

Essay Contest Score Card

Content

Criteria		High Points	Moderate Points	Low Points	Score
Introduction	<i>Essay grabs the reader's attention (5 Points)</i>	Starts with a powerful, creative, or surprising opening that makes the reader want to finish the essay. Connects perfectly to the topic. (4-5 points)	The opening is clear and related to the topic, but it is a bit predictable or standard (like a general statement or common quote). (2-3 points)	The opening is boring, uses a cliché, or has no clear connection (0-1 points)	
	<i>Essay establishes the writer's position/argument and/or introduces the topic (10 Points)</i>	The writer's position is easy to find and very specific. The reader knows exactly what the essay will prove or explain. (8-10 points)	The reader knows the general topic, but the writer's specific position or "plan" for the essay is a bit vague or broad. (4-7 points)	It is difficult to tell what the writer's argument is. The topic is mentioned, but there is no clear direction or stance. (0-3 points)	
Body	<i>Essay presents logical points/examples to support the position/argument of the writer (20 points)</i>	Uses strong facts, specific examples, and clear logic to prove the argument. Each point flows naturally to the next. (15-20 points)	Provides general examples or facts, but the connection to the main argument could be stronger or more detailed. (8-14 points)	Points are missing, confusing, or unrelated to the argument. Uses opinions without any facts or examples to back them up. (0-7 points)	
	<i>Essay transitions well between paragraphs (5 points)</i>	Each paragraph ends and begins with a natural bridge. The reader moves through the essay without feeling any "bumps" between ideas. (4-5 points)	Uses basic transition words (e.g., <i>First, Second, Finally</i>). The connections are clear, but the flow feels a bit repetitive or stiff. (2-3 points)	Paragraphs start and stop abruptly. It feels like a list of unrelated ideas rather than a single, connected essay. (0-1 points)	
	<i>Essay sticks to the main points and maintains the reader's attention (5 points)</i>	Every sentence supports the main goal. The writing is engaging and keeps the reader interested from start to finish. (4-5 Points)	The writer stays on topic most of the time, but occasionally wanders off into minor details or loses the reader's interest. (2-3 Points)	The essay jumps around or includes information that doesn't belong. It is hard for the reader to stay focused or care about the point. (0-1 Points)	
Conclusion	<i>Essay summarizes the argument/topic (10 points)</i>	Clearly summarizes the main points without just repeating them. Leaves the reader with a final, lasting thought or a call to action. (8-10 points)	Briefly restates the main points and the topic. It finishes the essay clearly but doesn't offer much "extra" insight or impact. (4-7 points)	The essay just ends suddenly or introduces brand-new ideas at the last minute. Fails to summarize what was learned. (0-3 points)	
Originality	<i>Essay is original/creative (10 points)</i>	The writer uses a distinct personal voice, creative metaphors, or a unique angle that makes the essay stand out from others. (8-10 points)	The essay is well-written but follows a very common "formula." It uses ideas and phrases that are predictable or used by many others. (4-7 points)	The essay relies on clichés, copied ideas, or sounds like it was generated without any personal thought or creativity. (0-3 points)	
CONTENT SECTION TOTAL (65 Points Possible)					



Essay Contest Score Card

Mechanics

Criteria		High Points	Moderate Points	Low Points	Score
Sources	<i>Essay uses and cites outside sources correctly (10 Points)</i>	Uses high-quality outside info that perfectly supports the essay. All sources are cited correctly, making it clear where the info came from. (8-10 points)	Includes some outside info to back up claims. Most sources are cited, though there might be minor formatting mistakes. (4-7 points)	Very little outside info is used, or it is used without giving credit (no citations). Sources may be unreliable or untrustworthy. (0-3 points)	
Grammar, Spelling & Punctuation	<i>Essay contains no grammar, spelling or punctuation errors (20 Points)</i>	Spelling, punctuation, and grammar are nearly perfect. The writing is smooth and very easy to read. (15-20 points)	There are a few errors, but they don't stop the reader from understanding the point. Most sentences are correct. (8-14 points)	Many mistakes in spelling or grammar make it hard to follow the writer's ideas. The reader has to stop and re-read often. (0-7 points)	
Title Page	<i>Entry contains a title page with name, FFA chapter, and grade (5 Points)</i>	Has all components on the title page. (5 points)	Is missing one or more components from the title page (1-4 points)	No title page (0 points)	
MECHANICS SECTION TOTAL (35 Points Possible)					
TOTAL (100 Points Possible)					

