# Essay Contest Judging Rubric

Name of Student: _________________________________________________________  
School: _________________________________________________________________

For each criterion listed, score the essay on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the best score. Use a separate form for each essay. Do not score in decimals or fractions – whole numbers only.  
5=Excellent  4=Above Average  3=Average  2=Below Average  1=Poor/Incomplete

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding of the topic</strong>: To what extent did the writer demonstrate a clear understanding of the question and respond with details about his/her experience?</td>
<td>In-depth understanding: key concepts related to the question and the story are identified and fully defined; excellent use of literary techniques such as comparison and contrast</td>
<td>Key concepts related to the question and the story are adequately identified and defined; average use of literary techniques to describe viewpoints</td>
<td>Key concepts are partially identified and defined; statement that viewpoints exist but little use of supporting details</td>
<td>Some concepts are identified but not defined; lack of reference to any viewpoints</td>
<td>Complete lack of reference to the question and the story; irrelevant information; unsupported statements, incomplete details</td>
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<td><strong>Original thinking relative to the topic</strong>: To what extent was the original thinking relative to the subject?</td>
<td>Fully, relative to the topic</td>
<td>Mostly relative to the topic without errors</td>
<td>Partially relative with minor errors</td>
<td>Somewhat relative with significant errors</td>
<td>Not relative to the topic at all</td>
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<td><strong>Effectiveness in presenting a point-of-view</strong>: To what extent did the writer present his/her point of view?</td>
<td>Point-of-view fully presented and supported by many facts</td>
<td>Point-of-view presented and supported with some facts</td>
<td>Point-of-view expressed but limited use of factual information</td>
<td>Point-of-view presented without use of supporting facts/opinion only</td>
<td>Facts are inaccurate</td>
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| **Literary style, grammar and spelling** | Literary style completely clear and effective, excellent grammar and spelling  
Varied sentence structure, essay well developed and cohesive | Literary style partially clear and effective, good grammar & spelling  
Sentence structure somewhat varied; essay well developed and cohesive | Use of literary technique to convey main ideas but lacking clarity  
Sentence structure lacks variety but essay mostly developed | Lacks use of literary technique  
Many errors in grammar and spelling | Irrelevant and/or erroneous information, main ideas unclear, illegible, grammar and spelling errors consistent throughout essay |

Judge: _____________________________________________________________  
Total Score: ______