



## 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 250<sup>th</sup> 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: March 26, 2026 Department: Minnesota

Signature of Department Chair: Tamara Thayer, Americanism Dept Chair

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