



2025 – 2026

Fifth Grade Flag Essay Contest Rules

www.ialegion.org/flag-essay

General Information

The American Legion of Iowa Essay Contest aims to help elementary students develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for the **United States Flag**. The contest also helps students learn flag etiquette and respect. The application can be downloaded from the website: www.ialegion.org/flag-essay.

Awards

- **Local and District:** Awards, if any, are the responsibility of the individual post and district.
 - **Department (State):** Department finalists will be recognized as other youth champions and invited to read their essays at the Department Convention. The first, second, and third-place winners will also receive **\$500, \$300, and \$200**, respectively, from The American Legion of Iowa and the American Legion of Iowa Foundation.
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Contest Rules

Essays are judged in three stages:

1. **Local:** A local American Legion Post will judge essays and forward one winning entry to their District Children and Youth Chairperson. This entry, along with a signed application, must be **postmarked no later than January 5, 2026**.
2. **District:** The District Children and Youth Chairman will judge the entries and forward one winning essay and application to Department Headquarters. This must be **postmarked no later than January 22, 2026**. A list of district chairs is available at the website above.
3. **Department:** The nine district entries will be judged by the Department Children & Youth Committee at the Mid-Winter Conference.

Note: All sections of the application must be completed and all directions followed to be eligible. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.

Essay Format and Eligibility

- **Eligibility:** Contestants must be fifth-grade students enrolled in a public, parochial, military, private, or state home school. They must also be citizens or lawful permanent residents of the United States.
- **Essay Format:**
 - **Length:** One page, 300 words or less.
 - **Formatting:** Double-spaced with 12-point font.
 - **Content:** The essay must be the student's own work, reflect their perspective on what the U.S. Flag represents to them, and use facts from the United States Flag Code.
 - **Title/Name:** The essay must include a title and the student's name, which will not be part of the word count.

The American Legion of Iowa Fifth Grade Flag Essay Contest Participation Application

Section I – Elementary School & Parent or Guardian – All sections must be completed clearly

This is to certify that _____ is a student currently enrolled at

_____ Elementary School located in _____,

Iowa, and is not outstanding with any school work. The high school graduation year for this student is _____.

Is the above-named student a U.S. Citizen or Lawful Resident? ____ Yes ____ No Total # of School Contestants: _____

Principal's Signature

Teacher's Full Name - Printed

Parent's or Guardian's Name(s) - Printed

Parent's or Guardian's Email Address

Parent's or Guardian's Address

City

State

Zip

I hereby authorize the publication of my child's essay in any American Legion publication or by the news and social media for public relations purposes for The American Legion of Iowa.

Parent's or Guardian's Signature

Parent's or Guardian's Phone Number

Section II – Post Commander (or Officer if necessary)

To be completed by The American Legion Post Commander and then mailed to the District Children & Youth Chairman

This must be forwarded (mail or email) no later than **January 5, 2026**

I, _____, Commander of American Legion Post # _____, in the Department of Iowa, do hereby certify the above-named contestant an official contestant in the Fifth Grade Flag Essay Contest.

Post Commander's or Officer's Signature

Phone

Total # of Post Contestants

Section III – District Children & Youth Chairman and Commander

To be completed by the District Children & Youth Chairman and District Commander before forwarding to (mail or email) to

Department Headquarters no later than **January 22, 2026**

I, _____, Commander of District _____ in The American Legion of Iowa, do hereby certify the above-named contestant was declared by the District Children & Youth Chairman as the winner, and is therefore eligible to represent the district at Department judging. **There was a total of _____ District Contestants.**

District Chairman's (C&Y or Americanism) Signature

District Commander's Signature