

Altrusa International of Hermiston

Literacy/International Relations Essay Competition Rules

Altrusa International of Hermiston strives to contribute to the strength, health, and vitality of our communities; cornerstones of our club include literacy and international relations. This competition focuses on these two values; contestants will select one of the topics provided and write an original work expressing their thoughts, opinions, research, if appropriate, and conclusions.

Eligibility

This contest is open to all students residing in the greater Hermiston, Umatilla, Stanfield, Echo, and Irrigon areas. Students may be from public, private, or home schools.

Competition Structure

- A. Students are grouped into competition categories based on current year grade level. The groups are:
 - a. Grades 1-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12
- B. Students will select from two questions (one literacy based or one international relations based) within their grade category and write an essay within the rules provided below.
- C. Each essay submitted will be reviewed separately by three different Altrusan judges. The three top scoring essays in each grade category will be sent on to a panel of community judges. The community judges will select the winner in each category.
- D. To conceal the identity of each contestant, each entry will be assigned a number by the Essay Contest Chairs; only the assigned number and grade level of the contestant will be visible to judges.

Essay Question Options

Grades 1-3

- a. What is your favorite book and why? Which character did you enjoy the most? Why?
- b. While each person is one of a kind, people around the world share many things in common. How are you like other children in the world? Think about how they look, their way of life, the foods they eat, what they are interested in, sports they play, or music they listen to. *Example: I love to play! How do other children around the world or in another country like to play?*

Grades 4-6

- a. Write an essay on someone who has significantly made a difference in American culture. How did their actions affect the lives of others? Why do you think their actions were important? How would you like to affect the lives of others?
- b. People around the world share the same basic needs, including food, water, shelter, health care, safety, and love. The geographic location, climate, and access to natural resources (such as water, fuel, wood products, or minerals) affect how

they live. How do people depend on the environment and one another to meet their basic needs? How do these factors affect the way people live around the world?

Grades 7-9

- a. Technology is changing the western world's definition of literacy. People can read newspapers, magazines, and books electronically; we can communicate without ever meeting one another, conduct international business without leaving our living rooms, and get worldwide information on demand. Has technology created a more literate global culture or an impersonal illiterate society?
- b. Many relief agencies and charitable efforts play an important role in improving the lives of others, by providing food, medicine, education, and more. How do individuals and organizations help others in need?

Grades 10-12

- a. For a variety of reasons, such as race, gender, class, ethnicity, people face significant obstacles in achieving the literacy they need to be successful in life. What are some of the barriers or costs, other than financial considerations, in achieving success? What causes them? How do people cope with or overcome them? What are the costs of achieving literacy?
- b. Needs are *things necessary for survival*, while wants are *desires to enhance one's life*, for convenience or entertainment. Is formal education a human need? Why or why not?

The following word limits are minimums:

- a. Grades 1 – 100 word minimum (may be dictated to an adult)
- b. Grade 2 – 150 word minimum (may be dictated to an adult)
- c. Grade 3 – 250 word minimum
- d. Grades 4-6 – 450 word minimum
- e. Grades 7-9 – 600 word minimum
- f. Grades 10-12 – 750 word minimum

Only Grades 1 and 2 may dictate their essays. All other grades must write their own essay.

The maximum word limit on all essays is 1,000 words.

The Rules

Any essay not meeting these guidelines may be disqualified.
The essay co-chairs will make the final decision on disqualification.

1. Original essays should be typed in 12 point Times New Roman font and double spaced. Participants must write their essay on one of the questions provided to their grade group.
2. Each entry must include a cover page with the required information (author's name, grade level, full mailing address, phone number, current school, selected question) in the format provided.

Every subsequent page must carry the title and page number, but NOT the author's name. See example provided for formatting expectations.

3. Essays may be typed or legibly handwritten. Electronically submitted essays must be in a version of MS Word or PDF. Those wishing to turn their essays in via hard copy should hand their completed packet to the front desk of the school. If the essay is submitted in a hard copy format, the entry must be stapled in the upper left hand corner. Only one essay may be submitted by each contestant.
4. Any quotations or copyrighted material used in the essay must be properly cited. Participants may use any recognized referencing system; the selected style must be consistent throughout the essay. Failure to identify any non-original material will result in disqualification.
5. All entries are final. No revisions are accepted.
6. The decisions of the judges are entirely their own. Their decisions are final. Only judges can assign penalty or award points.
7. Participants may request from Altrusa International of Hermiston's Literacy Committee Chairs (Angela Pursel and/or Jacelyn Keys) an interpretation or clarification of the rules through the contest email address – Hermiston.Altrusa.Essay@gmail.com.
8. At the discretion of Altrusa International of Hermiston any and all essays may be published.

Timeline

1. Essays must be turned in via email to Hermiston.Altrusa.Essay@gmail.com by 11:59pm on February 1, 2012. Contestants wishing to hand in their essays to the school must do so by close of business at their school office on February 1, 2012.
2. Winners will be notified by March 20, 2012.

Judging Criteria

Judging criteria remains the same for both stages of judging. Grade specific judging sheets will be used to break down each category into age appropriate judging criteria.

Clarity/Organization (0-20 points): Is the writer's concept clear? Does the paper ramble?

Quality (0-20 points): Does the paper present a sense of excellence?

Creativity (0-20 points): Does the writer employ a creative angle on their chosen topic?

Writing (0-20 points): Does the paper present with appropriate grammar and sentence structure?

Adherence to the rules (0-10 points): Was the essay prepared in the proper format and in adherence to the rules?

Overall Impression (0-10 points): What overall impression does the essay leave with the reader?