

THE “SÍ SE PUEDE” ANNUAL YOUTH ESSAY COMPETITION



César Chávez’s Legacy: How Can We Learn and Make a real Difference Today?

Identify a current issue affecting your community—such as wage inequality, immigrant rights, access to higher education, or rebuilding. How does this struggle compare to the battles Chávez fought?

ABOUT THE CONTEST:

The “Sí se puede” Essay competition is a bilingual essay writing contest in English or Spanish with a cash prize. The essay contest is sponsored by Formative Youth Journalism Initiative and the Pasadena Media Foundation, both of which are 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations founded in Pasadena. The contest is both inspired by Dolores Huerta’s passionate words, “Sí se puede” and by a powerful belief in students’ self-voicization of their experiences.

PRIZE:

The contest prizes are \$250 for first place, \$150 for second place, and \$100 for third place. All prizes will be awarded personally either as checks or as gift cards, depending on the winner’s preference.

A mandatory in-person congratulatory event will be held in early June in Pasadena for winners, guardians, parents, and/or sponsoring teachers.

WHO CAN ENTER?

Any student in grades 6-8 may submit essays for review. Students must reside within the boundaries of the Pasadena Area Community College District (image located on Page 2) or in zip codes 90032 (Los Ange-

les//El Sereno), 90041 (Los Angeles/Eagle Rock), 90042 (Los Angeles/Highland Park), 91775 (San Gabriel), 91776 (San Gabriel), 91801 (Alhambra), 91803 (Alhambra).

Students must currently be enrolled in 5th through 8th grade. Rising 5th graders (currently in 4th grade) are not eligible to participate. Information related to age and identification must be submitted during initial registration on an honor system. A follow-up confirmation will be conducted during finalist selections. Email contact@fyji.org for any questions or concerns.

THE SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS APRIL 30, 2025.

PERMISSION SLIPS:

Permission slips, found on Page 3, must be read, signed on paper, scanned as a PDF, and submitted along with the student’s essay. At least one parent/guardian and/or your teacher must sign a physical permission slip. The teacher and/or parent must certify the student’s age, grade and other eligibility requirements for the contest.

HOW DO I SUBMIT?

Essays are to be written on comput-

ers and submitted digitally via PDF format along with permission slips. Permission slips are to be digitally scanned as a PDF document. Essays are submitted as PDF files in the same form as permission slips.

A trusted guardian, teacher, or school staff member may submit the student’s signed permission slip and typed essay (in PDF format) on behalf of the student if the family is unable to do so. Please ensure that the name of the student being represented in a third-party submission is clearly indicated.

Please locate the “Sí se puede’ Annual Youth Essay Competition” tab on pasadenamediafoundation.org or fyji.org.

JUDGING:

The panel is made up of independent historians and literary scholars. Locate the rubric below. Each essay’s ranking will be an average of the cumulative rubric scores judged by the panel. All essays are reviewed. Judges will make a selection of finalist essays for a final round of judging to select winners. Judges are bilingual in Spanish and English.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ESSAY:

This essay will task you with thoroughly researching César Chávez's life as it fits in your own.

You must cite at least **five sources** in your essay that shows a strong level of research and media literacy. You may use **personal pronouns** (I, you, he, she, it, we, they, me, him, her, us).

An understanding of **essay structure** (an introduction, a body, and a conclusion) is highly recommended. The following technical requirements are specified for consistency and fairness:

Language: English or Spanish

Length: 500–800 words

Font: Times New Roman, 12 pt

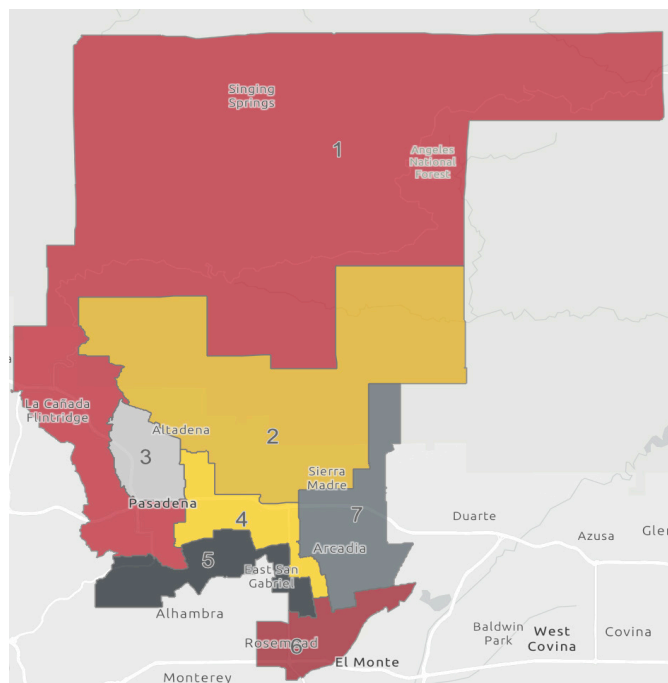
Spacing: Double-spaced

File Type: PDF format

Students may receive restrained guidance from a teacher. Contest organizers retain the right to validate that a student's work is their own at any time.

Home schooled students are not required to include the contact information of a teacher. In these cases, parents will be contacted to verify a student's work.

Essays must be submitted digitally via **PDF format**. Submissions must be sent through the designated form at pasadenamediafoundation.org or fyji.org.



Students must reside within the boundaries of the Pasadena Area Community College District or in zip codes 90032 (Los Angeles/El Sereno), 90041 (Los Angeles/Eagle Rock), 90042 (Los Angeles/Highland Park), 91775 (San Gabriel), 91776 (San Gabriel), 91801 (Alhambra), 91803 (Alhambra).



CONTEXT FOR THE ESSAY:

César E. Chávez and Dolores Huerta are two of the most highly regarded American civil rights activists, specifically for labor rights. Chavez and Huerta embodied what it means to be resilient and perseverant in the face of hardship and rejection.

They dedicated their life's work to the service of others and believed in the strength of community and of teamwork. Chávez demanded nonviolence in his work, leaving behind a legacy of peaceful protest. Huerta continues to advocate for the rights of women, immigrants, and those living in poverty.

Huerta's iconic words, "Sí, se puede" (Yes, we can), is both the titular headline of this competition but is also a rallying cry for laborers and civil activism across the world. This essay competition asks you to truly reflect on your experiences and show how the idea of "Sí, se puede" fits in your life.

RESEARCH

Students must seek their own sources and research according to their chosen topic. The Contest mandates a minimum of 5 cited sources in MLA (Modern Language Association) style. This must be accompanied by a bibliography in alphabetical order.

General context may be cited, but students should specifically research the community issue they identify.

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Permission Form



SUBMISSION DEADLINE **Wednesday, April 30, 2025**

This signed permission slip authorizes the student's entry into this Contest. This must be physically signed and uploaded in PDF format in the submission form found online.

Student's First Name*: _____ Student's Last Name*: _____

Middle School*: _____ E-mail*: _____

Phone number*: _____ Principal Name*: _____

Teacher Sponsor Name: _____ Teacher Sponsor E-mail: _____

STUDENT

I, the submitting student, affirm that the work I am submitting is my own original creation. The essay I am submitting is written solely by me and has not been copied, plagiarized, or artificially generated. I further have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance in any manner. I understand that any violation of this honor code may result in disqualification from the competition. I have notified both a parent/guardian and teacher, if applicable, of my entry.

PARENT/GUARDIAN

I hereby grant permission for _____ to submit an entry in the “Sí se puede” Annual Youth Essay Contest sponsored by Formative Youth Journalism Initiative and the Pasadena Media Foundation. I understand that if the student's essay is selected as a winning entry, he/she must not submit their entry elsewhere for any purpose.

I further authorize the Pasadena Media Foundation and/or the media to capture photos and/or videos of my child for marketing/promotional purposes.

Additionally, I certify that I have read, but have not provided aid, to the student's essay and that I will be contacted to verify this agreement if the student's essay is selected as a finalist. I understand that my child's entry will be disqualified if it is found in violation of this agreement. I am informed that essays are judged fairly and by a pre-determined board of judges.

Parent/Legal guardian Name*: _____

Parent/Legal guardian Phone Number*: _____

Parent/Legal guardian E-mail*: _____

Home Address*: _____

State*: _____ Zip Code*: _____

SUBMISSION DEADLINE **Wednesday, April 30, 2025**