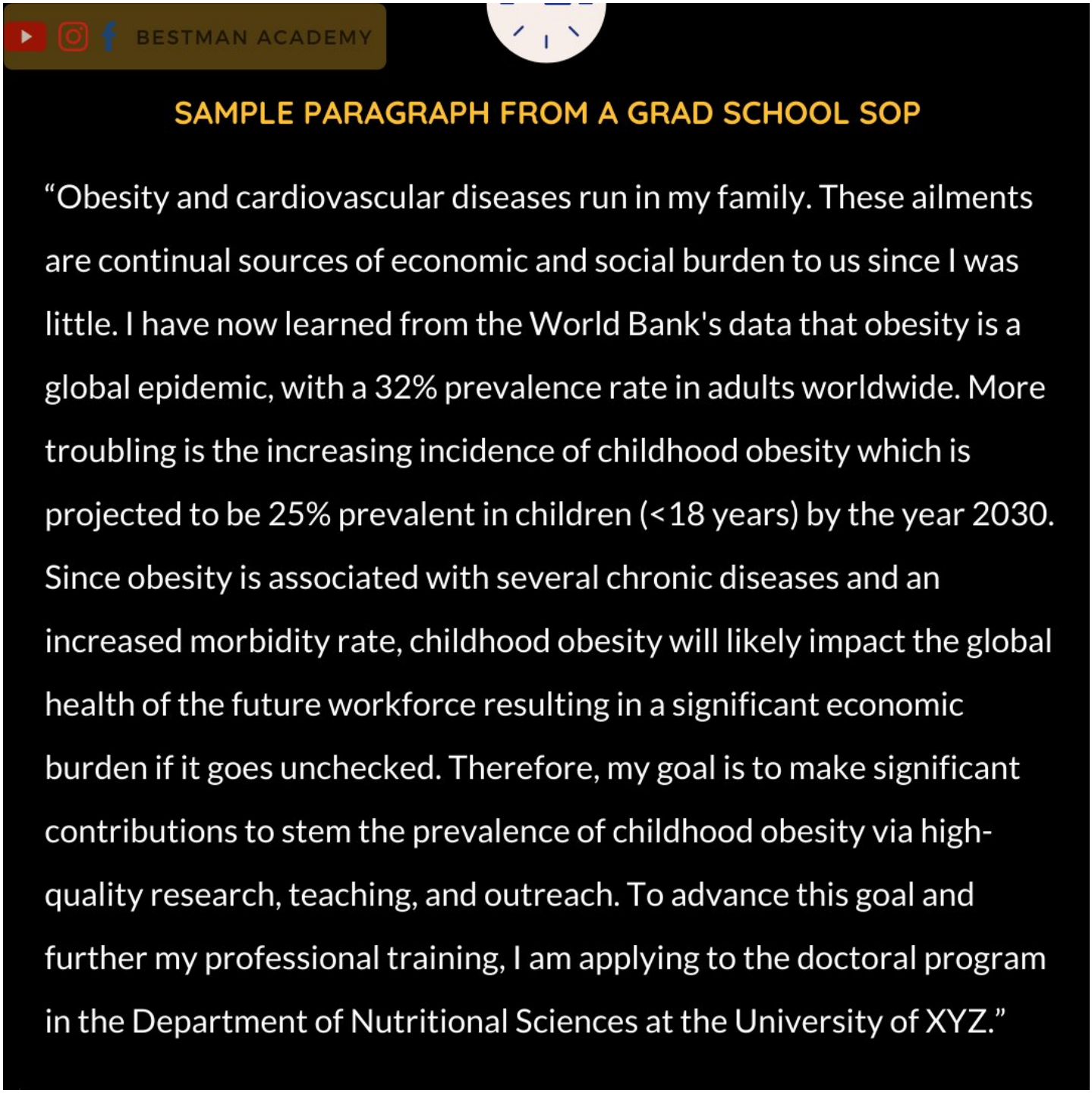
Assume that your chosen template provides answers to specific questions. ■



4. Now that you have the answer (template), try to figure out and write out the questions. ■



For example, check out this paragraph from a statement of purpose ■



So what are the questions answered by this template? IMO, some key questions would include ■

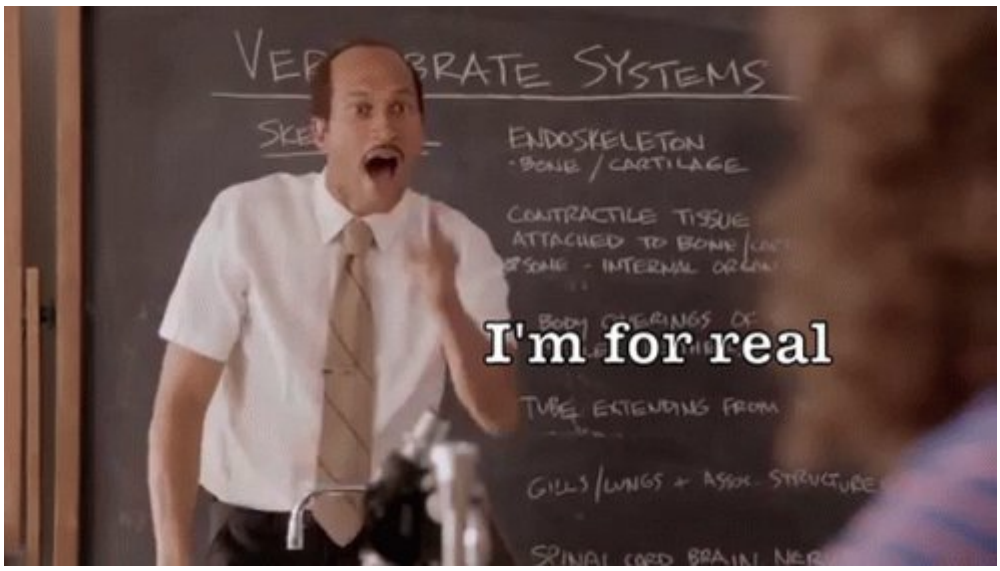
"Obesity and cardiovascular diseases run in my family. These ailments are continual sources of economic and social burden to us since I was little. I have now learned from the World Bank's data that obesity is a global epidemic, with a 32% prevalence rate in adults worldwide. More troubling is the increasing incidence of childhood obesity which is projected to be 25% prevalent in children (<18 years) by the year 2030. Since obesity is associated with several chronic diseases and an increased morbidity rate, childhood obesity will likely impact the global health of the future workforce resulting in a significant economic burden if it goes unchecked. Therefore, my goal is to make significant contributions to stem the prevalence of childhood obesity via high-quality research, teaching, and outreach. To advance this goal and further my professional training, I am applying to the doctoral program in the Department of Nutritional Sciences at the University of XYZ."

- What is the research problem I will focus on in grad school?
- Any personal link to this problem?
- Any statistics to back up the need to address this problem?
- What is my career goal?
- Why and where am I applying to?

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5. Now that you have the questions, WALK AWAY from the template for a while (for days if possible). This helps to clear your brain of sticky phrases or sentences in the template.

If you can't trust yourself not to copy the template, THRASH IT!



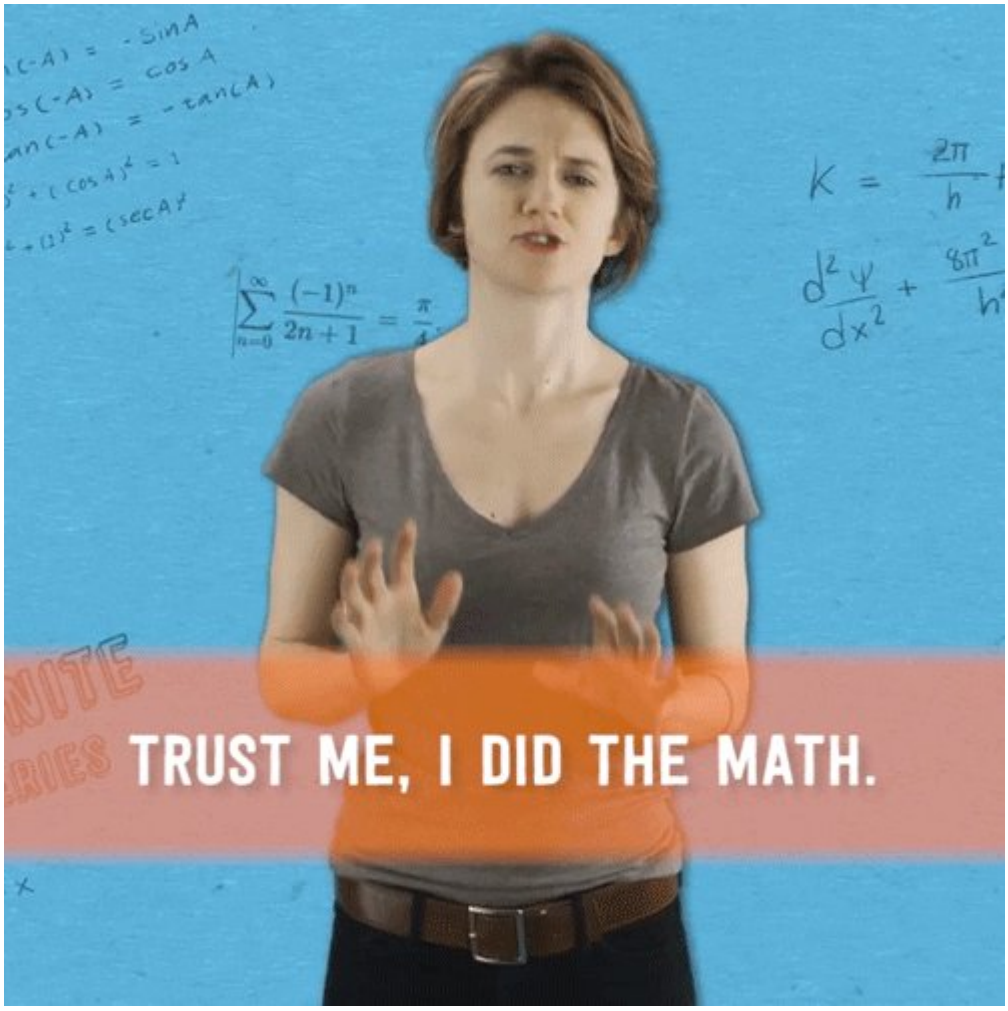
6. When your brain is back to default and ready to write, use the QUESTIONS you have developed (for each paragraph) from the template to draft your own unique document without revisiting the template.

In complete sentences, just answer the questions you have written down.

7. Keep editing till you are satisfied.

Importantly, use a second pair of eyes to help review your unique document.

In the end, you'd surely be proud.



If still in doubt, you may check out this article containing another example of this "question and answer" method. This used a sample paragraph from an email to a professor.
https://t.co/zW5Co6jd31

For scholarship opportunities, tips, and motivation, here are some priceless accounts to follow
@Oludeewon @olumuyiwaayo @matajson @Okpala_IU @AaronAkpuPhilip @drhammed @NoahAluko @particular6 @Iam_MrPackagin @arawu_samuel @oulawal @adejimiadeniji @oguntuyakitimi @SamdGreat01

@Ijesha_canadian @MICHAELSEGZY @Okafor_SC @zainab__tiamiyu @james_omoboye

The end.



Happy to learn other useful methods in dealing with this issue.