



American History

2023-2024

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American History Essay Contest

2023-2024 Essay Title: "The Stars and Stripes Forever"

Topic for 2023-2024

On May 14, 1897, John Philip Sousa played his new march, "**The Stars and Stripes Forever.**" This song would become the national march of the United States on December 11, 1987. Imagine it is 1897 and you are a newspaper reporter for *The Philadelphia Times*. Your newspaper editor has asked you to write an article about the new song performed that day. Your article needs to tell about Sousa's life and the story behind the song. It is the first performance of the song, so make sure your article includes thoughts about the music and how the audience reacts to what was seen and heard that day.

Title of Essay: **Stars & Stripes Forever**

Open to Grades 5–8

Length 300-1,000 words (depending on grade level, please check forms)

Chapters are encouraged to contact their schools, community libraries, church and youth organizations early about participating. Chapters may reach out to students in the community and do not need to go through just the schools. Please stay within the state of your chapter in encouraging students to participate.

One essay at each grade level is selected as the chapter winner. The winner's essay, title sheet found in forms, and three judges sheets also found in forms, should be emailed to the State Chairman American History for state competition.

Deadlines

State chairs send winning essays to division vice chairmen, to be received by February 15th. Division vice chairs send division winners to the national vice chairs, to be received by March 15th for the judging process.:

WV DEADLINE: MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE STATE CHAIR BEFORE JANUARY 8, 2024

Awards and Recognition

- Chapters may award a Bronze Medal to the chapter winners in each grade, plus a Chapter Winner Certificate. Chapters may also elect to award all participants a Certificate of Participation, available at the [DAR Store](#).
- States award a Silver Medal to the state winner in each grade, plus a State Winner Certificate, and other state-approved awards.
- Division Winners (one in each grade level) receive a Division Winner Certificate.
- National Winners (one in each grade level) receive a National Winner Certificate, gold pin, and monetary award presented at Continental Congress. Winning essays may appear in official DAR communications. National second and third place winners (one in each grade level), will receive a certificate and a monetary award.
- Contact your State Chair of the American History Committee for deadlines and address information for the American History Essay Contest.
- Detailed instructions and forms can be found in the NIP and on the American History Committee webpage under "American History Essay Contest" and "Forms".

Patriots of the American Revolution

Chapters are encouraged to promote and conduct the Patriots of the American Revolution DAR History Essay Contest. All grade 9, 10, 11, and 12 students in a public, private, or parochial school, and those who are home schooled are eligible. This contest is conducted without regard to race, religion, sex, or nation.

Topic: Select a figure from the era of the American Revolution (1773-1783). Discuss how he or she influenced the course of the American Revolution, who he or she was and his/her contribution to the founding of a new nation. Figures may be any person, whether a well-known figure or an everyday man, woman, or child who supported the American Revolution in ways large or small.

Students are encouraged to use primary sources (i.e., immediate, first-hand accounts such as letters, diaries, speeches, or newspaper reports) for their research. Lesser well-known figures are acceptable, but subjects must have been actual participants, i.e. not fictionalized.

One chapter winning essay is submitted to state chairs of American History; state winners are forwarded to the division vice chairs for judging; division winners are forwarded to the National Vice Chair for the Patriots of the American Revolution Essay. First, second, and third place

winners are selected. New forms will be available in the [Forms](#) section of the DAR Members' Website when the NIP is published.

Deadlines

State chairs send winning essays to division vice chairmen, to be received by February 15th. Division vice chairs send division winners to the national vice chairs, to be received by March 15th for the judging process.

WV DEADLINE: MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE STATE CHAIR BEFORE JANUARY 8, 2024

Awards and Recognition

- Chapters may award each participant in the Patriots of the American Revolution DAR High School Essay Contest, a Patriots of the American Revolution Essay Participation Certificate, available for purchase through the [DAR store](#).
- Chapters select one essay as the chapter winner. Chapters may award a chapter winner the certificate/bronze medal set, which is available for sale through the [DAR store](#). Chapters may also use their discretion to honor the chapter winner in other ways.
- At the State level, one Patriots of the American Revolution essay is selected, and a State level winner certificate/silver medal set is presented, which is available for sale through the [DAR store](#). States may use their discretion to honor the State winner in other ways.
- One Division Winner from each division will receive a Division Winner Certificate. First, second, and third place National winners are selected after judging at the national level. The National Winner will receive a National Winner Certificate, pin, and monetary award presented at Continental Congress. The winning essay may appear in official DAR communications. National second and third place winners will receive a certificate and monetary award.

Reading Resources

Contact your State Chair of the American History Committee for deadlines and address information for the Patriots of the American Revolution High School Essay Contest.

Detailed instructions and forms can be found in the [NIP](#).

Women in American History

The emphasis of Women in American History is on the role of women, past and present, in American History. Chapters are encouraged to select a notable woman from their state or

community to honor. March is officially “Women’s History Month,” so chapters may wish to use this occasion to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of the woman of their choice.

Chapters are encouraged to choose a woman to honor for this recognition by taking into consideration women who have made a contribution or a difference in their communities. She could be a historical entity or currently alive and worthy of recognition. Look for women who are, or have been, intellectual, educational, social, religious, political, scientific, or cultural innovators. The woman or women being honored may be DAR members, prospective DAR members, or non-members. You may select more than one woman to honor.

WV was able to honor several wonderful women last year. I can’t wait to see who all we enter this year!

Excellence in American History

Chapters may recognize an outstanding student of American History (separate from participation in one of the American History Essay Contest or the Patriots of the American Revolution DAR Essay Contest) through the presentation of a certificate of award and/or a bronze medal. The Chapter may determine eligibility and criteria for this award for any student in any grade.

Stars & Stripes newsletter

Let’s twinkle for the Red, White, and Blue! Chapters can **Celebrate Stars & Stripes Forever** by sharing items of interest as it relates to American History. We can learn from each other and spotlight chapters and members in their work in American History! Photos are encouraged!