

# Sons of the American Revolution

## George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest

### Rules

2020

The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) invites all high school students (9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades) interested in the American Revolution to participate in the George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest. The contest is open to all students attending home schools, public, parochial, or private high schools in that same grade range. While the preliminary rounds of the contest begin at the local level, students' compositions may eventually advance to the state or national levels, eventually held in June during the annual SAR Congress.

The Knight Essay Contest is designed to give students an opportunity to explore topics based on original research and deal with an event, person, philosophy, or ideal associated with the American Revolution. Each student's 800- to 1,200-word essay will be judged based upon its historical accuracy, clarity, organization, grammar and spelling, and documentation.

This contest is open to all students who are United States citizens or legal aliens. Applicants shall be attending public, parochial, or private high schools (including accredited home schools). Applicants shall be enrolled in the 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades during the contest year. The contest is conducted in three phases: the local (Chapter), state-level (Society), and national phases. The contest must be entered through an SAR chapter near the student's residence. In some cases, the contest may be entered at the state level (if the local society does not have chapters or the chapters are not participating). Only one entry per student is permitted per contest year. If the state-level society does not participate, then the essay may be submitted no later than 11:59 PM (Pacific Standard Time) on December 31 to the Judge-at-Large, Mr. V. Allen Gray, listed on the SAR website. The first place national winner is prohibited from participating in following years' contests.

**The local deadline date for the Knight Essay Contest varies by location, so please check online at <https://sar.org/education/youth-contests-awards/george-s-stella-m-knight-essay-contest> to locate your local contact and to request your local deadline information.**

The national chairman will notify all submitters by early April whether their entry was among the finalists. The actual winner will be informed in order to be able to attend the annual SAR Congress and read his or her essay at the Youth Awards Luncheon. The winning essay will also be published in the *SAR Magazine*.

The George S. & Stella M. Knight Essay Contest calls for an original researched and proven topic written in English. The topic of the essay shall deal with an event, person, philosophy, or ideal associated with the American Revolution; the Declaration of Independence; or the framing of the United States Constitution.

Students must source at least five references with the minimum of three being published works to allow for verification of sources if necessary. References from encyclopedias or the Internet will be accepted, but are not considered as part of the three published book sources. If there are no published references, the essay will be disqualified.

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The essay must have four parts: A.) title page, B.) essay pages, C.) bibliography or works cited, and D.) applicant's biography. The title page, bibliography, and applicant's biography must be listed on separate pages and no reference to the applicant's name or information can be part of the essay pages or bibliography. **Please follow these rules exactly. Essays that do not conform to the rules may be immediately disqualified.**

1.) The title or cover page must include the title of the essay, applicant's name, applicant's school grade level, home address, telephone number, and email address. In addition, the title page must include the name, address, and telephone number of the high school in which the applicant is enrolled, and the applicant's grade level. Additionally, the cover page must include the name, address, and telephone number of the school in which the contestant is enrolled along with a statement of how the applicant learned of the contest. If the entrant learned of the Knight Essay Contest through the Internet, include the URL of the website. This page is separated from the essay for judging purposes.

2.) The essay must have a minimum of 800 words and not exceed 1,200 words (excluding the title page, footnotes, bibliography page, and biography page). Word counts based on a word processor are acceptable. All contest entries must be submitted as PDF files attached to emails. Contest entries submitted in any other format will be disqualified. The first page of the essay must include the title of the essay. No applicant information of any kind must appear on these pages as the essays are separated and distributed to the judges for grading to prevent possible grading bias. The essay must be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font and double-spaced on white bond paper. Please use 8½" x 11" paper and 1-inch margins on all sides. The essay's pages, which shall include the bibliography page, must be sequentially numbered beginning with the first page of the essay as page 1. No contestant information may appear on the pages of the essay or bibliography. No bindings or special covers are allowed. Graphics are not permitted. An original copy of the essay must be submitted. Poor quality copies will not be accepted. Contest entries that do not conform exactly to these requirements will be disqualified. Plagiarism will be grounds for immediate disqualification.

3.) Citations in the essay and references in the bibliography must be documented in accordance with a widely used and publicly available citation system. Examples of a citation system include the Chicago Manual of Style, the MLA Manual of Style, the MHRA Style Guide, *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation*, and "Harvard referencing." The bibliography page must specify the system used. No contestant information may appear on the bibliography page(s).

4.) The applicant's biography is limited to one page and must include information regarding the contestant's academic awards and achievements, school activities, community activities, and plans for college.

This page is separated from the essay and bibliography for judging purposes. Entries must be submitted by the SAR chapter or society deadline. This is usually by December 31, though some have different deadlines. Please contact the chapter or society chairman to confirm the deadline and/or see the exceptions listed on the SAR contact page listed above.

Essays which meet the criteria above will be accepted and judged equally on the following criteria:

- A.) Historical accuracy
- B.) Clarity of thought

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C.) Organization and proven topic

D.) Grammar and spelling

E.) Documentation

Awards at the chapter and society levels may vary. Please contact the specific chairmen for more information. Awards at the national level are as follows:

First place: \$5,000; a medal and recognition certificate; up to \$500 toward travel expenses and one night hotel stay for the winner and a chaperone at the annual SAR Congress.

Second Place: \$2,500 and a recognition certificate

Third Place: \$1,000 and a recognition certificate

The winning essay of the national contest will be submitted for publication in the *SAR Magazine*. Participants in this contest agree that their essay may be published in the *SAR Magazine* and on the SAR Knight Essay Contest webpage. Winning essay participants, on all levels, may be required to supply a tax identification number in order to receive their award. By entering this contest, all participants agree that if their essay is chosen as the national winning essay, it will be the property of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). All participants further agree that the national winning essay may not be submitted to any other contest or used for any other purpose without the express permission of the national SAR Knight Essay Contest Chairman.

Applicants in the Knight Essay Contest agree that the interpretation of the rules and decisions of the National Chairman and its judges must govern without reservation and that decisions of the judges and/or the National Chairman are final and not subject to review.

Questions regarding specific rules may be directed to the national SAR Knight Essay Contest Chairman:

Mr. James M. Lindley

Email: [j.m.lindley@msn.com](mailto:j.m.lindley@msn.com)