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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://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScQea3bUmknfYvDzau-HxP6KPBw5-4G6wirDMOEg_3vDfUb-A/viewform.
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 4, 2026.**

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://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScQea3bUmknfYvDzau-HxP6KPBw5-4G6wirDMOEg_3vDfUb-A/viewform.

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): 4	0 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