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Knight Essay Contest Rules

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CONTEST RULES

1. ELIGIBILITY, SUBMISSION OF ESSAYS and DEADLINES

This contest is open to all students who are United States citizens or legal resident aliens. Contestants shall be in the **freshman, sophomore, junior or senior grade** of high school study during the contest year and attending school, including accredited home schools.

The contest must be entered through a Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution near the student's residence. If the State does not have chapters or if the chapters are not participating, the contest may be entered at the State level. If the State does not participate, then the essay may be submitted to the At Large Judge (see below). Only one entry per student is permitted per contest year. The first place national winner is not eligible to participate in the contest again.

Chapter and State essay submission dates may vary by location. Chapter and state deadlines are established by the chapter and state chairmen. Check **ESSAY CONTACTS** to locate your state contact and to request local deadline and submission information.

All essays must be submitted to the Chapter or State Knight Essay Chairmen by the deadline established by the Chapter or State. For students from a state where the State Society does not participate, the essay must be submitted to the At Large Judge, Mr. Allen Gray (knightessay@comcast.net), by December 31st. Some Chapter or State Chairmen encourage the electronic submission of the essay. If submitting an essay electronically, confirm the acceptable format(s) with the Chapter or State chairman.

All Chapters must submit their winning essay and the [state contest entry form](#) to their State Chairmen by the deadline established by the State Chairman (usually January 31st).

State Chairmen must submit their winning essays and the [national contest entry form](#) to the National Chairman no later than February 28th. E-mail submissions, for the sake of time, are preferred by the national chairman. U.S. Mail is also acceptable, but essays must be received (not postmarked) by February 28th.

The National Chairman will notify all state chairmen who submitted an essay whether their entry was among the finalists by early April. The national winners will be informed in order to be able to attend the Congress. The first-place national winner will read the winning essay at the Youth Awards Luncheon. The winning essay will be published in The SAR Magazine.

2. ESSAY SUBJECTS and RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS

The topic of the essay shall deal with an event, person, philosophy, or ideal associated with the American Revolution, the Declaration of Independence, or the framing of the United States Constitution. The essay must be based upon no less than five references, at least three of which must be published works. References to an encyclopedia or Internet websites are acceptable, but will not be satisfy the requirement that at least three references be published works. If there are no published references, the essay will be disqualified. Plagiarism will be grounds for immediate disqualification.

3. ESSAY FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

General Requirements: An original copy of the essay must be submitted. Poor quality copies will not be accepted. If submitted by mail, no bindings or special covers are needed. Graphics are not permitted. The essay must be written in English.

Specific Requirements: The essay must have four parts: (1) title page, (2) essay text, (3) bibliography, and (4) contestant's biography, each of which is described in more detail below. The title page, bibliography and contestant's biography must be on separate pages. In order to avoid bias, a blind-judging process is used, and the judges are provided with only the essay text and bibliography pages. Therefore, no reference to the contestant's name or other identifying information may appear on the essay text or bibliography pages. Essays that do not conform exactly to these requirements will be disqualified.

The title page must include the title of the essay, contestant's name, contestant's grade level, address, telephone number, and email address. In addition, the title page must include the name, address, and telephone number of the school in which the contestant is enrolled. This page is separated from the essay for judging purposes.

The essay text must be a minimum of 800 words and may not exceed 1,200 words (excluding title page, footnotes, bibliography page, and biography page). The first page of the essay text must include the title of the essay. No contestant information may appear on the essay text pages.

Citations in the essay text and references in the bibliography must be in accordance with a widely used and

publicly available citation system. Examples of a citation system include the *Chicago Manual of Style*, the *MLA Manual of Style*, the *MHRA Style Guide*, *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*, and "Harvard referencing." The bibliography page must specify the system used. No contestant information may appear on the bibliography page(s).

The contestant's biography is limited to one page and must include information regarding the contestant's academic awards and achievements, school activities, community activities, and plans for college. This page is separated from the essay text and bibliography pages for judging purposes.

4. JUDGING CRITERIA

Essays that meet the criteria in Rules 1-3 above will be accepted and judged on the following equally weighted criteria:

- Historical accuracy
- Clarity of thought
- Organization and proven topic
- Grammar and spelling
- Documentation

5. AWARDS

Chapter and State prizes vary. Please contact Chapter and State Chairmen for more information. The National Society awards are as follows:

First place: \$5,000; a medal with a recognition certificate; up to \$500 toward travel expenses; and a one-night hotel stay for the winner and a chaperone at the SAR Annual Congress.

Second Place: \$2,500 and a recognition certificate.

Third Place: \$1,000 and a recognition certificate.

6. PUBLICATION and ASSIGNMENT OF RIGHTS

The national winning essay will be submitted for publication in The SAR Magazine. Participants in this contest agree that their essay may be published in The SAR Magazine and on the NSSAR Knight Essay Contest webpage. Winning essay participants, on all levels, may be required to supply a tax identification number in order to receive their award. By entering this contest, all participants agree that if their essay is chosen as the National winning essay will be the property of NSSAR. All participants further agree further agree that the National winning essay may not be submitted to any other contest or used for any other purpose without the express permission of the NSSAR Knight Essay Contest Chairman.

7. NSSAR DECISIONS ARE FINAL AND NOT SUBJECT TO REVIEW

Participants in this contest agree that the interpretation of the rules and decisions of the National Chairman and its judges must govern without reservation and that decisions of the judges and/or the National Chairman are final.

Questions regarding specific rules may be directed to the National Chairman.

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