VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

2020-2021 Theme

"Is This the Country the Founders Envisioned?"

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2020

Patriotic Audio Essay Competition Grand Prize: $30,000 Award

What Is The Voice of Democracy Program?

Since 1947, the Voice of Democracy has been the Veterans of Foreign Wars' (VFW's) premier scholarship program. Each year, nearly 57,000 high school students compete for more than $2 million in scholarships and incentives. Students compete by writing and recording an audio essay on an annual patriotic theme. This year's theme is, **Is This the Country the Founders Envisioned**?

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, state and national level.

The Rules

Who can enter?

The Voice of Democracy is open to students in grades 9-12 by the Oct. 31 deadline, who are enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or over, previous Voice of Democracy first place state winners, GED or Adult Education Students are ineligible.

What do I need to enter?

Record your original 3-5 minute (+ or – 5 seconds max.) essay on an audio CD or a flash drive. One student per CD or flash drive. When burning your CD, make sure that "Create Audio CD" option (or similar) is selected so the program can properly convert your sound file and burn it to CD. After it has finished, be sure to play back your audio CD on a system other than your computer, such as a standard radio or car CD player, to verify that the conversion/burning process was successful. You will submit the recording, typed essay and this completed entry form. Provide these items to your school/group competition or local VFW Post for judging. In addition you can submit your emailed entry form, essay, and audio file to the VFW Post upon approval. You must be the sole author of your essay. The recording must be in your own voice and in English. Hearing/speech impaired students should email the Voice of Democracy National Office at youthscholarships@vfw.org for special instructions. No music, singing, poetry or sound effects are allowed. The body of the essay must not identify you in any way, (including, but not limited to, your name, school, city, state, race or national origin) although the recording & typed essay should be labeled with your name, to show ownership. You may enter only one competition at one Post (if otherwise eligible) per year. At any time during the contest, additional participant personal information could be requested by the VFW, including but not limited to a photograph, SSN or biographical information.

2020-21 Official Entry Form
Voice of Democracy Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

_____

Name: First, M.I., Last

_____

Address

_____

City, State, Zip

( )_____ _____

Phone **Email**

_____ _____ _____

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy) **Grade in School** **Age**

_____

School Name, City, State

_____

Teacher's name and Email (if applicable)

To Be Completed by Student's Parent/Guardian
(required even if student is 18 or over)

_____

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

_____

Parent/Guardian Signature **Date**

( ) _____

Parent/Guardian's Daytime Phone

_____

Parent/Guardian's Email

I Have Read and Understand the D.C. National Finals Rules (On Opposite Side)

I certify that I am the sole author of the enclosed audio/essay entry and that I have only entered the competition once yearly if otherwise eligible.
I understand that if it is found that I have entered any other Post's competition or used this essay for another VFW competition, I face elimination from the competition and will return any and all prizes or incentives awarded.

_____

Signature of Student Participant **Date**

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

2020 - 2021 Theme

"Is This the Country the Founders Envisioned?"

Student Entry Deadline: October 31, 2020

Official Rules for Students Advancing to National Level

In the event my audio essay is selected for entry into the National Voice of Democracy Competition, I do hereby for myself, for my heirs, executors, administrators and assignees; waive, release and discharge all rights and claims which I have or which may hereafter accrue against the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and/or the several Departments (state organizations) of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and their respective officers, agents, successors and assigns from any damages which may be sustained by me in connection with my participation in or association with the VFW Voice of Democracy Competition and/or arising out of my travel to and during the Competition. In the event of sickness, accident or injury in connection with the Competition, I consent to and accept the services of a duly licensed medical, surgical or dental specialist selected on my behalf and for such treatments, as they may deem necessary. I understand that VFW will not be liable for such treatment. I further understand that the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States retains non-exclusive rights to use my tape, essay and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

To Be Completed by the VFW Post

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post level Voice of Democracy Competition.

_____

Post Commander's/Chairman's Signature **Post #**

_____

VFW Auxiliary President's/Chairman's Signature (if applicable)

_____

Post Address

_____

City, State, Zip

_____

VFW Post Email

No. of students participating _____

No. of winners advanced to District _____

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarship awards $ _____

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (banquet, pins, etc.) $ _____

To Be Completed by the VFW District

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Voice of Democracy Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Department finals.

_____

District Chairman's Signature **Dist. #**

_____

Address

_____

City, State, Zip

( ) _____ _____

Phone **Email**

To Be Completed by the VFW Department Chairman

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected first-place winner of the Voice of Democracy Department Competition, is our sole entry into the National Judging.

_____

Department Chairman's Signature

( ) _____ _____

Daytime Phone **Email**

The winner❍ has been ❍will be (check one) notified that they are the first-place Department winner on _____.

Where Do I Submit My Entry?

All entries begin at the local VFW Post level. The only exception is where schools/classes/youth groups have large numbers of students and wish to conduct their own competition, submitting one winner for each 15 students to the local VFW Post. Individual students may submit their entry directly to the Post. This VFW Post should be within your local area and within your U.S. state of residence. Entries sent to VFW National will be returned. One winner for every 15 entries from each Post advances to District and one District winner advances to the state (Department) competition. If you need help finding a participating VFW Post in your area, follow these instructions: First, visit this website **vfw.org/FindaPost** to "Find A VFW Post." Be sure this Post is within the state you reside in. If you do not have success in finding a Post, or if you have trouble getting in touch with them, you can contact your VFW Department (state) office to see if they can offer any information or assistance. You can visit this link **vfw.org/ContactUs** and look for "Find a State Contact" to get your VFW state office's phone number and email. If you still need assistance, please email us at VFW National Headquarters at **youthscholarships@vfw.org**

What Is the Deadline for My Entry?

All entries competing at the Post level must be in the hands of that VFW Post by midnight, **Oct. 31, 2020.** It is the responsibility of the student to meet this deadline by submitting their entry to the proper location by ensuring it is a participating Post.

What Are the Judging Criteria?

Originality is worth 30 points:
Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest.

Content is worth 35 points:
Clearly express your ideas in an organized manner. Fully develop your theme and use transitions to move smoothly from one idea to another.

Delivery is worth 35 points:
Speak in a clear and credible manner.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) has again approved this contest for its National Advisory List of Contests and Activities.

Twisted X Brands
A Proud Sponsor

VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

For assistance contact:
816.756.3390 ext. 6155
Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org
vfw.org

Revised 3/2020

LOCAL VFW POST INFORMATION:

CONTACT: _____

_____

PHONE: _____ **BEST TIME TO CALL:** _____

ALTERNATE CONTACT: _____

_____

PHONE: _____ **BEST TIME TO CALL:** _____