

ESSAYS ON TECHNOLOGY



OVERVIEW

Applying leadership and 21st century skills, participants write a research-based essay, using two (2) or more sources provided on-site, that makes insightful connections about a current technological topic.

ELIGIBILITY

Three (3) individuals per state are allowed to participate.

TIME LIMITS

Two (2) hours are allotted for the on-site challenge.

ATTIRE

TSA competition attire is required for this event.

PROCEDURE

ON-SITE CHALLENGE

- A. Participants report to the event area at the time and place stated in the conference program.
- B. Participants receive the writing prompt, two (2) or more articles on a current technological topic, and instructions for the on-site challenge.
- C. Time begins after participants have received all materials.
- D. Participants prepare essays using a laptop computer (provided by participants).
- E. After two (2) hours, participants stop writing. Each participant turns in an essay not exceeding three (3) typed pages, and one (1) works-cited page.
- F. Essays are submitted in PDF format on a clean (unused) USB flash drive, provided by the participant.
- G. Entries are reviewed by judges with neither students nor advisors present.
- H. A list of ten (10) finalists are announced at the awards ceremony.

REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Students will work to develop their leadership and 21st century skills in the process of preparing for and participating in this TSA competitive event. The development and application of those skills must be evident in their submission, demonstration, and/or communication pertaining to the entry.

- A. Participants are responsible for bringing a fully-charged laptop computer complete with the software necessary. Participants who report without a laptop will not be permitted to compete.
- B. National TSA will NOT provide access to the Internet. Using a hotspot for this event is not allowed.
- C. No power sources are provided for participants. The laptop computer must be capable of being used for the entire two (2) hour time frame of the event, without needing a power source.
- D. Participants are responsible for bringing a clean (unused) USB flash drive to the event room.
 1. Flash drives must not contain any other documents, images, etc.
 2. Flash drives will not be returned to participants.
 3. Participants who report without a flash drive will not be permitted to compete.
- E. Only participants are allowed in the event area. Should a participant finish before the allotted time expires, the participant is allowed to leave quietly but may not re-enter the event room.
- F. Each entry must have only the participant identification number noted and centered directly below the title of the essay.
- G. The length of the essay is limited to three (3) typed pages, single-spaced. The list of references is not included in the three (3) pages.
- H. All essays must adhere to the following criteria:
 1. 12pt Times New Roman
 2. One inch (1") margins on all sides
 3. Single (normal) spacing

- I. With the essay, participants must turn in a one (1)-page typed bibliography, using proper MLA bibliography format.
- J. Essays must be submitted with a bibliography and in PDF format. Entries not following these guidelines will not be scored.
- K. All essays and USB drives become the property of TSA and will not be returned.

EVALUATION

- A. The essay criteria

Refer to the official rating form for more information.

STEM INTEGRATION

This event aligns with the STEM educational standards of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

LEADERSHIP AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

This event provides opportunity for students to build and develop leadership and 21st century skills including but not limited to:

- Communication
- Collaboration/Social Skills
- Initiative
- Problem Solving/Risk Taking
- Critical Thinking
- Perseverance/Grit
- Creativity
- Relationship Building/Teamwork
- Dependability/Integrity
- Flexibility/Adaptability

CAREERS RELATED TO THIS EVENT

This competition has connections to one (1) or more of the careers below:

- Research technician
- Scientist
- Writer

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2023 & 2024 OFFICIAL RATING FORM

HIGH SCHOOL

Judges: Using minimal (1-4 points), adequate (5-8 points), or exemplary (9-10 points) performance levels as a guideline in the rating form, record the scores earned for the event criteria in the column spaces to the right. The X1 or X2 notation in the criteria column is a multiplier factor for determining the points earned. (Example: an "adequate" score of 7 for an X1 criterion = 7 points; an "adequate" score of 7 for an X2 criterion = 14 points.) A score of zero (0) is acceptable if the minimal performance for any criterion is not met.

Go/No Go Specifications

- Before judging the entry, ensure that the items below are present; indicate presence with a check mark in the box.
- If an item is missing, leave the box next to the item blank and place a check mark in the box labeled ENTRY NOT EVALUATED.
- If a check mark is placed in the ENTRY NOT EVALUATED box, the entry is not to be judged.

- ☐ Computer hardware is present and fully charged
- ☐ USB flash drive is present
- ☐ The entry is submitted in PDF format with a bibliography
- ☐ ENTRY NOT EVALUATED

ESSAY (110 points)				Record scores in the column spaces below.
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance	
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points	
Thesis (X1)	The thesis is not a complete thought and/or is inappropriate for the essay; the title and thesis do not correlate with one another, or the thesis lacks creativity.	The thesis is evident and the idea behind it is somewhat concise and fairly creative; the essay title correlates with the thesis.	The thesis is well structured, concise, positioned appropriately, and creative; the essay title is authentic and correlates well with the thesis.	
Introductory Paragraph (X1)	The introduction explains the background but may lack detail; it does not help to establish the writer's position.	The introduction creates interest and generally states the position.	A well-developed introduction engages the reader and creates interest; the introduction states a significant and compelling position.	
Supporting Paragraphs (X2)	Paragraphs lack main points to support the thesis, and/or there is a poor development of ideas.	Paragraphs include main points that are related to the thesis, with adequate supporting details and a fairly developed narrative.	Paragraphs provide well-developed main points directly related to the thesis; supporting examples are concrete and detailed; the narrative presents a consistent and effective point of view.	
Concluding Paragraph (X1)	The conclusion is recognizable, but it does not effectively summarize the topic.	The conclusion generally summarizes the topic and restates the thesis.	The conclusion wraps up the point of the essay and creatively restates the thesis.	
Organization (X1)	There is no discernible organization; transitions are not present.	A logical progression of ideas is evident; transitions are present throughout the essay.	The essay conveys a logical progression of ideas, with a clear structure that enhances the thesis; transitions are mature and graceful.	
Style (X1)	The style is confusing and hard to follow; it contains fragments and/or run-on sentences; word choice is simple, ordinary, and/or un compelling.	The style is clear, sentences are somewhat expressive, and word choice is appropriate.	The style is smooth, skillful and coherent; sentences are strong and expressive, with varied structure; word choice is appropriate and mature.	
Mechanics (X2)	The essay contains distracting errors in punctuation, grammar, and spelling.	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are generally correct, with few errors.	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are correct with no errors evident.	

ESSAY (110 points) – continued				
Research Base (X1)	The essay lacks an adequate research base and/or uses minimal support from articles; leadership and/or 21 st century skills are not evident.	The research base is adequate, with support from articles; leadership and/or 21 st century skills are somewhat evident.	The essay conveys a detailed research base that includes comprehensive support from articles; leadership and/or 21 st century skills are clearly evident.	
Works Cited (X1)	Bibliography is not in the proper MLA format.	Bibliography is in the proper MLA format, but contains minor errors.	Bibliography is in proper MLA format, with no errors.	
ESSAY TOTAL (110 points)				
Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points in the semifinalist section) must be initialed by the evaluator, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right.				
Indicate the rule violated: _____				
To arrive at the TOTAL score, add any subtotals and subtract rules violation points, as necessary.				TOTAL (110 points)

Comments:

I certify these results to be true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

JUDGE

Printed name: _____ Signature: _____



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EVENT COORDINATOR INSTRUCTIONS

PERSONNEL

- A. Event coordinator
- B. Judges:
 1. Two (2) judges per heat.
 2. Two new judges to evaluate the top ten (10) from each heat.

MATERIALS

- A. Coordinator's packet, containing:
 1. Event guidelines, one (1) copy for the coordinator and for each judge
 2. TSA Event Coordinator Report
 3. List of judges/assistants
 4. Stopwatch
 5. Envelopes for each USB flash drive
 6. Results envelope
- B. Tables and chairs for judges
- C. Tables and chairs for participants
- D. Securable room (preferable) for the duration of the event
- E. Two (2) or more articles on a current technological topic; one (1) set per participant and one (1) set per judge

RESPONSIBILITIES

AT THE CONFERENCE

- A. Attend the mandatory coordinator's meeting at the designated time and location.
- B. Report to the CRC room and check the contents of the coordinator's packet.
- C. Review the event guidelines and check to see that enough personnel have been scheduled.
- D. Inspect the area(s) in which the event is to be held for appropriate set-up, including room size, chairs, tables, outlets, etc. Notify the event manager of any potential problems.

- E. At least one (1) hour before the event is scheduled to begin, meet with judges to review time limits, procedures, regulations, evaluation, and all other details related to the event. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the event begins.

EVENT CHECK-IN

- A. Check in the contestants at the time stated in the conference program.
- B. Ensure that computer hardware is present and fully charged.
- C. Place an entry number on each USB flash drive.

ON-SITE CHALLENGE

- A. Begin the event at the scheduled time by closing the doors and checking the entry list.
- B. Late entries are considered on a case-by-case basis and only when the lateness is caused by circumstances beyond the participant's control.
- C. In order to compete, participants must be on the entry list or must have approval of the CRC.
- D. All participants should be in the room at this time. Participants registered but not present may be disqualified.
- E. Remind participants to:
 1. not use any identifying information other than the identification number, which must be centered directly below the title of the essay.
 2. leave a one inch (1") margin on all sides of the essay.
 3. single space their work using an 12pt Times New Roman font.
 4. submit only three (3) essay pages, plus a single page for references.
 5. save their work in a PDF format on a flash drive.
- F. Distribute both the prompt and the articles on a current technological topic to all participants. The prompt indicates the topic and instructions for composing an essay related to the articles.

- G. Instruct participants that those who finish before time is called must submit their work (on the flash drive) and leave quietly.
- H. Five (5) minutes before the two (2) hours is up, make an announcement that participants have five (5) minutes to complete their essay.
- I. Exactly two (2) hours after beginning, call time and collect the flash drives from participants.
- J. Supervise and assist the judges during the reading of the essays. Each entry must be read and evaluated independently.
- K. Decisions about rules violations must be discussed and verified with the judges, event coordinator, and CRC manager to determine either:
 - 1. To deduct twenty percent (20%) of the total possible points in this round or
 - 2. To disqualify the entryThe event coordinator, judges, and CRC manager must initial either of these actions on the rating form.
- L. Judges determine the ten (10) finalists and discuss and break any ties.
- M. Submit the finalist results and all related forms in the results envelope to the CRC room.
- N. Manage security and the removal of materials from the area.