



AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST

Contest Rules

The American Legion Auxiliary's Americanism Essay Contest is for students in grades 3-12, including students with special needs, divided into six classes. One award in each class will be presented in each division. Winners will receive a \$50 check, and a \$50 donation in the student's name will be made to the Spirit of Youth Scholarship Fund.

Essay Title:

"Celebrating America's 250th Birthday and the Veterans Who Fought for Our Freedom"

Essay Classes:

Class	Grade Level	Word Requirement*
I	3 and 4	150-250
II	5 and 6	250-300
III	7 and 8	350-400
IV	9 and 10	450-500
V	11 and 12	450-500
VI	Students with special needs	Word count should correspond with student's grade level

1. The Americanism Essay Contest cover sheet must be filled out **legibly** and **completely**. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.
2. Departments (states) will determine the deadline for the local unit contests.
3. Essays will be due from the state department chairs to the Americanism Division chairs by April 15.
4. Essays received after the contest deadline will not be accepted.
5. Submissions become property of the American Legion Auxiliary. Through submission of an essay, contestants and their legal guardians grant non-exclusive reproduction and publication rights to the works submitted and agree to have their names and writing published for commercial use without additional compensation or permission.
6. The essay shall be the work of only one individual.
7. Use of AI in writing essays is not allowed. Essays will be checked for use of AI. Any essay determined to be 30% or more AI written will be disqualified.
8. Essays will be scored using the following rubric:
 - Word Count: 5pts.
 - Cover Sheet: 5pts.
 - Topic/Theme — Does the Essay Answer the Topic Question?: 25pts.
 - Content — Original Thought: 25pts.
 - Grammar: 10pts.
 - Clarity/Coherence: 10pts.
 - Organization — Introduction, Body, and Conclusion: 10pts.
 - Correct Word Usage: 10pts.

THE DECISION OF THE JUDGES SHALL BE FINAL.



AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST 2026 Cover Sheet

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Essay Checklist:

- ☐ Class competing in _____
- ☐ Sponsoring ALA unit _____
- ☐ Typed or neatly written essay conforming to the word requirement for class
- ☐ Completed essay cover sheet as first page of essay
- ☐ Word count of essay _____
- ☐ Due date for student to return to ALA unit _____

To be completed by the student and parent/guardian:

*** Please write legibly in ink.**

Student Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Address (Street, City, State, ZIP): _____

Student or Parent/Guardian Email Address: _____

Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Name and Signature: _____

School Name: _____

Teacher Name: _____

School City/State: _____

Auxiliary Use Only (Must be completed for entry to be considered.)

Sponsoring Unit Name/Number: _____

Signature of Unit Americanism Chair: _____

Unit Winner Due to Department on: _____ Department: _____

Signature of Department Chair: _____

Department Winner Due to National Americanism Division Chair by April 15, 2026