Official Rules for Students Advancing to National Level

In the event my audio essay is selected for entry into the National Voice of Democracy Competition, I hereby for myself, for my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns; waive, release and discharge all rights and claims which I have or which may hereafter accrue against the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and/or the several Departments (state organizations) of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and their respective officers, agents, successors and assigns from any damages which may be sustained by me in connection with my participation in or association with the VFW Voice of Democracy Competition and/or arising out of my travel to and during the Competition/ In the event of sickness, accident or injury in connection with the Competition, I consent to and accept the services of a duly licensed medical, surgical or dental specialist selected on my behalf and for such treatments, as they may deem necessary. I understand that VFW will not be liable for such treatment. I further understand that the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States retains non-exclusive rights to use my tape, essay and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

To Be Completed by the VFW Post

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post level Voice of Democracy Competition.

Post Commander’s/Chairman’s Signature Post #

VFW Auxiliary President’s/Chairman’s Signature (if applicable)

Post Address

City, State, Zip

VFW Post Email

No. of students participating __________________________

No. of winners advanced to District __________________________

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarship awards $ __________________________

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (banquet, pins, etc.) $ __________________________

To Be Completed by the VFW District

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Voice of Democracy Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Department finals.

District Chairman’s Signature Dist. #

Address

City, State, Zip

( ) Phone Email

To Be Completed by the VFW Department Chairman

I certify that the student in the previous section is the duly selected first place winner of the Voice of Democracy Department Competition, is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairman’s Signature

( ) Daytime Phone Email

The winner ☐ has been ☐ will be (check one) notified that they are the first-place Department winner on ________.

Revised 3/2020
What is the Voice Of Democracy Program?

Since 1947, the Voice of Democracy has been the Veterans of Foreign Wars' (VFW’s) premier scholarship program. Each year, nearly 57,000 high school students compete for more than $2 million in scholarships and incentives. Students compete by writing and recording an audio essay on an annual patriotic theme. This year’s theme is, Is This the Country the Founders Envisioned?

Why Should I Enter?

Prizes and scholarships can be awarded at the Post, District, state and national level.

The Rules

Who can enter?
The Voice of Democracy is open to students in grades 9-12 by the Oct. 31 deadline, who are enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions. Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen at the earliest opportunity allowed by law. Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or over, previous Voice of Democracy first place state winners, GED or Adult Education Students are not eligible for entry.

What do I need to enter?
Record your original 3-5 minute (+ or -5 seconds max.) essay on an audio CD or a flash drive. One student per CD or flash drive. When burning your CD, make sure that "Create Audio CD" option (or similar) is selected so that the program can properly convert your sound file and burn it to CD. After it has finished, be sure to play back your audio CD on a system other than your computer, such as a standard radio or car CD player, to verify that the conversion/burning process was successful. You will submit the recording, typed essay and this completed entry form.

Where Do I Submit My Entry?

All entries begin at the local VFW Post level. The only exception is where schools/classes/youth groups have large numbers of students and wish to conduct their own competition, submitting one winner for each 15 students to the local VFW Post. Individual students may submit their entry directly to the Post. This VFW Post should be within your local area and within your U.S. state of residence. Entries sent to VFW National will be returned. One winner for every 15 entries from each Post advances to District and one District winner advances to the state (Department) competition. If you need help finding a participating VFW Post in your area, follow these instructions: First, visit this website vfw.org/FindAPost to "Find A VFW Post." Be sure this Post is within the state you reside in. If you do not have success in finding a Post, or if you have trouble getting in touch with them, you can contact your VFW Department (state) office to see if they can offer any information or assistance. You can visit this link vfw.org/contacts and look for "Find a State Contact" to get your VFW state office’s phone number and Email. If you still need assistance, please Email us at VFW National Headquarters: youthscholarships@vfw.org

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) has again approved this contest for its National Advisory List of Contests and Activities.

2020-2021 Official Entry Form

Voice Of Democracy Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

Name: First, M.I., Last

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone (              ) Email ____________

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy) Grade in School Age

School Name, City, State

Teacher’s name and Email (if applicable)

To Be Completed by Student’s Parent/Guardian

(required even if student is 18 or over)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Parent/Guardian’s Daytime Phone

Parent/Guardian’s Email

I Have Read and Understand the D.C. National Finals Rules (On Opposite Side)

I certify that I am the sole author of the enclosed audio/essay entry and that I have only entered the competition once yearly if otherwise eligible. I understand that if it is found that I have entered any other Post’s competition or used this essay for another VFW competition or used this essay for another VFW competition, I face elimination from the competition and will return any and all prizes or incentives awarded.

Signature of Student Participant Date