



Announcement of the Declaration of Independence First Public Reading

Are you in 5th through 8th grade?
You're invited to participate in an

Essay Contest

Topic for 2026-2027

"To announce independence from Great Britain, the Declaration of Independence was publicly read in Philadelphia on July 8, 1776. Following this reading, the word spread throughout the colonies in newspapers, more public readings, and posted notices. Imagine you lived in Philadelphia or an area of the colonies where news did not reach you for weeks. How would you react to hearing the Declaration read in your community? With whom would you share the news?

What action would you take after hearing it?

How would this have impacted your life?"

Open to Grades 5-8
Length 300-1,000 words (depending on grade level)

For information, contact:

DAR Chapter Charlotte Parkhurst Chapter - Folsom & El Dorado Hills

Contact Chairperson - Genie Hamilton

Phone (916) 607-3450 (text) E-mail AmerHistEssayDAR@gmail.com

Document No. AHC-1004

Revised March 2026

National Information Packet 2026

The deadline for essay submissions is November 1, 2026 at no later than 5:00 p.m.

NON PROFIT

National Society Daughters of the American Revolution
AMERICAN HISTORY ESSAY CONTEST 2026–2027
(This information is for chapter and school use)

ALL ESSAYS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY

TOPIC:	"To announce independence from Great Britain, the Declaration of Independence was publicly read in Philadelphia on July 8, 1776. Following this reading, the word spread throughout the colonies in newspapers, more public readings, and posted notices. Imagine you lived in Philadelphia or an area of the colonies where news did not reach you for weeks. How would you react to hearing the Declaration read in your community? With whom would you share the news? What action would you take after hearing it? How would this have impacted your life?"
PARTICIPANTS:	All grade 5, 6, 7, and 8 students in a public, private, or parochial school, or those who are home schoolers, are eligible. An individual student may submit an entry directly to a DAR chapter in their own state if their class or school is not participating. This contest is conducted without regard to race, religion, sex, or national origin. DO NOT SUBMIT A STUDENT PHOTOGRAPH WITH ENTRY.
LENGTH:	Grade 5: 300–600 words Grades 6, 7, and 8: 600–1,000 words
FORM:	Essay is to be prepared on a computer, using black type in a non-script font no smaller than 12 point or larger than 14 point. A limited vision student may use Braille, a tape recorder, or very large type. A written transcript must be included, as well as a teacher's or physician's letter attesting to the student's special need. Please note that the entire essay must be the student's original work. This includes all research, writing, and editing, which must be done by the student themselves and not by a parent, teacher, tutor, AI, or other helper. Each essay must include a completed Title page. AHC-1008
RESOURCES:	Essay must have a list of all resources utilized. Four individual resources are expected. Internet resources, if used, should include the electronic address. ** <u>Any essay with information copied directly from sources without using quotes (plagiarized) will be disqualified.</u> **
JUDGING AND AWARDS:	Judging will be based on historical accuracy, adherence to topic, organization of material, interest, originality, spelling, grammar, and that it is the student's own work. Pictures, maps, drawings, graphics, and other such additions <i>will not</i> be considered in judging and should not be included. Judging at the chapter level is by three judges, including at least two non-DAR judges. Judging at other levels is by three judges, all of whom are non-DAR members. CHAPTER: One essay at each grade level is selected as the chapter winner and forwarded to the state American History chair for state competition or to district/region first. American History essay contest chapter winner certificates and bronze medals may be presented by the chapter if desired. In addition, chapters may present certificates of participation to every student who participates in the essay contest. STATE: One essay at each grade level is selected as the state winner and forwarded to the appropriate national division vice chair of American History for division competition. The state winner receives a silver medal and state winner certificate. DIVISION: One essay in each grade is selected as the division winner and forwarded for national competition to the national vice chair. Division winners are presented a division winner certificate and a blue ribbon. NATIONAL: First, second, and third place winners are selected at the national level. A certificate, gold pin, and monetary award are presented to the national first place winner at Continental Congress. Winning essays (or videos) may appear in official DAR communications. The national second and third place winners receive a certificate and a monetary award. Note: All essays must be submitted to a local chapter electronically by a teacher, school or individual student. Essays sent directly to the national chair or vice chair of the essay contest will not be considered.
DEADLINE:	Chapter chairs should determine date for teachers, schools or individual students to forward essays to them to the chapter chair to allow for judging to be completed prior to state deadline. <i>States with district level judging should set appropriate intermediate deadlines. Date assigned:</i> November 1, 2026 @ 5:00 PM

NAME, EMAIL AND PHONE NUMBER OF CHAPTER CONTACT PERSON Genie Hamilton (Chairperson)
AmerHistEssayDAR@gmail.com, 916-607-3450 (text)

NAME OF SPONSORING DAR CHAPTER Charlotte Parkhurst Chapter - Folsom & El Dorado Hills

If additional information about the contest is needed, please contact the Office of the Historian General, NSDAR, at
1776 D Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20006-5303 Phone: (202) 879-3256

National Society Daughters of the American Revolution
American History Essay Contest
(Grades 5-8)
Judge's Scoring Sheet

Student's Name: _____ *Total Score: 0

School: _____ Town/State: _____ Grade level: _____

	1	2	3	4	Score
Essay Submission: Consider: Title Page is complete and formatting is correct. Does not exceed word count: 300-600 (5th), 600-1000 (6th-8th)	Title page is not complete; essay exceeds or is below word count; formatting is not correct.	Title page is complete; but word count and/or formatting is not completed according to directions.	Word count is correct; but title page and/or formatting is not completed according to directions.	Submission is complete; title page is complete; essay has required word count; formatting is correct.	_____/4
Historical Accuracy: Consider: Essay meets standards of historical accuracy. 2X Points	Essay does not contain correct historical information (1-2pts)	Essay contains generally relevant and correct historical information (3-4pts)	Essay contains relevant and correct historical information (5-6pts)	Essay contains extensive correct historical information (7-8pts)	_____/8
Adherence to Topic: Consider: Writer demonstrates a clear understanding of question and responds with details. 2X Points	Little or no facts, concrete details, or examples included (1-2pts)	Attempts to develop subject with facts and examples, but lacks concrete details (3-4pts)	Develops subject with facts, concrete details, quotations and examples (5-6pts)	Thoroughly develops subject with relevant facts, concrete details, quotations and examples (7-8pts)	_____/8
Organization of Essay: Consider: Organization of essay	No organization: lacks beg/mid/end	Some organization: attempt at a beg/mid/end	Organized: beg/mid/end	Strong organization beg/mid/end	_____/4
Interest: Consider: Originality, word choice, voice, holds the reader's interest. 2X Points	Limited vocabulary that does not communicate strongly or capture the reader's interest (1-2 pts)	Words communicate clearly, but the writing lacks variety (3-4 pts)	Vivid words and phrases draw pictures in the reader's mind, but occasionally words are used inaccurately (5-6 pts)	Vivid words and phrases that draw pictures in the reader's mind, and the choice and placement of the words seem accurate and natural (7-8 pts)	_____/8
Mechanics: Spelling and Grammar	More than four (4) errors in spelling and/or grammar	Three (3) misspellings and/or grammatical errors	Two (2) or fewer misspellings and/or grammatical errors	No misspelling or grammatical errors	_____/4
Resources: Consider: Author, Title, Primary or Secondary, and/or Website address	Zero to one source listed (0-1pt)	Two sources	Three sources, including one primary source	Four or more sources, including both primary and secondary sources	_____/4

Comments:

Judge's signature: _____ Email _____

* Note: The highest score an applicant can attain is 40.

National Society Daughters of the American Revolution
American History Essay
Electronic Contest Title Page* 2026 – 2027
Grades 5 – 8

Title of Essay: **Announcement of the Declaration of Independence First Public Reading**

Subtitle (*optional*) _____

Contestant's Name _____

Contestant's Grade Level _____

Contestant's Contact Information (*email and/or complete address*) _____

Contestant's Phone Number (*with area code*) _____

Contestant's School _____

School's Contact Information (*optional*) _____

Name of Sponsoring DAR Chapter _____

Number of words in essay (*Grade 5: 300-600 words; Grades 6-8: 600-1,000 words*):

***Any missing information on the title page will result in a lower score when judged.**