

Application for 2009-2010 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 ____/____/____

Parent or Guardian Permission:

I give my permission for my child/ward to participate in this contest.

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Relationship _____

Sponsoring Optimist Club Name _____

Sponsoring Optimist Club Number _____

Please send application to address below

Official Topic: "The Internet: Today's Evolution or Tomorrow's Menace?"

Essay Contest Rules

Each contestant must be given a copy of the rules and complete the entry form. The rules contain information about the contest, judging and awards.

Section I - General Rules

1. The Optimist International Essay contest is divided into three levels of competition: Club, District and International.
2. Contestants must enter through a local Optimist Club or an at-large contest if a local Club is not available.
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 December 31st of the 2009-2010 school year (December 31st, 2009) Students must enter in the District in which they reside. U.S. students attending school on military installations outside the United States 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 an 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 furnish a copy of their birth certificate before participating.

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 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 typewritten and double-spaced. (Deduction of 5 points)
5. Essays must contain at least 400 words, but no more than 500 words. Every word of the essay is counted. This does not include the title, a bibliography or footnotes. Hyphenated words count as 1 word. (Deduction of 5 points for each 25 words over/under limit)
6. Each page of the essay must be numbered starting with page 1 of the essay, not the title page. The numbers must be centered at the bottom of each page.
7. Any quotations or copyrighted material used 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, French or Spanish if the language used is an official language of the country in which the sponsoring Club is located.
10. The entry must be stapled together in the upper left-hand corner. Covers of any type are not accepted.

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 all other levels of the competition, judges must be non-Optimists.
2. In an effort to conceal the identity of each contestant, 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 detached and retained 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: 40 points
2. Vocabulary and Style - phrasing and continuity: 30 points
3. Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling: 20 points
4. Neatness: 5 points
5. 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 400-500 word limit: 5 points for each 25 words over/under limit
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 \$2500 college scholarship for the first-place winner
3. International level -
First Place: plaque, \$6,000 college scholarship
Second Place: plaque, \$3,750 college scholarship
Third Place: plaque, \$2,250 college scholarship
A. Scholarships are funded by the Optimist International Foundations of the United States and Canada. Scholarships awarded are for use at a college, university or trade school only.
B. All scholarships will be payable to the educational institution of the recipient's choice, subject to the approval of Optimist International.
C. All scholarships will be administered by Optimist International.
D. Scholarships are held for 12 years from the effective date.

For more information contact: