

Contestant Application Form for 2021-22

Optimist International Essay Scholarship Contest

“How Does An Optimistic Mindset Change My Tomorrow”

Please print clearly:

Contestant Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State and Zip Code _____

Telephone (____) _____ Email address _____

Date of Birth ____/____/____ Age _____

Have you participated in any other Optimist Club’s Essay Contest this school year? ____YES ____NO

I have studied the rules of this contest, and I understand that I will be bound by all of the requirements:

Contestant Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Parent/Guardian Permission:

I give my permission for my child/ward to participate in the Optimist essay scholarship contest. I further give my permission to the Central MN Noon Optimist Club and the DMM Optimist District and Optimist International to publish: 1) a new media release (which will contain only my child/ward’s name and age) and 2) a picture or video of my child/ward for any Optimist publication or promotion.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Parent/guardian email address _____

Please attach this application form to the front of the essay



Contest deadline is February 19, 2022



2021-22 Optimist Essay Scholarship Contest

“How Does an Optimistic Mindset Change My Tomorrow”

(sponsored by the Central MN Noon Optimist Club)

Local Contest Entry Deadline is February 9, 2022

Written essays and a completed application form must be submitted:

Via U.S. mail or hand delivery to:
Boys & Girls Clubs of Central MN
Attention: Aimee Minnerath
345 30th Ave. N.
St. Cloud, MN 56303

Or emailed to: AMinnerath@BGCMN.Org

Essays will be considered timely if they are received by February 9th deadline date or emailed or hand delivered to the above address **on or before midnight on February 9, 2022.**

2021-22 Essay Scholarship Contest Awards

DMM Optimist District award is **\$2,500 college scholarship** (one winner per year).

Central MN Noon Optimist Club prizes:

- 1st place: \$250
- 2nd place: \$150
- 3rd place: \$100

For more information, please contact **Aimee Minnerath** at AMinnerath@BGCMN.Org

Attachments include:

1. Sample Title Page
2. Sample Page 1 of Essay
3. Application form for Essay Contest
4. Official Essay Contest Rules (2 Pages)
5. Instructions to Essay Contest Judges

6. Essay Contest Judge's Score Sheet

Website information is available at: WWW.OptimistInternational.org

This is a **SAMPLE TITLE PAGE** for the 2021-22 OPTIMIST ESSAY CONTEST – Items listed below must be included on your title page. Your title page may be as creative as you choose. The title page will NOT be seen by the judges.

“How Does an Optimistic Mindset Change My Tomorrow”

Number of words in this essay: 746

Jane Johnson

1256 Jefferson Lane

St. Cloud, MN 56304

Phone Number: 320-555-0000

Email address: jjohnson@gmail.com

Date of Birth – October 1, 2005

St. Cloud Christian School

This is a **sample of Page 1** of an essay. The essay topic and number of words must be on page 1
Each page must have a page number.

“How Does an Optimistic Mindset Change My Tomorrow”

An essay containing 782 words



Official Rules

Each contestant must be given a copy of the rules and must complete the entry form. The rules contain information about the contest, judging and awards.

Section I - General Rules

1. The Optimist International Essay Contest is divided into two levels of competition: Club and District.
2. Contestants must enter through a local Optimist Club or an at-large contest if a local Club is not available. An At-Large student may not have competed in an Optimist International or District contest in the same year.
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 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. Students must enter in the District in which they reside. U.S. students attending school on a military installation outside the United States are eligible to enter in their last home of record. Students 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 age and identification from their birth certificate or passport before participating. A copy of the document is only needed for District winners.

Section III - Contest Rules

1. Participants must write on the official contest topic.
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. At the top of page 1 should be the official topic and the number of words (penalty of 2 points for lack of topic and 5 points for failure to identify the total number of words correctly).
4. Essays must be type-written and double-spaced. (Deduction 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 one (1) word. (Deduction of 5 points for each 25 words over/under limit – French Essays will allow 50 words over/under limit for the deduction in scoring). 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.
7. Any quotations or copyrighted material used in the essay must be identified properly. For example, use of a specific writer's format (such as MLA) may be specified by the instructor overseeing the contest. Failure to identify non-original material will result in disqualification.
8. No reference can be made in the essay that identifies the student, parents, school, community, sponsoring Optimist Club or District. (Deduction of 5 points or fraction based on degree of identification)
9. An essay may be written in either English, French or Spanish if the language used is an official language of the country in which the sponsoring Club is located.
10. The entry must be stapled together in the upper left-hand corner. Covers of any type are not accepted.



Section IV – Judging

1. Judging will be completed by a panel of three qualified judges who are not acquainted with the contestants. At the Club level, judges may be Optimist Members. At the District level, judges must be non- Optimists. (Friends of Optimists are excluded and can be used as judges).
2. In an effort to conceal the identity of each contestant, each entry will be assigned a number by the Essay Contest Chair. The assigned number will be placed on the title page and page 1 of the essay. The title page will then be detached and retained by the Essay Contest Chair. The judges will be given the essays bearing only the assigned numbers.
3. Judges will not discuss or compare essay being judged.
4. Only judges can assign a penalty or award points.

Section V – Scoring of Contest

Scoring procedures at all levels of the contest will be identical.

1. Material Organization (Logical interpretation of the subject, adherence to topic): 30 points
2. Creativity – 10 points
3. Vocabulary and Style (Phrasing and continuity): 30 points
4. Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling: 20 points
5. Neatness: 5 points
6. Adherence to contest rules (prepared in the proper format): 5 points

Section VI – Penalties

1. Failure to list official topic: 2 points
2. Failure to accurately identify total number of words: 5 points
3. Failure to type essay and double-space: 5 points
4. Failure to stay within the 700-800 word limit: 5 points for each 25 words over/under limit. French essays will allow 50 words over/under for deduction. Words are to be counted manually.
5. Self-identification: 5 points or fraction based on degree

Section VII - Awards

Only Optimist International awards obtained from Shumsky or Ansell are to be given at all Club and District level contests.

1. Club level - medallion
Clubs are allowed to give monetary awards of up to \$500 per winner for the Essay contest in addition to the official medallions. The Club level awards may be given in the form of a scholarship, savings bond or cash prize but are completely discretionary.
2. District level - plaque and a \$2,500 college scholarship for the first place winner
 - A. Scholarships are paid through the Optimist International Foundations in the United States and Caribbean and the Canadian Children's Optimist Foundation in Canada.
 - B. Scholarships awarded are for use only at a college, university, or trade school.
 - C. All scholarships will be payable to the educational institution of the recipient's choice, subject to the approval of Optimist International.
 - D. All scholarships will be administered by Optimist International.
 - E. Winners of an Optimist International scholarship must claim their scholarship by the age of 25.



Instructions to Judges

The Judges Score Sheet, along with a copy of the rules, should be given to each judge.

Points

Material Organization

In this category, the interpretation of the subject, a clear presentation of the writer's concept, dedication to research and the logical organization of the supporting facts should be considered.

Maximum point award is 30 points.

Creativity

Consider originality, individuality and imagination.

Maximum point award is 10 points.

Vocabulary and Style

The choice of words, use of descriptive phrases, clear sentence structure and illustration of the topic are considered. Use of figures of speech, similes, metaphors and quotations are important factors.

Maximum point award is 30 points.

Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling

Consider such factors as subject and verb agreement, plurals of nouns and tense.

Maximum point award is 20 points.

Neatness

General appearance of the essay is a vital part of the presentation. Legibility and spacing in handwritten essays are to be considered.

Maximum point award is 5 points.

Adherence to Contest Rules

The ability to follow instructions and observe rules is important. The rules detail the format for the essay.

Maximum point award is 5 points.

Total of points awarded should be compiled and placed in the indicated space on the form.

Penalties

Failure to list the official topic

The official topic must be listed at the top of page 1 of the essay.

Deduct 2 points for lack of the topic.

Failure to identify total number of words and doing so correctly:

The number of words is to be indicated at the top of page 1 of the essay. The total must be accurate and in the proper place to avoid penalty points.

Deduct 5 points for incorrect total or indication in the wrong place.

Failure to Type Essay and Double Space

All essays are to be type-written and double-spaced.

Deduct 5 points.

Failure to stay within the 700-800 word limit

The word limit does not include the title, footnotes or bibliography. It applies only to the text and includes every word, regardless of length. Hyphenated words count as 1 word.

Deduct 5 points for each 25 words over or under the limit. French Essays will allow 50 words over/under for the deduction. Words are to be counted manually.

Self-Identification

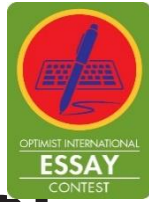
Students cannot identify themselves, parents, school, community, sponsoring Optimist Club or District. "My father the mayor" is considered a violation.

Deduct 5 points or fraction of based on degree of identification made.

Selection of the Top Three Winners

1. Each judge ranks the best essays from 1 to 5. Ties in points and ranking are not allowed. Re-evaluate essays if necessary.
2. The Club Essay Chair will enter each judge's score on the Master Score Sheet.
3. The grand total of the three judges is determined for each essay. The entry having the largest grand total of points is declared the winner.
4. In case of a tie, the entry scoring the largest number of points in category 1 is declared the winner. If a tie still exists, each succeeding category is considered the tie-breaker.
5. Should a tie still exist through category 5, the tied essays will be re-evaluated by the three judges and judged a second time.

****Scores and totals are only available to the Contest Chair. No one is permitted to see the point totals or rankings! All scores are confidential!**



Judge's Score Sheet

Optimist Essay Contest

Judge # _____

Entry Number

| Categories to be judged | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Material Organization <i>Maximum point award 30 points</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Creativity <i>Maximum point award 10 points</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Vocabulary and Style <i>Maximum point award 30 points</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling <i>Maximum point award 20 points</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Neatness <i>Maximum point award 5 points</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Adherence to Contest Rules <i>Maximum point award 5 points</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Points Awarded | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Penalties | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Failure to list official topic <i>Deduct 2 points</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Failure to identify total number of words and doing so correctly <i>Deduct 5 points</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Failure to Type Essay/Double Space <i>Deduct 5 points</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Failure to stay within the 700-800 word limit <i>Deduct 5 points for each 25 words over/under the limit. French essays will allow 50 words over/under</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Self-Identification <i>Deduct 5 points or fraction based on degree of identification</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Penalties Deducted | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Final Total <i>Total points awarded minus total penalties deducted</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ranking of top 5 essays NO TIES ALLOWED | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Signature of Judge _____ Date ____/____/____