



Virginia War Memorial 2020 Veterans Day Essay Contest

“It is a challenge to us, all Allied nations, to ensure that they do not and have not died in vain.”

– General Lucian Truscott Jr.

Prompt: Write about an American who served during World War II who inspires you.

As we reach the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, the Virginia War Memorial encourages students to reflect on the men and women who have served their country, and find inspiration in their service. Subjects of student essays may be those who survived the war, or those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Students should consider the lessons they can learn from their subject, and what we can all take from their example. While selecting subjects, students should consider family members, members of their communities, or others whose stories resonate personally. Subjects may have served in any branch of the military. Essays should focus on the subject’s time in service, though students may also address his or her time before and after the war if relevant.

Responses should be developed through research, using interviews and/or primary sources when possible. Students are free to utilize newspaper articles, first person accounts, military records, letters, or more to tell us about the subject, and why he or she is inspirational.

Successful essays will have a clear focus and address the above theme directly, using a variety of cited sources as well as drawing from personal experiences. Students must properly cite their sources in a bibliography (APA or MLA style) and include the bibliography with their submission. Entries will be judged on clarity of thought, proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation, and adherence to the contest theme and guidelines.

The Virginia War Memorial Veterans Day Essay Contest is open to all Virginia Middle and High School public, private, or homeschooled students. A winning entry will be chosen from the 6th-8th grade group, and the 9th-12th grade group. Each winner of the 2020 Essay Contest will receive a \$200 gift card and their teachers will receive \$100 gift cards for classroom use. **Winners will be invited to read their winning essays at the Commonwealth’s Veterans Day Ceremony, to be held Wednesday, November 11, 2020.** Submissions must be between 500-750 words and incorporate at least one primary source. Entries are due Sunday, October 11th by 11:59pm. Entries received after this time will not be considered. For all rules and guidelines, please visit <https://vawarmemorial.org/learn/contests-scholarships/essay/> or contact Morgan Guyer, VWM Assistant Director of Education, at morgan.guyer@dvs.virginia.gov.