



TOPIC

The topic for the 2021-2022 school year is:

“How Does an Optimistic Mindset Change My Tomorrow?”

ESSAY CONTEST RULES

RULES

Section I -General Rules

1. The Optimist Essay Contest is divided into two levels of competition: Club and District
2. Contestants are eligible for only one Club's essay contest during any given year. (October 1st - September 30th).
3. Contestants must enter through a local Sioux Valley Optimist Club. No individual having previously won a District Essay scholarship will be eligible to compete at any level of the competition again.
4. Contestants must compose an original essay with limited guidance from others. Works of fiction or poetry will not be accepted.
5. All District-level contests must have a minimum of 3 contestants participating.
6. Optimist International will have the right to edit, publish or otherwise duplicate any essay entered into the contest without payment to the author.
7. **For the District level winners:** ALL contestants at each level of the contest must provide age and identification from their birth certificate or passport before participating.

Section II - Contest Rules

1. Participants must write on the official contest topic.
2. Each entry must begin with a title page containing: topic, number of words, writer's name, address, phone number, name of school and date of birth.
3. At the top of page 1 should be the official topic and the number of words (penalty of 2 points for lack of topic and 5 points for failure to identify the total number of words correctly).
4. Essays must be type-written and double-spaced. (Deduction of 5 points)
5. Essays must contain at least 700 words but no more than 800 words. Every word of the essay is counted. This does not include the title, bibliography or footnotes. Hyphenated words count as one (1) word. (Deduction of 5 points for each 25 words over/under limit. French Essays will allow 50 words over/under limit for the deduction in scoring). Words are to be counted manually.
6. Each page of the essay must be numbered starting with page 1, not the title page. The numbers must be centered at the bottom of each page.
7. Any quotations or copyrighted material used in the essay must be identified properly. For example, use of a specific writer's format (such as MLA) may be specified by the instructor overseeing the contest. Failure to identify non-original material will result in disqualification.
8. No reference can be made in the essay that identifies the student, parents, school, community, sponsoring Optimist Club or District. (Deduction of 5 points or fraction based on degree of identification)
9. An essay may be written in either English.
10. The entry must be stapled together in the upper left-hand corner. Covers of any type are not accepted.

SCORING

Scoring procedures at all levels of the contest will be identical.

1. Material Organization (Logical interpretation of the subject, adherence to topic): 30 points
2. Creativity – 10 points
3. Vocabulary and Style (Phrasing and continuity): 30 points
4. Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling: 20 points
5. Neatness: 5 points
6. Adherence to contest rules (prepared in the proper format): 5 points

PENALTIES

1. Failure to list official topic: 2 points
2. Failure to accurately identify total number of words: 5 points
3. Failure to type essay and double-space: 5 points
4. Failure to stay within the 700-800 word limit: 5 points for each 25 words over/under limit.
French essays will allow 50 words over/under for deduction. Words are to be counted manually.
5. Self-identification: 5 points or fraction based on degree

AWARDS

1. Club level - \$250 for winner of the Essay contest. The Club level award may be given in the form of a cash/check prize.
2. District level - plaque and a \$2,500 college scholarship for the first place winner.
 - A. Scholarships are paid through the Optimist International Foundations in the United States and Caribbean and the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation in Canada.
 - B. Scholarships awarded are for use only at a college, university, or trade school.
 - C. All scholarships will be payable to the educational institution of the recipient's choice, subject to the approval of Optimist International.
 - D. All scholarships will be administered by Optimist International.
 - E. Winners of an Optimist International scholarship must claim their scholarship by the age of 25.