

The top three Fifth Grade Flag Essay Contest winners attended the Department Convention and read their essays and received their awards. Congratulations to them all.

1st Place (\$500) – Claire Heston, DCG Middle School, Legion Post #49, 6th District

2nd Place (\$300) – Sully McCarville, Notre Dame Elem, Legion Post #545, 4th District

3rd Place (\$200) – Elena Sieren, CAM Elem, Legion Post #210, 7th District

General Information

The purpose of The American Legion of Iowa Essay Contest is to develop a more profound knowledge and appreciation for the United States Flag on the part of elementary-aged students. Additional objectives include the ability to gain an understanding of flag etiquette and respect for the flag. Applications may be downloaded from www.ialegion.org/flag-essay.

Awards

Local and district contest awards, if any, will be the responsibility of the individual post and district. Each district finalist must be completed in time to be forwarded to The American Legion Department of Iowa Headquarters.

The Department finalists will be recognized in the same manner as other youth champions and will be invited to read their essays at the Department Convention. First, Second, and Third Place winners will also receive \$500, \$300, and \$200 from The American Legion of Iowa and American Legion of Iowa Foundation.

Contests

Local contests will be conducted and judged by the local sponsoring American Legion Post, and the winning essay, along with the completed certification form, will be forwarded as follows:

1. Individual Legion Posts will forward one winning entry (please retain a copy) to their District Children and Youth Chairperson, with a signed Participation Application, postmarked by January 5th of the current program year. If the district does not have a Children & Youth Chairman, the District Americanism Chairman will suffice. Each section of the application must be thoroughly reviewed and completed by the deadline to be eligible for consideration. Failure to follow all directions will automatically disqualify an essay no matter how well written.
2. District entries will be judged by the respective District Children & Youth Chairman and signed off by the District Commander. A listing of District Chairmen can be found at www.ialegion.org/flag-essay. The first-place district finalist's essay and completed application form needs to be sent to Department Headquarters, postmarked no later than January 22, 2026. It is highly recommended that district chairs retain a copy of the application and essay before forwarding the original.
3. The Department Children & Youth Committee will judge the nine district entries at the Mid-Winter Conference, immediately following the Americanism meeting.

Please Note: A list of The American Legion Department of Iowa District Children & Youth Chairmen is available online at www.ialegion.org/flag-essay or upon request from Department Headquarters.

Essay

The format for the essay is limited to the following:

- A one (1) page document containing 300 words or less
- Double-spaced with 12-point font
- The student's own words and effort
- The essay must contain a title and the student's name which will not be part of the word count

The essay is to reflect the students' perspective of what the United States Flag represents to them using facts from the United States Flag Code.

Eligibility

Participants shall be citizens or lawful permanent residents of the United States. All contestants must be students enrolled in the fifth grade in a public, parochial, military, private, or state home school.

www.ialegion.org/flag-essay

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