

Revised 2023-2024 Optimist International Essay Scholarship Competition Application

PRINT Name _____ Gender _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Date of Birth ____/____/____ Age on Oct 1, 2023 _____

Did you enter any other Optimist Club's Essay Contest this school year? Yes No

Contestant Agreement: I have studied the rules of the contest, and I will be bound by all the requirements. I understand entries will be run through plagiarism and AI detection software.

Contestant's Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Parent or Guardian Permission:

I, _____, grant the Optimist Club/International my permission to use a picture or video of my son/daughter, for their public relations purposes. Optimist Club/International may use the photo or video in any publication they see fit.

I give my permission for my child/ward to participate in this scholarship contest.

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Relationship _____

Sponsoring Optimist Club Name _____

Sponsoring Optimist Club Number _____

Language: English, or if District language is different: French or Spanish

Official Topic: "Optimism: How it Connects Us"

Each contestant must be given this copy of the rules and complete the entry form, above.

Section I - General Rules

1. The Optimist International Essay Contest is divided into two levels of competition: Club (preliminary contest) and District (scholarship competition). The winner of a local club contest advances to the District Scholarship Competition.
2. Contestants must enter through a local Optimist Club.
3. Contestants must compose an original essay with limited guidance from others. Webster's Dictionary defines an essay as an analytic or interpretive literary composition. Works of fiction or poetry will not be accepted.
4. All District-level contests must have a minimum of three (3) contestants participating.
5. Optimist International will have the right to edit, publish or otherwise duplicate any essay entered into the contest without payment to the author.

Section II - Qualifications for Contestants

1. The contest is open to contestants under the age of 19 as of October 1st of the current Optimist International contest year (October 1 – September 30) **and who have not yet completed secondary school or its equivalent, including CEGEP students in Québec, Canada.** There is no minimum age. Contestants must enter in the District in which they reside. United States contestants attending school on a military installation outside the U.S. are eligible to enter in their last home of record. Contestants residing in non-Districted areas where there are no Optimist Clubs are not eligible for competition.
2. Contestants are eligible for only one Club's essay contest during any given year. (October 1st - September 30th)
3. No individual having previously won a District Essay scholarship will be eligible to compete at any level of the competition again.
4. All contestants at each level of the contest must provide proof of age and identification in the form of a copy of either their birth certificate or passport before participating. A copy of the Club winner's document will be submitted to the District contest.

Section III - Contest Rules

1. Participants must write on the official contest topic for the current year.
2. Each entry must begin with a title page containing topic, number of words, writer's name, address, phone number, name of school and date of birth.
3. The official topic should be at the top of title page and at the top of page 1. (penalty of 3 points)
4. The word count must also be listed at the top of page 1 (penalty of 5 points)
5. Essays must contain at least 700 words but no more than 800 words. Every word of the essay is counted. This does not include the title, bibliography, or footnotes. Hyphenated words count as 1 word. (Deduction of 5 points for each 25 words over/under limit – French essays will allow 50 words over/under before deduction. Words are to be counted manually.
6. Each page of the essay must be numbered starting with page 1, not the title page. The numbers must be centered at the bottom of each page.