

## **Wirt County Pioneer Days Essay Contest Rules and Topic Tips:**

Open to Middle School students in Grades 5 – 8. Two winners will be chosen, one Gr. 5 – 6 and one Gr. 7 – 8. Each will receive a \$100 cash award on Pioneer Day, October 4, 2025, at 9 AM in the stage area by WesBanco Parking Lot.

### **Rules for Participation:**

1. **Essay Requirements:** Your essay should be at least 2 pages in length and must include references to 3 printed materials (such as books, newspapers, or magazines) and 2 internet articles that provide information on the journey westward in 19<sup>th</sup> century America.
2. **Understand the Topic:** Carefully read the topic description of “The Journey Westward in 19<sup>th</sup> - Century America” provided on the contest poster.
3. **Topic Tips:** What trails were used by the pioneers? Describe the daily schedule of the wagon as it covers 15 to 20 miles per day. What basic provisions and supplies were taken on the trip? What challenges and hardships were faced on the trails? Describe the interactions between pioneers and Native Americans on the trails westward.
4. **Start with a Strong Introduction:** Begin your essay with an introductory paragraph that clearly states the main idea or provides a personal statement about the journey westward in 19<sup>th</sup> century America.
5. **Organize Your Thoughts:** Outline your key ideas and arguments before drafting your essay to ensure a clear and logical flow of information.
6. **Conclude Effectively:** End your essay with a concluding paragraph that summarizes the key points you want to emphasize about the challenges and methods of the journey westward in 19<sup>th</sup> century America.
7. Submit your completed essay to the Principal by the designated deadline to be eligible for the contest.

Good luck to all participants, and we look forward to reading your essays on this fascinating aspect of pioneer life!