Optimist International Essay Contest

Optimist International sponsors and Essay Contest each year that gives students a chance to win a $2,500 college scholarship.

The first step to this contest is to submit your Essay to Platte County Optimist Club by February 1, 2020. Our entries received will be judged and the winner will be sent to West Missouri District for the District contest. The winner of this contest will be awarded the scholarship.

This year’s Topic is “Is Optimism the Key to Achieving the Dreams you iMagine?”

It is open to those students who were under the age of 19 as of October 1, 2019.

Essays are to be sent to:
Platte County Optimist Club
P.O. Box 901397
Kansas City, MO 64190

They must be received into the P.O. Box by February 1, 2020 in order to be judged.

Platte County Optimist Club contact for questions is Michele Long 816 741 8415
Application for 2019-2020 Optimist International Essay Contest

Name_________________________ M F
Address___________________________
City_________________________ State/Province_________________________ Zip/Postal Code________
Telephone_________________________ E-mail_________________________
Date of Birth_________________________ Age_________________________
Have you participated in any other Optimist Club’s Essay Contest this school year? Yes • No

Contestant Agreement:
I have studied the rules of the contest, and I will be bound by all of the requirements.
Contestant’s Signature __________________ Date ______/_____/_____

Please send application to address below:

Section I - General Rules
1. The Optimist International Essay contest is divided into two levels of competition: Club and District.
2. Contestants must enter through a local Optimist Club, or an At-Large contest if a local club is not available. An At-Large student may not have competed in an Optimist International or District contest in the same year.
3. Contestants must compose an original essay with limited guidance from others. Webster’s dictionary defines an essay as an analytic or interpretative literary composition. Works of fiction or poetry will not be accepted.
4. All District-level competitions must have a minimum of 3 contestants participating.
5. Optimist International will have the right to edit, publish or otherwise duplicate any essay entered into the contest without payment to the author.

Section II - Qualifications for Contestants
1. The contest is open to students under age 19 as of October 1st of the current Optimist International Contest year (October 1 - September 30) and is not restricted to a post-secondary institution. Students must enter in the District in which they reside. U.S. students attending school on military installations outside the U.S. are eligible to enter in their last home of record.
2. Contestants are eligible for only one Club’s contest during any given year.
3. No student who has previously won a District Optimist Essay contest scholarship will be eligible to compete at any level of the competition again.
4. All contestants at each level of the contest must show proof of age before competing. Optimist Clubs may require a copy of birth certificate or passport before participating if offering a Club scholarship separate from Optimist International. District winners must provide a copy of birth certificate or passport with the District entry documentation.

Section III - Contest Rules
1. Participants must write on the official topic.
2. Each entry must begin with a title page containing: the official 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 each 25 words or fraction of degree of difference for identification).
4. Essays must be typewritten and double-spaced.
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 footnote. Hyphenated words count as 1 word (Deduction of 5 points)
6. Each page of the essay must be numbered starting with page 1 of the essay, not the title page. The numbers will be placed on the title page and by the Essay Contest Chair. The assigned number will be placed on the title page and page 1 of the essay. The title page will then be detained and returned by the Essay Contest Chair. The judges will be given the essay bearing only the assigned number.

Section IV - Judging and Timing
1. Judging will be completed by a panel of three qualified judges. At the Club level, judges may be Optimist Members, who are not acquainted with the contestants. At the District level, judges must be non-Optimists.
2. In an effort to conceal the identity of each entry, each entry will be assigned a number by the Essay Contest Chair. The assigned number will be placed on the title page and page 1 of the essay. The title page will then be detained and returned by the Essay Contest Chair. The judges will be given the essay bearing only the assigned number.
3. Judges will not discuss or compare essays being judged.
4. Only judges can assign a penalty or award points.

Section V - 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 and Spelling: 20 points
5. neatness: 5 points
6. Adherence to Contest Rules - prepared in the proper format: 5 points

Section VI - 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 or fraction based on degree of identification
5. Self-identification: 5 points or fraction of based on degree of identification

Section VII - Awards
1. Club level - medallion
2. District level - plaque and a $2,500 college scholarship for the first-place winner

For more information contact:
Contact Person: _____________
Contact Address: _____________
Contact Phone or Email: ____________

Parent or Guardian Permission:
I give my permission for my child/ward to participate in this contest.
Signature_________________________ Date ______/_____/_____

Relationship_________________________
I, ______________________________, grant the Optimist Club/International my permission to use a picture or video of my son/daughter ___________________________ for their public relations purposes. Optimist Club/International may use the photo in any publication they see fit.

Sponsoring Optimist Club Name ___________________________
Sponsoring Optimist Club Number ___________________________

Language: ☐ English ☐ French

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