



2023-2024

AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST

Dear School Principal or Teacher,

Promoting Americanism in our local communities, especially children, is one of the focal points of Elkdome. The Michigan Elks Association encourages 10-13 year old students to thoughtfully consider American values and appreciate the blessings and responsibilities of citizenship through this essay contest. There are four levels of selection that the essays will need to go through to get to the national competition (local, district, state, national). At each level, three (3) essays from each division are chosen to go onto the next level. At the local and district levels a certificate is given for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places and mention is made in our local newsletters. At the state level a certificate and _____ for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places are given. If one of your students is sent to the national competition then they go against all the other state finalists for the “grand prizes” of \$1,000, \$500 and \$250.

We hope that your school decides to accept this worthwhile project for their school and help the children learn more about how great our country is to live in. Your school has received a postcard with all of this information on it along with the local lodge that you are connected with. Should you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me via email at: americanism@mielks.org.

Jason Manke, MEA Americanism Chairman

Essay Theme: *“What the Bill of Rights Means to Me”*

1. Eligible participants must be a student enrolled in the fifth, sixth, seventh or eighth grade during the normal 2023-24 school year, preceding June 30, 2024. **Deadline: Must be submitted to Local Lodge by December 15, 2023.**
2. Essay length is not to exceed 300 words.
3. Essay must be typed or legibly printed in ink. Also, Essay must be submitted as written (or typed) by the entrant.
4. Essay must be submitted for judging to the Elks Lodge administering the contest at his or her school or, if unknown, to the Lodge nearest to the home address of the entrant.
5. Entrant must be identified on essay by name, home address, grade, school attended and sponsoring Lodge. (Lodge may enter Lodge information on essay cover sheet.)
6. Judging criteria:
 - Originality: Avoid the use of trite or worn out words and phrases – 30 points
 - Development of theme: Stay focused on ideas and thoughts. Don't ramble – 40 points
 - Mechanics and neatness: Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation – 30 points

There are now four separate divisions for judging essays:

- Division I—5th grade; • Division II—6th grade • Division III—7th grade; & • Division IV—8th grade



2023-2024 AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST COVER SHEET

(MUST be attached to each Essay)



“What the Bill of Rights Means to Me”

Section 1 — to be filled out by student

(Circle or Highlight One Grade)

•Division I: 5th Grade

•Division II: 6th Grade

•Division III: 7th Grade

•Division IV: 8th Grade

School _____ Teacher's Name _____

School Address _____ City _____ State _____

Student's Name _____ Male ☐ Female ☐ Age _____ Grade _____

Parent's Name _____ Phone (____) _____

(used only to contact the winners)

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail _____

Send to Local Lodge no later than December 15, 2023.

Section 2 — to be filled out by Lodge Chairman

Chairman's Name _____ Phone Number (____) _____

Sponsoring Lodge Name & Number _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail _____

Select the top three essays from each division and send them to the District Americanism Chairman by January 31, 2024 or the date established by the State Chairman. (Top three only, do not separate as 1st, 2nd, or 3rd.)

Section 3 — to be filled out by District Chairman

Chairman's Name _____ District _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Chairman's Phone Number (____) _____ E-mail _____

Select the top three essays from each division and send them to the State Americanism Chairman by February 28, 2024 or the date established by the State Chairman. (Top three only, do not separate as 1st, 2nd, or 3rd.)

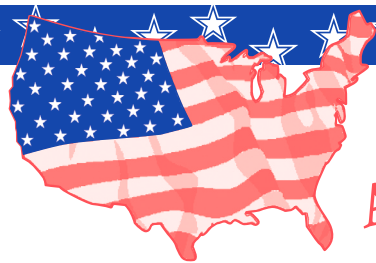
Section 4 — to be filled out by State Chairman

Chairman's Name _____ State _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

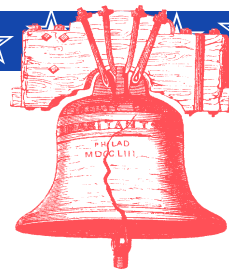
Chairman's Phone Number (____) _____ E-mail _____

Select the 1st, 2nd & 3rd place winners for your State and send the 1st place winner from each division to the Contest Administrator, Gwendolyn B. Parker, by March 31, 2024.



AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST

*Sponsored by Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of
The United States of America*



THEME:

“What the Bill of Rights Means to Me”

RULES:

1. At the time of the contest, eligible participants must be Students enrolled in one of these four divisions: **I**—5th grade; **II**—6th grade; **III**—7th grade; or **IV**—8th grade.
2. Essay length is not to exceed 300 words.
3. Essay must be typed or legibly printed in ink. Also, Essay must be submitted as written (or typed) by the entrant.
4. Essay must be submitted for judging to the Elks Lodge nearest to the address of the entrant.
5. Participant must be identified by name, grade, school attending and sponsoring Elks Lodge on the Essay.

AWARDS:

Plaques will be awarded by Grand Lodge for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place for national winning essays in Divisions I, II, III, and IV. Monetary awards will be disbursed for each grade level for 1st Place—\$1,000; 2nd Place—\$500; and 3rd Place—\$250. Winners will be announced at the Grand Lodge Session in Austin, TX, June 30–July 3, 2024.

ENTRY DATE:

Essay should be submitted to local Elks Lodge on/before December 15, 2023.

The Essay Contest Cover Sheet must be completed for each level of competition and remain attached to the Essay.

Sponsoring Elks Lodge: _____ No. _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone No. _____

E-mail: _____

