



# 2024 State Essay Competition

Competition Type – Individual

## Contest Purpose

Being able to express one’s thoughts clearly in written form is critical to success in almost any field, including education. The purpose of the essay competition is to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their writing skills, as well as to express their views on a current topic in education. The topic for the 2024 Essay Competition focuses on “the homework debate.”

**Ah, homework. The word we all love to hate. Since the dawn of public education, students, parents and teachers have debated over homework. How much should be assigned? At what age should it begin? Is it really helpful, or should we abandon it altogether? Research the issue of homework and its helpfulness or harm. Be sure to record what sources you read during the course of your research so that you can cite any you use in your essay. In essay format, discuss your philosophy of homework--why it should or should not be used and what policies you think are appropriate.**

## Competition Guidelines

- A. Only one entry per chapter. Chapters may wish to hold a local competition to determine who will compete at State.
- B. Entry must contain the following identification information at the top of the document:
  - Student’s name
  - Student’s school
  - School system
  - FGE advisor’s nameThis information does **not** count in the essay’s word limit (see C below).
- C. Essays must range from 1,000 to 1,250 words. Other than the title of the essay and the information identification information at the top (see A above), every word of the essay is counted using Microsoft Word’s word count tool.
- D. Essays must be written in English.
- E. Essay responses should be supported by information from sources related to the topic, all of which must be included in a Works Cited list.
- F. Contestants must include references and cite all their sources of information in a Works Cited list. Please use care to avoid plagiarism; plagiarized essays will be disqualified. **Essays without a Works Cited section will also be disqualified.**
- G. All entries become the property of PAGE, who assumes all rights and privileges to use.

## Judging and Scoring

- A. The judges’ decisions are final.
- B. Scoring is based on the Essay Competition rubric (see Judge’s Scoring Rubric in this PDF).

## Eligibility/How to Enter

- A. This competition is only for affiliated FGE chapters.
- B. To be eligible to compete, a student must have attended an FGE Day during the current school year or be registered to attend FGE Day at Mercer University on March 14.
- C. Only one student per chapter may enter.
- D. Type your essay as a Word document, carefully following the Competition Guidelines above.
- E. Entry process is paperless. We will utilize an online form which contains a link to upload your essay electronically in Word document format. **Entry must be submitted by midnight on March 1, 2024.**

# ESSAY COMPETITION

## Judge's Scoring Rubric

Contestant's Name:

Contestant's School:

*(Points awarded may range between zero and the maximum number indicated.)*

Is the essay on the stated topic?                      YES                      NO

Does it include a Works Cited list?                      YES                      NO

If yes to both, continue with the scoring process. If no on either, do not continue with the scoring process.

<b>A. GUIDELINES</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Points Assigned</b>
The essay is between 1,000 and 1,250 words. Score 5 if within limits; score 0 if not within limits.	5	
The essay cites sources of information within the body of the essay.	10	
<b>B. TOPIC ORGANIZATION</b>		
The essay clearly presents a main idea (thesis) and supports it throughout the paper.	10	
The essay is well-planned and well-thought out. Includes introduction, statement of main idea, convincing and relevant data and evidence to back up the main idea, and conclusion that strengthens the claim and evidence.	20	
<b>C. ESSAY CONTENT</b>		
The essay introduces a compelling claim that is clearly arguable and takes a purposeful position on an issue.	10	
The main idea is exceptionally well-presented and argued; ideas are detailed, well-developed, supported with specific evidence & facts, as well as examples and specific details.	20	
Sources are exceptionally well-integrated, and they support claims argued in the paper very effectively.	10	
<b>D. MECHANICS/GRAMMAR</b>		
All sentences are well constructed and have varied structure and length. The essay demonstrates mastery of the language and sentence composition that is clear and purposeful. The author makes no errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling.	15	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	

**Judges' Comments:**