



2019 Illinois Essay Contest

For students in Grades 6 through 12
*Any Lutheran student or student in a
Lutheran school is eligible*

Contest Guidelines

1. Students will write a life-affirming essay based on the 2019 Conference theme: "**Did God Really Say...?**" and Conference bible verse: "*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.*" *John 6:68*
2. Examples of topics the essay could deal with are, but not limited to: abortion, the handicapped, infanticide, cloning, stem cell research, physician assisted suicide or euthanasia.
3. The Lutherans For Life mission statement is "Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life". All essays must focus on the 2019 Conference Theme above, the Conference Bible verse above and the LFL mission statement. The enclosed rubric, FOCUS section, explains this further.
4. The teacher (or Pastor in the case of a Lutheran student not in a Lutheran school) will determine the top essay and submit only one essay for each of the age categories below. The enclosed rubric illustrates what will be used to assess the essays to determine a winner.
5. The student's name, Church/School, grade level, address, and email address must appear on the essay. In addition, the teacher's (or Pastor's) name, address, phone number, and email address must also be submitted with the essay on a separate page.
6. All sources for references, statistics and quotes should be incorporated within the essay and then included in a bibliography at the end.
7. Students in grades 6-8 should submit essays up to 400 words while students in grades 9-12 should submit essays no longer than 750 words.
8. Essays and the Teacher/Pastor information should be submitted digitally using Microsoft Word to cybersandyg@hotmail.com by March 15, 2019. All entries become the property of Lutherans For Life.
9. There will be a \$100 award for the first place essay in each of the two categories at the State of Illinois level, \$75 for the second place essay, and \$50 for the third place essay. Only the first place essay from each of the two categories will advance to the national contest.
10. Grand Prize for the national contest winning entry at each level is \$250 plus free conference registration to a 2019 Regional Conference and one night stay at the conference hotel.
11. For more information, contact Sandy Goss at cybersandyg@hotmail.com.
12. For access to resources on the sanctity of life, visit www.lutheransforlife.org.

Rubric for Assessment of the Life Essay

(maximum of 21 points for each essay)

	3	2	1	0
ORGANIZATION Structure Transitions	Logical progression of ideas with a clear structure that enhances the thesis. Transitions are mature and graceful. The essay has a nice smooth flow between ideas.	Logical progression of ideas. Transitions are present equally throughout essay. The essay has a flow of ideas.	Organization is clear. Transitions are present in some places but may be missing in others. In places flow is interrupted or doesn't exist.	No discernable organization. Transitions are not present. Connections between ideas seem confusing or incomplete.
INTRODUCTION Background/History Thesis Statement CONCLUSION	Well-developed introduction engages the reader-creates interest. Contains detailed background information. Thesis clearly states a significant and compelling position or belief. Conclusion effectively wraps up & goes beyond restating the thesis.	Introduction creates interest. Sufficient background information is provided. Thesis clearly states the position or belief. Conclusion effectively summarizes topics.	Introduction adequately explains the background, but may lack detail. Thesis states the position or belief. Conclusion is recognizable and ties up almost all loose ends.	Background details are a random collection of information, unclear, or not related to the topic. Thesis is vague or unclear. Conclusion does not summarize main points.
MAIN POINTS Body Paragraphs, Bibliography	The main idea or thesis statement is clearly defined. There may be more than one key point. Appropriate relevant information and details are shared from a variety of sources including personal experiences, observations, feelings and prior knowledge. Supporting details are accurate, relevant, and helpful in clarifying the main idea(s). Statistics or research are used effectively. A simple bibliography gives the references for the resources used.	The main idea can be identified. The writer shares relevant information, facts and experiences. There is a clear distinction between general observations and specifics. Supporting details are relevant and explain the main idea. Research is evident and statistics are used. Missing information in bibliography.	The main idea can be identified. The writer shares some information, facts and experiences, but may express feelings without much to substantiate it. There may be problems going from general observations to specifics. Stronger support and greater attention to details would strengthen this paper. Statistics and research do little to help support the main idea. Incomplete bibliography.	More than one of the following problems may be evident: The main idea is not identifiable. The writer shares some information, but it is limited or unclear. Details are missing or repetitious. Statistics are missing. No bibliography.
FOCUS LFL Mission, Conference theme verse	The paper is in complete agreement with the mission of Lutherans for Life and focuses on the conference theme verse.	The paper is in agreement with the mission of Lutherans for Life and somewhat focuses on the conference theme verse.	The paper doesn't completely agree with the mission of Lutherans For Life and touches on the conference theme verse.	Little or no effort has been made to address the mission of Lutherans For Life and doesn't focus on the conference theme verse.
BIBLICAL ACCURACY	Several Biblical references give strong support for the main idea and are a natural part of the essay. Verses used are interpreted accurately. Citations are accurate.	Biblical references are used to support the main idea. Verses used are interpreted accurately. Citations are accurate.	There are places where a Biblical reference would have helped support the main idea. There are some problems with interpretation of the verses used. Citations are accurate.	Little effort is given to use Biblical references to support the main idea. Problems exist in the interpretation of the verses and their citations.
STYLE Writer's Voice, Audience Awareness	The paper is honest and enthusiastic. The language is natural yet thought-provoking. It brings the topic to life. The reader feels a strong sense of interaction with the writer and senses the person behind the words. Writing is smooth, skillful, and coherent. Sentences are strong and expressive with varied structure.	Writer's voice is consistent and strong. The writer is aware of an audience. The reader is informed and remains engaged. Sentences have varied structure.	Writer's voice may emerge strongly on occasion, then retreat behind general, vague, tentative, or abstract language. The writer is aware of an audience. The reader is informed, but must work at remaining engaged. Sentence structure shows some variety.	Writing is confusing, hard to follow. Language is vague. No audience awareness. No variety in sentence structure.
MECHANICS Spelling, punctuation, capitalization	Punctuation, spelling, capitalizations are correct. No errors.	Punctuation, spelling, capitalizations are generally correct, with few errors. (1-2)	A few errors in punctuation, spelling, capitalization. (3-4)	Distracting errors in punctuation, spelling, capitalization

	POINTS
ORGANIZATION	
INTRODUCTION/CONCLUSION	
MAIN POINTS	
FOCUS	
BIBLICAL ACCURACY	
STYLE	
MECHANICS	
TOTAL POINTS	

Students Name _____

Church/School _____ Grade _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Student Email Address _____

Phone Number _____

Teacher/Pastor _____ Email _____