



FAQS for Students

How does this work?

Your English 1 instructor will ask you if you would be willing to be entered into the contest. A panel of English and Library faculty will judge the essays. Winners will be notified and awarded prizes. Winning essays, with permission, will be archived.

Can I ask my teacher to submit my essay or can I submit it myself?

Your instructor will determine the qualifying essays. Students are not permitted to submit their own essays. If your instructor wants to submit your paper as a contest entry, s/he will give you a Student Submission Form to complete, sign, and return to him/her.

When will I find out if I win?

Each year's submission pool closes in June and the winners will be notified in August.

How will I find out if I win?

You will be notified via a letter sent to the permanent address on your submission form.

What happens if I win?

You (and your guests) will be invited to an informal award ceremony where you will be given your prize. Your essay will be archived.

Do I have to be here to win? What if I graduate / transfer / leave before June?

No. You do not have to be at Santa Monica College when winners are decided in order to win.

What will happen to my essay after I win? What if I don't win?

If your essay wins, it will be archived (with your permission, granted via the submission form). People, including future students in English 1, will be able to read it as an example of a truly outstanding essay. If your essay does not win, it will not be archived. All essay copies will remain with the panel of judges. Your copy will not be returned to you – so be sure to keep a copy of your own!

Will I know whom I am competing against?

No. All essays are anonymous.

Can I submit an essay from another class / Is this only for English 1?

This contest is only for argumentative research essays from English 1 classes. Essays from other departments or classes may not be submitted.

Do I have to pass the class to qualify? What if I have to withdraw or am deployed?

That decision will be made by your instructor based on circumstances and the quality of your work.

Will you know who I am?

No. All identifying information will be stripped from the essay and it will be anonymous.

Is the contest held at a particular place or a specific time?

The contest is held and the essays are judged over the entire year. The award ceremony and announcement of winners will be at the beginning of the next fall semester. Winners will be notified of the time and place of the ceremony.

Will I be able to revise my paper before my instructor submits it?

Except for minor corrections of spelling and grammar errors, no substantive revision is allowed. Your paper should be the same version that was submitted for grading.