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Bank of America Essay and Speech Contest

The Bank of America Essay/Speech Contest is for 4th, 5th and 6th grade students. **Each participating school may nominate one essay at each grade (4th, 5th, 6th).** There are no regional level contests.

Instructions for Students

2021-2022 Topic: “Think of one major problem that is facing our world today. What steps could be taken to solve it?”

Write a research-based, informational essay/speech that addresses this topic, based on your research and your own experience. An informational essay/speech is written to inform the audience about the writer’s understanding of the topic based on personal knowledge and research completed. The structure of the informational essay is first to frame the central issue, then include facts and details for focus using information from your own experience and a variety of sources. Be sure to cite, in the context of the essay/speech (see examples below), at least three different sources you used in your research. Sources may include personal interviews, articles, websites, reference and other books. Please be careful when choosing internet resources. For this topic, you might research a variety of topics in current events such as COVID vaccinations, masking rules, drought/water rights, wildfires, or other relevant issues for information. **Essays may be typed or handwritten in black or blue ink on binder paper.**

Essays/speeches do not require formal footnotes and/or bibliographies, but students must cite at least three different sources in the body of the essay/speech. This should be done in narrative form, e.g., “The Encyclopedia Britannica, 2009 edition, lists...” “On October 4, 2006, an NBC newscaster noted...” or “John Jones, in his article ‘Global Warming’ stated...”

Instructions for Teachers:

The essay/speech contest is an opportunity for students to practice and perfect their language arts skills in the areas of research, expository writing, and public speaking. Essays and speeches should demonstrate proficiency of the CA Common Core State Standards for writing and presenting informational/explanatory reports. Writing Standard 2, for each grade level, addresses writing informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. Writing standards 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 also support the development of an informative/explanatory essay/speech. Speaking and Listening Standards 4 and 6 are addressed by the presentation of this knowledge. If essays/speeches are presented in classrooms, Speaking and Listening standards 2 and 3 may be addressed as audience members evaluate and summarize information presented. For information regarding these standards refer to the Common Core State Standards for English/Language Arts, History/Social Studies and Science and Technical Subjects found at www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/ .

Please be sure the student reads and follows the guidelines for this essay/speech contest.

Event Information

The Bank of America Speech Contest and Awards Presentation is as follows:

- The competition for 2021-2022 will be held on **Thursday, May 5, 2022**. Details will be emailed to those participating beforehand. It is yet to be determined whether this event will be held virtually or in-person.
- A reception and award presentation for all finalists and guests will be held following the competition.

Awards

Bank of America will award a \$50 Russo's Books gift card for the first place winner, a \$30 Russo's Books gift card for the second place winner, and a \$20 Russo's Books gift card for the third place winner at each grade level. Each student who is invited to and participates in the speech contest will receive a trophy at the awards presentation.

Note to Parents and Educators: *The news media may elect to cover all or part of this event, which can include photos, video or text that identifies and may quote the child/student. This news coverage may appear in newspapers, newsletters, on television, radio or other publicly circulated communications. State law permits media access to student competitions and often helps highlight the many wonderful students we have in our county.*

For additional information, contact Kara Haushalter, English-Language Arts Coordinator, at (661) 636-4155 or Christine Goedhart-Humphrey, Student Events Coordinator, at (661) 636-4330.

Guidelines for the Bank of America Essay and Speech Contest

Guidelines for the Essay

The guidelines for the essay nomination process are as follows:

1. Students write informational/explanatory essays using the topic/time/reference guidelines listed in the instructions for students.
2. Each participating school selects and submits (nominates) one essay at **each** grade level (4th, 5th, & 6th).
3. Essays should be submitted by clicking **HERE** or by going to the link below and clicking on the blue button titled *Essay Submission Form*:
<https://kern.org/student-events/english-language-arts/bank-of-america-essay-speech-contest/>
4. Essays may be typed by the student or hand written in black or blue ink on binder paper.

Essay Submission

Essays should be submitted before **5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 8, 2022.**

Essays should be submitted by clicking **HERE** or by going to the link below and clicking on the blue button titled *Essay Submission Form*:

<https://kern.org/student-events/english-language-arts/bank-of-america-essay-speech-contest/>

Essays will be judged and ranked by an evaluation panel; writers of the top essays will be invited to present their essays as speeches in the event final.

Retain a copy of your essay and a copy of the guidelines. Submitted essays will not be returned.

Judging Criteria for Essays

The criteria for judging the essays are as follows: (100 points total)

Organization (Writing Standards 2, 4):	20 points
Content (Writing Standards 2, 5):	40 points
Voice (Writing Standard 4):	10 points
References, minimum 3 (Writing Standards 7, 8):	20 points
Mechanics (Language Standards 1, 2, and 3):	10 points

Guidelines for the Speech

The guidelines for the speech contest are as follows:

1. The speech relates to the topic for the year.
2. The focus/purpose is to inform or explain. A speech to inform imparts information on a specific subject. It is expected that the information presented in these speeches is found through research on the topic.
3. This speech should not be a dramatic, theatrical performance, and should not include singing or choreography. Points will be deducted for a violation of this guideline.
4. Time limit: 3 minutes MINIMUM . . . 5 minutes MAXIMUM
5. Memorization is encouraged, however, note cards may be used.
6. No props or costumes may be used.
7. Student is not to state his/her name or school in the presentation.

Judging Criteria for the Speech

The criteria for judging the speech contest are as follows: (100 points total)

Organization:	20 points
Poise:	15 points
Content:	30 points
Delivery:	20 points
References: (minimum 3)	15 points
Potential Deductions: (rules 3-7)	5 points each