



## League of Women Voters of Blount County 2009 Annual High School Essay Contest

### **PURPOSE:**

The League of Women Voters of Blount County announces an Essay Contest for high school students in Blount County. Our organization's Mission Statement is:

*As a nonpartisan group of women and men, we seek to organize and foster open conversation, education, and voter registration. It is our aim to encourage people to engage fully in the political process.*

The LWV Essay Contest encourages students to think and write about engagement in the political process. In addition, the Essay Contest strives to:

- Promote serious discussion among high school students, their teachers, and parents.
- Strengthen student research, writing, and reasoning skills.
- Complement existing curriculum and class activities.

### **ESSAY TOPIC:**

*In your opinion, what are the three most important issues facing Blount County government as we approach the 2010 General Elections and why?*

### **RULES:**

1. Essayists must be Blount County students currently enrolled in grades 9- 12.
2. Essays must be typed on 8.5 x 11 paper, double-spaced, using 12 pt. font. Pages should be numbered, but your name should not appear on your essay, only on the Cover Sheet.
3. Essays must be at least 700 words long and no longer than 1000 words. Essays that are outside those limits will be disqualified. Word Count must be included on the Cover Sheet.
4. The Cover Sheet in the packet must be completed in full and stapled to the essay.
5. Essays will be judged on four criteria:
  - Focus and Organization (25%)—How well does your essay address the specific question?
  - Style/Mechanics (25%)—Is the essay well written in terms of grammar, spelling, word choice, and punctuation?
  - Strength of Conclusion (25%)—Does the essay support a clear and sound conclusion?
  - Originality (25%)—Does the writer develop ideas creatively, presenting alternatives throughout?

**DEADLINE:**

Completed, signed Essay packets must be postmarked **no later than November 1, 2009**. They should be mailed to **Autumn Hall, 213 Fox Glove Lane, Maryville, TN 37801**.

**REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION:**

- Failure to address topic.
- Incorrect or incomplete Cover Sheet.
- Entry not postmarked by the deadline.
- The essay plagiarizes someone else's statements or ideas.

**AWARDS:**

A first place award of a \$200 U.S. Savings Bond and a second place award of a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond will be presented to winners. Winning essays will be posted on the LWVBC website and provided to the local news media.

**HOW DO I WRITE THE ESSAY?**

The essay is a three-part paper that lays out and develops a response to the essay contest question. Although researching a topic to find examples to illustrate your point can be helpful, an essay should be more than a research paper about other people's ideas.

Your essay should include the following:

- An *introduction*, which introduces the subject and explains your position. The introduction should demonstrate that you understand the essay question and have formed a response to it.
- A *body*, which develops your argument using research and analysis. You may contrast and compare several ideas or events, critique various perspectives, interpret and draw inferences. Be sure to identify other sources you use.
- A *conclusion*, which summarizes the research and analysis presented in the body and sets forth your conclusion which should support the position described in the introduction. Your aim is to convince your reader that your position is reasonable and correct.

*If you have questions about the essay contest, call V. Kemp at 363-8110.*

League of Women Voters of Blount County  
2009 HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST

**ENTRY COVER SHEET**

PLEASE **PRINT** LEGIBLY

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City Zip

School \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Word Count \_\_\_\_\_

*I give permission for my/my child's essay to be posted or published in its entirety or in part on the League of Women Voters website and/or local news media.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature Date

(If student is under 18 years of age)