

Job Responsibilities

Club decides to hold a scholarship contest

Print Essay Contest Program Planning Guide off the Publications page of the Optimist International website

Appoint a Club Contest Chair

Contact District Essay Chair to discuss rules and contest procedures. If you do not know who the District Chair is, look in the District directory. If they are not listed, contact the District Governor or Optimist International.

Ask District Chair if there is an entry fee for Clubs to submit a winner to the District level contest.

Create proposed budget for activity.

Determine deadline for all essays to be received (should be no later than early February)

Check with District Chair any time questions arise

Purchase Essay contest medallions and participation certificates from Shumsky or the Canadian Service Centre

Decide whether the Club will offer a monetary award (scholarship, savings bond or cash) If the Club decides to present cash or savings bond awards to student winners, they should first consult with the association for their state or province that coordinates scholastic activities and competitions to determine if such payments would result in the recipient's forfeiture of amateur status. If a student loses their amateur status, they may be unable to compete in collegiate athletics and activities. If you need assistance, ask a local English teacher or Debate coach if they can direct you to the appropriate organization.

Secure 3 judges for event. Some possibilities include a reporter, lawyer, judge, editor, author, teacher (not from a participant's school) or politician.

Find a back-up judge to be used in case of an emergency.

Give the judges a copy of the rules and membership information to familiarize them with the organization. (see Essay Contest Program Planning Guide)

Purchase contest posters and rule pads from Shumsky. These items will promote the contest and encourage students to enter.

Clubs can also create their own posters.

Contact local schools and provide details about the contest. Ask for permission to hang a poster and rule pad in the school.

Contact English teachers and ask them to make the essay entry part of their curriculum. This will ensure a good number of entries.

Contact the local newspaper and ask them to include contest details in their community calendar section.

Send press release to local media outlets – newspapers, radio and TV stations.

Contact the Department of Education and ask for a contact name for local home-schooled students.

Contact the local PTA/PTO President to distribute information to parents at a meeting.

Contact local bookstores, libraries, coffeehouses, rec centers and places where young people spend time and ask if they will display information about the contest.

Contact local youth Clubs, such as Boy/Girl Scouts, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and JOOI.

Make sure to ask all participants to submit a copy of the birth certificate with their entry. Verify that each participant under the age of 19 as of December 31st of the current school year.

Review entries for obvious violations of the rules. If an entry violates the rules so much that the Chair feels it is not worthy of judging, the Chair may disqualify it from the competition. (see rules in the Essay Contest Program Planning Guide)

Each essay should be assigned a number by the Chair. The number should be written on the title page and the first page of the essay. Then the title page should be removed from the essay. The Chair should keep all the title pages. Judges should never see the title pages.

Optional – Confirm the total number of word in each essay. Remember that the material in the text of the essay is counted; footnotes are not counted. If the student's word count is not correct, note the correct total on a list. This will cut down some of the time it takes the judges to complete their work.

Give each of the judges a copy of the judging forms. (included in Essay Contest Program Planning Guide)

Meet or call each of the judges to make sure they understand the judging procedures.

The judging can be handled in either of the following ways:

All three judges meet and evaluate the essays and submit their completed judging forms to the Club Essay Chair. You will need to find and secure a location for the judges to meet and work.

Or

Each judge is sent a packet with copies of the essays to evaluate. They return the essays and completed judging sheets to a set date to the Club Essay Chair.

Judges should never compare scores or comments on the essay entries.

If the Club Chair feels there was an oversight, he/she should contact the judge directly to discuss the matter. Contest Chairs cannot change the judges' scores or evaluations!

Present the judges with a certificate of appreciation or small gift to show the Club's appreciation of their work. Invite them to the next Club meeting and activity.

Reattach title pages to the essay entries.

The Chair should use the Master Score Sheet (page 13 of the Essay Contest Program Planning Guide) to determine the winner of the contest.

- Enter the points allotted to the various entries by each of the judges on the scoresheet.
- After totaling the points for each entry in the total column, rank the entries in the rank column. If no ties occur, the winner can easily be determined.
- In the case of a tie, the entry scoring the largest number of points in Category 1 shall be declared the winner. If a tie still exists, each succeeding category should be considered the tie-breaker.
- If a tie exists through category 5, the tied essays should be resubmitted to the judges for a second judging.
-

Announce the first, second and third place winners to the Club and local media. Invite the media and parents to the awards presentation. Invite the winners read their essays. Present medallions and monetary awards to the winners. Take photos! This could take place at a Club meeting or special event.

Notify all participants of the winners of the contests.

Return all non-winning essays to the authors. Keep the first place essay to submit to the District.

Give the first place winner details about the next level of competition

Make sure all invoices are paid.

Do a club evaluation of the project to determine the success of the project. Is this something the Club will do again?

Complete Evaluation form (sample included, form on-line) and send to either

Optimist International

4494 Lindell Blvd.

St. Louis, MO 63108

Or

Optimist International Canada

4559 boul Métropolitain est

St-Léonard, QC H1R1Z4 Canada

Fill out the District Essay Contest Entry Form (page 15 of the Essay Contest Program Planning Guide). The form must be signed by the student, Club President and Club Essay Chair.

Send the District Essay Contest Entry Form (page 15 of the Essay Program Planning Guide), birth certificate, winning essay (with attached title page) and entry fee (if applicable) **to the District Essay Chair no later than February 28th!**