

“Votes for Women: 1920-2020” Essay Contest

RULES for Essay Contest

The “Votes for Women: 1920-2020” Essay Contest is being sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Southwestern Indiana (“LWVSWIN”) to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the formation of the League of Women Voters and the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920. Rules and Entry Form also at: www.lwvswin.org

ESSAY TOPIC

Introduction: We think of the United States as being a representative democracy where citizens participate in the democratic process by voting for local, state, and federal government officials who then represent the people and work on their behalf. However, our history reveals conflicting opinions about who should have the right to vote. Prior to the 19th Amendment, women were not allowed to vote; in fact, some were jailed when they tried. Prior to the 15th Amendment, black men were excluded from voting – sometimes in violent ways. Opinions about who should be allowed to vote can also be implied from circumstances such as when the location of polling places are more conveniently located for some populations than for others who are then less likely to vote. This is just one example of a voter suppression tactic.*

ESSAY TOPIC: Respond to ONE of the following questions as the **topic of your essay**:

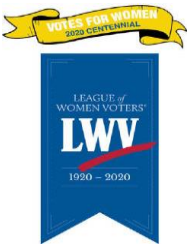
1. Should there be restrictions on who is allowed to vote in federal elections in the United States? If so, what restrictions and why? If not, then why not? Expound.
2. Do you think voter suppression threatens democracy or is it a legitimate political tactic? Expound.
3. Do you think the voting process could be made easier? Expound.

Your essay does not have to be exhaustive. Chose an aspect/s you consider most interesting or most important and write about that/those. Extensive research is not required; however, some background reading is encouraged. Express your personal ideas, opinions, and conclusions. If you quote someone or use someone else’s idea – give them credit within your essay or in a footnote. Formal style is not required. See the below rules for formatting and other details.

*Resource: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/318833/the-womans-hour-by-elaine-weiss/9780143128991/readers-guide/>

ELIGIBILITY

- Only essays that meet the requirements of the Rules for this Essay Contest will be considered.
- A contestant must be currently enrolled (Fall 2019 semester) as a student attending a high school located within Vanderburgh County or Warrick County, Indiana.
- Essays must be the original work of the contestant with any quotations identified with appropriate quotation marks and attribution for the quotation noted within the essay or as a footnote.
- The essay and a signed Entry Form must be postmarked or delivered by **Wednesday, November 6, 2019**.



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WINNERS and WINNING ENTRIES

- Up to three (3) winners will be chosen.
- Winners will be recognized at the League of Women Voters “Votes for Women: 1920-2020” Event.
- Names of winners and essay titles will be released to the media.
- Winners will receive a cash prize of \$200 each.
- Winners will receive up to 6 tickets to the “Meet the Author” reception following the February 2020 event and a copy of The Woman’s Hour by Elaine Weiss.
- Winning essays will be published by the League of Women Voters of Southwestern Indiana on its website and may be published in printed program and/or other publication.

All winning entries become the property of the League of Women Voters of Southwestern Indiana and may be published (orally, printed, digitally) in whole or in part by or with the permission of the League of Women Voters of Southwestern Indiana. A digital copy of winning entries may be requested. No entries will be returned.

ESSAY FORMAT & GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The title of the essay must appear both as the heading of the essay and on the Entry Form.

- Essays must be:
 - Written in the English language and in paragraph form;
 - Between 375-800 words in length;
 - Typed, double spaced, and use 12-point font (Calibri, Arial (standard), or Times New Roman);
 - Formatted to have all margins (left, right, top, and bottom) set at one inch (1”) wide.
- The topic must be addressed, but the contestant may narrow, broaden, or choose an aspect of the topic for the essay. See “Essay Topic” information above.
- No one position, approach, or opinion is expected; however, the essay must be respectful of any alternative positions.
- Writing must demonstrate critical and creative thinking. It should be organized and concise.
- Content must include relevant, well-supported, authentic information.
- Grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation must meet Indiana high school academic standards.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS - DEADLINE is November 6, 2019

Essay submissions must be postmarked or delivered on or before

Wednesday, November 6, 2019, 12:00 Midnight

Two (2) copies of the essay should be mailed **with a completed and signed** (by the student *and* by a parent or guardian) **Entry Form** in prepaid first-class U.S. Mail to: League of Women Voters of Southwestern Indiana
Attention: Essay Contest
P. O. Box 4456
Evansville, IN 47724

If student doesn’t have funds for postage, contact Lezlie Simmons.

Exception: Classroom teachers *only* may hand deliver submissions. Exceptions to the mailing requirement may be made in the event a classroom teacher elects to gather and submit 1 or more student essays by arrangement with the LWVSWIN contact person listed below who will pick-up at the school. This is strictly at the option of an individual teacher.

Contact Person: Lezlie Simmons (812) 437-9320 or slezlie@hotmail.com