



**Official Topic: "I Want To Make A Difference because. . ."**

## Essay Contest Rules

Each contestant must be given a copy of the rules and complete the entry form. The rules contain information about the contest, judging and awards.

### Section I - General Rules

1. The Optimist International Essay Contest is divided into three levels of competition: Club, District and International.
2. Contestants must enter through a local Optimist Club.
3. Contestants must compose an original essay with limited guidance from others. Webster's Dictionary defines an essay as an analytic or interpretive literary composition. Works of fiction or poetry will not be accepted.
4. All District-level contests must have a minimum of 3 contestants participating.
5. Optimist International will have the right to edit, publish or otherwise duplicate any essay entered into the contest without payment to the author.

### Section II - Qualifications for Contestants

1. The contest is open to students under age 19 as of December 31st of the 2006-2007 school year. (December 31, 2006) Students must enter in the District in which they reside. U.S. students attending school on a military installation outside the United States are eligible to enter in their last home of record. Students residing in non-Districted areas are not eligible.
2. Contestants are eligible for only one Club's essay contest during any given year. (October 1st - September 30th)
3. No individual having previously won an Essay scholarship will be eligible to compete at any level of the competition again.

### Section III - Contest Rules

1. Each contestant must be given a copy of the rules and must complete the entry form. The rules contain information about the contest, judging and awards.
2. Participants must write on the official topic. The official topic must be listed with the total number of words at the top of the first page of the manuscript. (Deduction of 2 points for lack of topic and 5 points for each 25 words over/under limit)
3. Each entry must begin with a title page containing: topic, number of words, writer's name, address, phone number, name of school and date of birth. (Deduction of 5 points for incorrect total of words)
4. Essays must be type-written and double-spaced. (Deduction of 5 points)
5. Essays must contain at least 400 words but no more than 500 words. Every word of the essay is counted. This does not include the title, bibliography or footnotes.
6. Each page of the essay must be numbered starting with the first page of the essay, not the title page. The numbers must be centered at the bottom of each page.
7. Any quotations or copyrighted material used in the essay must be identified properly. For example, use of a specific writer's format (such as MLA) may be specified by the instructor overseeing the contest. Failure to identify non-original material will result in disqualification.
8. No reference can be made in the essay that identifies the student, parents, school, community, sponsoring Optimist Club or District. (Deduction of 5 points or fraction based on degree of identification)
9. An essay may be written in either English, French, or Spanish if the language used is an official language of the country in which the sponsoring Club is located.
10. The entry must be stapled together in the upper left-hand corner. Covers of any type are not accepted.
11. Any protest in the conduct of any Club or District contest must be made immediately. The Essay Contest Chair will decide all protests

in conformity with the contest rules. The decision of the Contest Chair is final, and no higher appeals will be recognized.

### Section IV – Judging and Timing

1. Judging will be completed by a panel of three **non-Optimist** qualified judges.
2. In an effort to conceal the identity of each contestant, each entry will be assigned a number by the Essay Contest Chair. The assigned number will be placed on the title page and first page of the essay. The title page will then be detached and retained by the Essay Contest Chair. The judges will be given the essays bearing only the assigned numbers.
3. Judges will not discuss or compare essays being judged. 4. Only judges can assign a penalty or award points.

### Section V – Scoring of Contest

Scoring procedures at all levels of the contest will be identical.

1. Material Organization (Logical interpretation of the subject, adherence to topic): 40 points
2. Vocabulary and Style (Phrasing and continuity): 30 points
3. Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling: 20 points
4. Neatness: 5 points
5. Adherence to contest rules (prepared in the proper format): 5 points

### Section VI – Penalties

1. Failure to list official topic: 2 points
2. Failure to identify total number of words: 5 points
3. Failure to stay within the 400-500 word limit: 5 points for each 25 words over/under limit
4. Self-identification: 5 points or fraction based on degree
5. Failure to type essay and double-space: 5 points

### Section VII - Awards

Only Optimist International awards obtained from Shumsky Enterprises or the Canadian Service Centre are to be given at all Club and District level contests.

1. Club level - medallion
2. District level - plaque and a \$650 college scholarship for the first place winner
3. International level -  
**First-place:** \$6,000 college scholarship, winner's plaque  
**Second-place:** \$3,750 college scholarship, winner's plaque  
**Third-place:** \$2,250 college scholarship, winner's plaque
  - A. Scholarships are funded by the Optimist International Foundations of the United States and Canada.
  - B. Scholarships awarded are for use only at a college, university, or trade school.
  - C. All scholarships will be payable to the educational institution of the recipient's choice, subject to the approval of Optimist International.
  - D. All scholarships will be administered by Optimist International.
  - E. Scholarships are held for 12 years from the effective date.

**For more information contact:**

**Gardena Evening Optimist Club  
Essay Chairman John Ing  
at  
[info@gardenaoptimist.org](mailto:info@gardenaoptimist.org)**



# Application for 2006-2007 Optimist International Essay Contest



Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring Optimist Club Name & No. **GARDENA EVENING OPTIMIST CLUB 14310**

Essay Chair's Name **JOHN ING**

Optimist Club Email [info@gardenaoptimist.org](mailto:info@gardenaoptimist.org)