



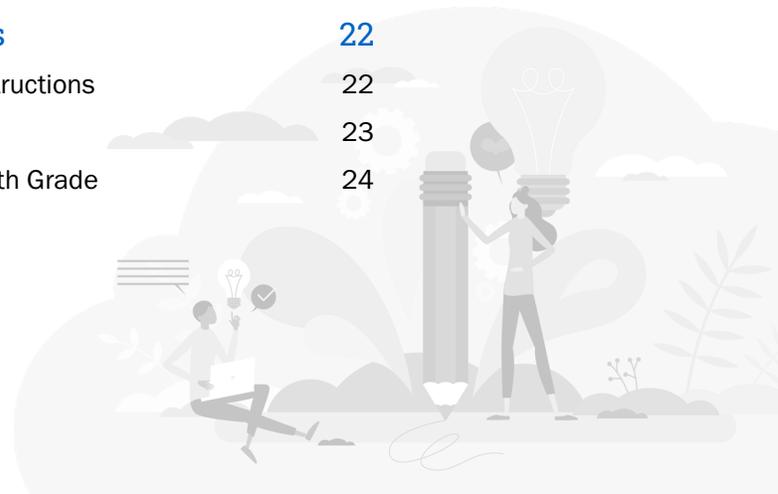
# “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest

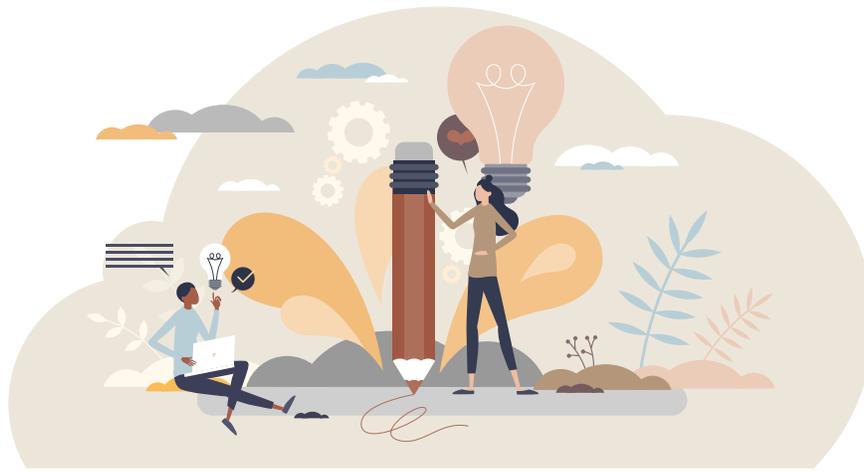
**A CONTEST FOR FIFTH-GRADE STUDENTS**

*Coordinator Guide*

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# “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest

## Introduction

Since 1996, the American Immigration Council has lifted young voices and perspectives on immigration through our “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest.

**The contest inspires fifth graders across the United States to reflect on and write about the theme “Why I’m Glad America Is a Nation of Immigrants” or “What Does It Mean to Be a Welcoming Nation.”**

The assignment and accompanying educational experiences provide America’s classrooms with an important opportunity to explore immigration and inclusion.

The contest begins at the local level, with regional contests run by chapters of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Each chapter submits its first-place entry to the Council for the national contest, which is made possible by the generous support of the **Murthy NAYAK Foundation**. The national grand prize winner (and two guests) will win a trip to read their entry at an awards ceremony hosted by the American Immigration Council.

This guide has been developed for AILA chapters and their coordinators to help run local contests. It provides detailed information and content, as well as a step-by-step action plan for leading the work in your communities.

Please strictly adhere to the Council’s guidelines on length of written submissions (500 words maximum), national contest due dates, and submission requirements.





## Sponsoring a Local Contest is Easy

While the instructions contained in this guide are comprehensive, this contest does not have to be elaborate. The suggestions found in this booklet are based on the previous experience of chapters, as well as our own review of the program at-large.

### Consider these quick tips for getting a local contest running:

- 1. Sponsor the contest in just ONE school in your area.** Is there a chapter leader, or any local chapter member, who has a fifth-grade child (or grandchild) and would be willing to call the child's teacher to suggest this contest? Or, put a notice in your chapter newsletter asking interested members to volunteer to reach out to local schools.
- 2. Prizes do not need to be elaborate.** While some chapters have developed awards that include symphony tickets and museum passes, a chapter running a first contest could issue a \$100 savings bond to the winning student or invite the winner and his/her parents to a chapter dinner in their honor.
- 3. Politicians and the press love local stories about kids winning contests.** Call your Representative's or Mayor's office and ask if the elected official would write a congratulatory letter to the winner that you can frame, read, and present to the winner. Call the city desk of your hometown newspaper or local access cable TV station to ask if the media outlet could send a photographer or video camera to the chapter dinner where the winner will read their essay.
- 4. Use the contest as a project for up-and-coming leaders in your chapter to test their organizational skills.** Current chapter executive committee members often have multiple chapter-related responsibilities already. Why not assign coordination of your local contest to a recent AILA member in your area who regularly shows up at meetings and has expressed an interest in becoming more involved? Or, why not use the contest as a challenge to involve potential leaders and urge them to help the chapter? Lastly, law student members make good coordinators too.



# Local Contest – Timeline & Checklist

## Getting Started

Welcome Creative Writing Contest Coordinators! The “Celebrate America” Fifth Grade Creative Writing Contest is successful thanks to the hard work and dedication of coordinators like you. Below you will find a general timeline of suggestions, as well as materials that will support a successfully run contest.

The **bold items** on page 6 are required documents and important dates for the national contest.

### September – October

- Each chapter selects a Creative Writing Contest Coordinator (CWCC) and contacts the American Immigration Council to verify coordinator participation. The CWCC solicits other chapter members to serve on a Creative Writing Contest Committee, who then help the Contest Coordinator approach local schools for participation, recruit local judges, promote the contest, solicit prizes, and plan the local contest award ceremony.
- Solicit volunteers at chapter meetings or via the chapter newsletter.
- Contest Coordinators, Committee members and American Immigration Council Ambassadors approach local institutions, public service agencies and immigrant advocacy groups to co-sponsor the Creative Writing Contest. Look to minority bar associations, ethnic and religious organizations, and immigration advocacy organizations in your community.
- Target local public and private schools. Make initial contact with teachers, principals, and administrators using the Form Letter to Teachers and Board of Education Members.
- Ask chapter members to approach their children’s schools.
- Coordinator’s approach local Boards of Education to introduce the Contest. Poll chapter members to determine if anyone has a contact at the Board, or knows someone who is a teacher, to assist in identifying the appropriate Board contact.
- Follow up with schools and Boards of Education about participating in this year’s contest
- Begin soliciting prizes sponsoring your local contest.

### November – December

- Distribute Creative Writing Contest flyer to those schools that have agreed to participate.
- Recruit a panel of volunteers to do the initial screening of entries to select the top-ten for submission to judges. For volunteers, look to AILA members, law school students, members of co-sponsoring organizations, or Board of Education members.
- Build an outreach strategy to secure judges for the selection of the local contest winner. Look to prominent members of your community such as the mayor, members of Congress or the State Legislature, local USCIS officials, prominent immigrants, local business owners, news reporters, radio and television personalities, entertainers, and athletes.
- Start planning the local contest awards ceremony. Choose the date and decide on the format. Look for and reserve an appropriate space. We recommend that you schedule the contest awards ceremony in conjunction with an appropriate local event, for example an ethnic festival or a naturalization ceremony. The student can even be honored at a Chapter meeting.
- Recruit AILA Chapter volunteers to make presentations to participating classrooms



## January

- Participating teachers teach a unit on immigration and introduce the Creative Writing Contest to students. If possible, suggest that teachers require students to write an essay, poem, story, etc. as a classroom assignment, rather than making it a voluntary exercise (remember that the creative writing piece must be no longer than 500 words).
- AILA members speak to participating classes about immigration.
- Encourage teachers to invite outside guests to hear the presentation (e.g., parents, students, and teachers from other classrooms). This will help spread the message to an even broader audience.

## Early February

- Finalize panel of initial screeners.
- Deadline for schools to submit entries to Contest Coordinators. Remember Coordinators are responsible for setting up a local deadline so that the winner may be submitted before the April national deadline.

## Late February – Mid March

- Panel of initial screeners reviews entries and selects top ten entries for submission to judges.
- The top ten entries are submitted to judges. Judges then review and select first-, second-, and third-place winners—returning their score sheet to the Contest Coordinator.

## Late March – April

- Notify first, second-, and third-place winners.
- The winning entry must be submitted to the Council by **May 12, 2023** to be eligible for the national contest.
- Email the winning entry along with the corresponding required forms:
  - **Release Authorization Form**
  - **Proof of Fifth Grade Enrollment**
- Email out invitations to your local contest award ceremony.

## May – June

- The winner of the national contest is announced by the American Immigration Council.**
- Send out Creative Writing Contest Press Release to announce the winner(s) to your community.
- Hold awards ceremony to honor winners of your local Creative Writing Contest.
- Invite local media, elected officials, school board members, and other community members to attend the awards ceremony.
- The national grand prize winner (and two guests) will win a trip to read their entry at an awards ceremony hosted by the American Immigration Council.**



# Promotion and Participation: Getting Schools and Teachers Involved

## Contest Selling Points

When conducting outreach to teachers and school professionals, we recommend using some of the following contest selling points. Get to know your school and pick the one(s) you think would be the most likely to encourage participation.

-  **1** The contest is student-centered and encourages critical thinking and creative writing.
-  **2** Creative writing encourages children to use their imagination and has been shown to develop self-confidence and a strong sense of identity.
-  **3** Creative writing develops reading, writing and critical thinking skills.
-  **4** Creative writing teaches children about empathy and creates an emotional outlet to express themselves, their stories, and their ideas.
-  **5** The contest enables students to use narrative, descriptive, expository and persuasive writing styles, which is essential according to 5th grade standards.
-  **6** The contest allows students to share different perspectives, learn from one another, and expand their understanding of immigration history in the United States.
-  **7** The contest allows students, teachers, and the greater school community to participate in a national movement aimed at inspiring our youth to use their civic voice for the greater good of their country.
-  **8** Through public readings, writer's workshops, naturalization ceremonies, and other events, the opportunities to learn about immigration in participating communities are endless and the impact is exponential. Where else does a fifth-grade student get to read his or her writing in front of hundreds of people?



## Sample Language to Board of Education or Teachers

[Date]

[Name] [Address]

Dear [Name],

I am writing to follow up on our recent discussion about the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest.

The Contest inspires fifth graders across the United States to reflect on and write about the theme “Why I’m Glad America Is a Nation of Immigrants” or “What Does It Mean to Be a Welcoming Nation.” The contest begins at the local level, with regional contests run by chapters of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Each chapter sends its first-place entry to the Council for the national contest, which is made possible by the generous support of the **Murthy NAYAK Foundation**.

Students are encouraged to be creative and can submit their entries in the form of an essay, poem, story, interview or any other written form. The deadline for submitting entries to the contest is [\[Insert Date Here\]](#).

I’d be happy to arrange for an immigration attorney to speak to your students about the contest and answer any questions they might have.

- [\[Add for school board\]](#) If you are interested in introducing the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest to the schools in your district, please contact me at your earliest convenience at [\[enter your contact information\]](#) and we can discuss next steps.
- [\[Add for teachers\]](#) If you are interested in participating in the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest, please complete the attached form and return it to me at your earliest convenience. I will follow up with more materials and details on the contest upon receiving your reply. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [\[enter your contact information\]](#).

Sincerely,

[\[Your Name And Affiliation\]](#)



## “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest

### Sample Teacher Participation Form

School Name

School Address

Teacher and/or Contact

Phone

Email

Number of Students

Are you interested in a guest speaker?  YES  NO

Please return no later than  to:

*[Coordinator: Enter your name, email, and chapter affiliation in the field at right. If needed, separate lines by hitting Return.]*

Name  
Email address  
Chapter affiliation

★ Download the fillable version of this form at [CelebrateAmericaWritingContest.org](http://CelebrateAmericaWritingContest.org).  
Instructions for customizing this form with your contact information are on page 22.



## Sample Language to Teachers Participating in Contest

[Date]

[Name] [Address]

Dear [Name],

We are very excited that you have agreed to participate in the American Immigration Council's "Celebrate America" Creative Writing Contest, made possible by the generous support of the **Murthy NAYAK Foundation**. As you know, contestants are to write on the theme "Why I'm Glad America Is a Nation of Immigrants" or "What Does It Mean to Be a Welcoming Nation."

Students are encouraged to be creative and can submit their entries in the form of an essay, poem, story, interview or any other written form. The contest is open to fifth graders from the [enter school/district/region/city/state/other] area.

Entries will be judged based on theme, presentation, creativity and message, and are limited to 500 words. Each entry must include the enclosed Enrollment Form (with an attached proof of enrollment in the fifth grade) and an Authorization for Release, to be signed by each contestant and his or her parent or guardian.

The deadline for submissions is [insert date]. Submissions should be sent to [insert information]. Winners will be announced on [insert date]. The winners will receive [insert details about prizes] and will be honored at an awards ceremony on [insert details of ceremony]. The first-place winner of the [enter school district/region/etc. as listed above] contest will go on to compete at the national level with other students from around the country.

If you need additional information or would like to arrange for a speaker, please contact me at [fill in your contact information].

Thank you again for participating in the "Celebrate America" Creative Writing Contest. Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

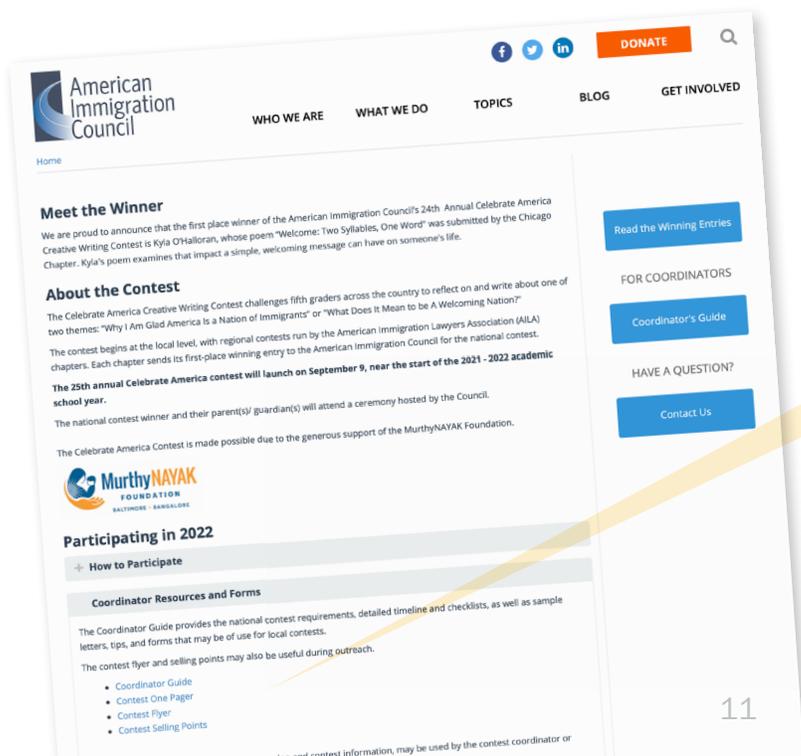
[Your Name And Affiliation]



## Tips for Classroom Visits

There are two ways you can visit a participating classroom. You can teach/co-teach a lesson, or you can give a presentation (whether in-person or virtual). Please do what makes you feel most comfortable and is permitted. Although your visit would be valuable for students, classroom presentations are not always necessary or possible.

- ✓ Ask the teacher for the **entry policies** for guests at the school.
- ✓ Email the **lesson plan** to the teacher in advance of your visit.
- ✓ Teachers might think of ways to plan other **immigration-themed lessons** to enhance your visit. They can help you to divide students into groups and set up the classroom. Some teachers will want more control than others.
- ✓ **Make copies of the flyers** to pass out to students.
- ✓ Small pieces of **candy** will win you a captive audience but check with the teacher on school policy for eating in classrooms. **“Cool” academic supplies** might include stickers, colorful post-it notes, highlighters, colorful pens, etc.
- ✓ If you want to take photos or ask the teacher to take photos, you will need parental permission. Participants will need to fill out the **Authorization for Release** form on page 24.



Use the resources available on the Contest page:

[CelebrateAmericaWritingContest.org](https://CelebrateAmericaWritingContest.org)

Flyers (PDF format)

Contest-themed Powerpoint deck

All forms (PDF format)



## Suggested Outline for Classroom Presentations



### **Introduce yourself.**

Explain what you do as an immigration attorney and the type of clients you serve.



### **Describe the immigration process.**

Try to emphasize the careful screening of applicants and the lengthy process to counter any myths the students may have heard to the contrary.



### **Put a face on immigration facts.**

Give examples of some of your clients, how they came to the United States, what they left behind, how they are doing in the U.S. Consider whether one of your clients is willing to come with you to tell their story first-hand.



**Emphasize the important contributions immigrants make**  
to the country and to the community. Give examples.



**Ask students to share** their own immigration stories.



**Ask for any questions.**



**Thank the class** for their participation in the Creative Writing Contest and their interest in immigration.



# Judging

## Sample Language for Invitation to Panel Judges

[Date]

[Name] [Address]

Dear [Name],

Each year, the American Immigration Council sponsors the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest to inspire fifth graders across the United States to reflect on and write about the theme “Why I’m Glad America Is a Nation of Immigrants” or “What Does It Mean to Be a Welcoming Nation.” The contest begins at the local level, with regional contests run by chapters of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Each chapter sends its first-place entry to the Council for the national contest, which is made possible by the generous support of the **Murthy NAYAK Foundation**.

The [Region/State] AILA Chapter requests that you consider participating in the contest as a judge to aid in the selection of our local winners.

The “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest is part of the American Immigration Council’s ongoing efforts to spread a positive message about the benefits of immigration. We believe that this contest plays a significant role in demonstrating the important contributions immigrants make to our community and to America. It also helps educate students, families, and teachers on the history of immigration and how it may relate to them on a more personal level.

Approximately [insert number] schools in the [insert Region/City/State] area are participating in the contest. The deadline for submissions is [insert date]. Our screening committee will review all of the entries, and the top ten will then be submitted to a panel of judges from [insert area] to rank and determine the first, second and third place winners. We hope that you will agree to participate in this panel.

Thank you in advance for considering this request. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [insert phone number and email address].

Sincerely,

[Your Name And Affiliation]



# Suggestions for Initial Committee Screening

## Essay Anonymity

Before providing the panel of screeners with the creative writing entries, assign each entry a number and delete any reference to the author's name, school or other identifying information. The top ten entries should also be submitted to the panel judges identified by number only.

## Initial Screening

This can be done a number of ways, depending on the number of entries received. If there are a large number of entries, divide the entries evenly between the screeners, and ask each screener to choose the top three entries from their group using the suggested criteria indicated below (or other criteria developed by the Creative Writing Contest committee). A smaller committee can then review the top three entries from each group, using the same criteria, to select the "final" top ten for submission to the panel judges. Alternatively, if a more manageable number of entries is received, each screener can review and rank all the entries and select the top ten for submission to the panel judges.

## Judging Criteria

To determine the top ten entries please use the following criteria:

- **Content/Theme:** How well does the entry explain/explore the themes "Why I Am Glad America Is a Nation of Immigrants" or "What Does It Mean to Be a Welcoming Nation."
- **Presentation:** Are the ideas well developed?
- **Creativity:** Is the submission unique in some way?
- **Message:** Are you moved by the message?

**We suggest that each category be given a score from 1 to 5** (5 being the best). Add up the scores from each category so that each entry receives a total score out of 20. The scorecard on the next page may be helpful.





## Sample Language to Judges with Ranking Instructions

[Date]

[Name] [Address]

Dear [Name],

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a judge in the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest. I am pleased to report that [insert Number] entries were submitted to the contest. Enclosed you will find the top ten entries that were screened by a committee of [insert general description of committee members]. The entries were evaluated on the basis of theme, presentation, creativity, and message. You will see that in addition to poems, there are [insert other formats that were used, if appropriate] among the top ten entries.

We are asking the panel of final judges to rank the top ten creative writing entries from 1-10 (10 being the best) using the criteria set forth below. The winning submission will be chosen based on the highest overall score.

### Judging Criteria

To determine the top ten entries please use the following criteria:

- **Content/Theme:** How well does the entry explain/explore the themes “Why I Am Glad America Is a Nation of Immigrants” or “What Does It Mean to Be a Welcoming Nation.”
- **Presentation:** Are the ideas well developed?
- **Creativity:** Is the submission unique in some way?
- **Message:** Are you moved by the message?

The first, second, and third place winners of the contest will be honored at [insert details of awards ceremony]. In addition, the first-place entry will be submitted to the national contest, the winner of which will be honored at an awards ceremony hosted by the American Immigration Council.

Each entry has been assigned a number. We have prepared a ranking sheet for your scores. We ask that you return your rankings to us no later than [insert date].

We hope that you will be able to join us at the awards ceremony on [insert date]. Thank you, once again, for your participation in this important project.

Sincerely,

[Your Name And Affiliation]



## Judge's Score Sheet

**“Why I Am Glad America Is A Nation of Immigrants”  
or “What Does It Mean to Be a Welcoming Nation?”**

Entry #	Score (1-10; 10 being the highest)

Comments: (optional)

Judge's Name:

Date:

**Please return no later than**  **to:**

*[Coordinator: Enter your name, email, and chapter affiliation in the field at right. If needed, separate lines by hitting Return.]*

Name  
Email address  
Chapter affiliation

★ **Download the fillable version of this form at [CelebrateAmericaWritingContest.org](http://CelebrateAmericaWritingContest.org).**  
Instructions for customizing this form with your contact information are on page 22.



## Winners

### Sample Language to Top Three Local Winners

[Date]

[Name] [Address]

Dear [Name],

CONGRATULATIONS! You are the [first-, second-, third-] place winner in the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest, made possible by the generous support of the Murthy NAYAK Foundation. Your [insert form of written work submitted—poem, essay, etc.] was selected from [insert number] entries received. You should be very proud of your achievement.

As a winner, you will receive [insert prizes, if any]. In addition, you will be honored at an [awards ceremony/AILA meeting] on [insert details of date, time, and place of event]. Your family [friends, principal, teacher and entire classroom] are [all] invited to attend the awards ceremony.

[FOR FIRST-PLACE WINNER, INSERT]: As the first-place winner in the [City/State/Region] contest, your [type of creative writing piece] will be submitted to the national contest, together with other entries from around the country. The winner of the national contest will read his or her winning entry at an awards ceremony hosted by the American Immigration Council.

Once again, congratulations. I look forward to meeting you at the ceremony.

Sincerely,

[Your Name And Affiliation]



## Awards Ceremony & Prizes

### Sample Language to Solicit Prizes

Dear [Name],

I am writing to you on behalf of the American Immigration Lawyers Association [enter your region/state AILA chapter and list other sponsors] to ask for your assistance with the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest.

Fifth grade students from around the [insert city/state/region/school district] area have been asked to submit creative writing pieces on the theme “Why I’m Glad America Is a Nation of Immigrants” or “What Does It Mean to Be a Welcoming Nation.” The contest is part of national efforts to spread a positive message about the benefits of immigration.

The top three winners of the [insert area] contest will be honored at an awards ceremony on [insert details of ceremony]. We would like to invite [insert name of organization] to participate in the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest by asking you to donate [insert item you are requesting].

Your generous contribution will be noted in the program for the awards ceremony.

We hope to make this contest an enriching experience for the students writing about immigration and for the community as a whole. Your contribution will help us achieve this goal.

Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

[Your Name And Affiliation]

### Sample Invitation to Awards Ceremony

Dear [Name],

The [state/region] Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association would like to invite you to what promises to be a very heartwarming event in our community. On [insert date], three [insert city] area students will be honored for their winning entries on the theme “Why I’m Glad America Is a Nation of Immigrants” or “What Does It Mean to Be a Welcoming Nation” during a ceremony at [insert place of ceremony]. The ceremony will begin at [insert time] and will last approximately [insert estimated length of ceremony].

The winning entries were selected from [enter number] entries submitted by fifth grade students from the [enter city/state] area. The “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest, made possible by the generous support of the Murthy NAYAK Foundation and sponsored by the American Immigration Council, helps spread a positive message about the benefits of immigration to America. All the entries received contain truly inspirational messages for our community and country.

The three students to be honored are: [insert names of students and their schools]. The winners were selected by a panel of judges from the community: [insert names of judges]. The entry of the first-place winner will be submitted to the American Immigration Council for the national contest.

I hope that you will be able to join us for this event. If you have any questions, please contact me at [insert phone number and email address].

Sincerely,

[Your Name And Affiliation]



## Sample Awards Ceremony Press Release

CONTACT:

[insert name and phone number]

### ELEMENTARY STUDENTS CELEBRATE AMERICA'S TRADITION OF WELCOMING IMMIGRANTS

[INSERT NAME OF CITY]: Three [insert city] area students will be honored for their winning entries into the local "Celebrate America" Creative Writing Contest during a ceremony at [insert place, date, and time of awards ceremony].

The winning entries were selected from [enter number] entries submitted by fifth grade students from the [enter city/region/state] area. The "Celebrate America" Creative Writing Contest, which is made possible by the generous support of the Murthy NAYAK Foundation, was locally coordinated by the [insert state/region] AILA Chapter and [insert names of other co-sponsors], to help spread a positive message about the benefits of immigration to America.

[INSERT QUOTE FROM CONTEST COORDINATOR: e.g. "We were overwhelmed by the profound insight, humor and optimism of the entries. These children can teach many Americans some very important lessons," said Joe Smith, coordinator of the Creative Writing Contest.]

The three students to be honored are: [insert names of students and their schools]. The winners were selected by a panel of judges from the community: [insert names of judges]. The winners will receive [insert prizes]. In addition, the first-place entry, written by [insert student's name] will be entered into the National Creative Writing Contest, sponsored by the American Immigration Council. The national winner will read his or her winning entry at an awards ceremony hosted by the American Immigration Council.



## Sample Thank-You Letter to Prize Contributors

Dear [Name],

On behalf of the American Immigration Lawyers Association's [your state/region] Chapter and [list other sponsors], I would like to thank [insert name of donating organization] for its generous donation of [insert prize] to the "Celebrate America" Creative Writing Contest.

Approximately [insert number of contestants] students participated in the contest, and thanks to the generosity of [insert name of donating organization] and other local sponsors, we were able to award prizes to the authors of the winning entries.

Your contribution has certainly helped make learning about immigration an enjoyable experience for the students. I have enclosed copies of the top three creative writing entries for you and your staff's reading. You will also find a copy of your listing in our awards ceremony program.

Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,

[Your Name and Affiliation]



# Important Dates and Required Forms

## Deadlines

Local contests' winning entries **must be submitted to the Council by May 12th** to be eligible for the nation-al contest. Email the winning entry along with the corresponding required forms to **Mohammed Naeem -- [mnaem@immcouncil.org](mailto:mnaem@immcouncil.org)**

## Required Forms

Participants need to complete and submit the Release Authorization form and the Proof of Fifth Grade Enrollment form (examples are on pages 23 and 24). The printable/fillable versions are available on the contest webpage [CelebrateAmericaWritingContest.org](http://CelebrateAmericaWritingContest.org).

## Personalizing the Forms for the Participants in Your Local Contest

**For coordinators:** Download the forms that will need to be returned to you by participants (as described above) and by teachers and judges (see pages 9 and 17).

- 2. Fill in your contact information and the submission deadline in the spaces indicated.** To preserve your contact information, save the forms using the Save As command from the File menu in Acrobat, and rename the form in a way that will be meaningful to you and the recipients. *Examples:* 2021CWC\_AuthForm.PDF and 2021CWC\_JudgeScoreSheet.PDF.
- 3. Email these personalized forms to participants, teachers, and judges.**

**All forms can be filled out directly using Acrobat.** If you don't have it, a free version of the Acrobat reader is available for download [here](https://get.adobe.com/reader/) (<https://get.adobe.com/reader/>).

1

Blank form to download and personalize

2

Coordinator fills out contact information and deadline

3

Form with contact information for participants to fill out and sign



## “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest

### Authorization for Release

Student Name

Home Address

Telephone

Email

Thank you for submitting an entry to the “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest sponsored by the American Immigration Council.

Your entry may be published in the American Immigration Council’s (Council) American Heritage Awards program book, in the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) Annual Conference program, and in any publication of the AILA Chapter sponsoring your local contest. In addition, your creative writing entry and photograph may be published in appropriate newspapers, journals, or other print media. Your name, address and telephone number may be released to such publication in the event that they wish to contact you in connection with your entry. It is understood that the use of these materials by the Council, AILA, or any other institution will not be for personal gain.

By signing this release, you are agreeing to transfer copyright and other rights for your creative writing entry to the American Immigration Council, and to release the Council, AILA, and other participating organizations from any claims relating to the above-stated uses. By signing this release, you agree to complete any tax reporting forms should prize money be received.

By signing this release, you are agreeing that the above-named student’s entry is 500 words or less, and that if it is longer, it will not be eligible for national judging.

Author Signature

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Date

Please return no later than  to:

*[Coordinator: Enter your name, email, and chapter affiliation in the field at right. If needed, separate lines by hitting Return.]*

Download the fillable version of this form at [CelebrateAmericaWritingContest.org](http://CelebrateAmericaWritingContest.org). Instructions for customizing this form with your contact information are on page 22.





## “Celebrate America” Creative Writing Contest

### Proof of Enrollment in Fifth Grade

Submit proof of enrollment with this form (i.e., a transcript, a report card, or a letter from your school principal), and return it to your contest coordinator.

Name of Participating Student

Name of School

Name of School Principal

School Address

School Phone Number

Please return no later than  to:

*[Coordinator: Enter your name, email, and chapter affiliation in the field at right. If needed, separate lines by hitting Return.]*

Name  
Email address  
Chapter affiliation

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