



Eighth Annual Black History Month Essay Contest

Sponsored by the Human Relations Council of the Greater Hemet, San Jacinto and Menifee Region

Contest is open to all middle school, high school and college students in the San Jacinto Valley and the Menifee Valley.

Essay Topic and Format:

Celebrating Black History in the United States began in 1926, when Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a Harvard Ph.D., initiated "Negro History Week." Dr. Woodson, a historian, chose the second week in February because it included the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, the Bicentennial (200th birthday) of the U.S.A., the week-long observance was extended to the entire month of February in order to have enough time for celebratory programs and activities.

As the United States celebrates National Black History Month in February, your task is to pick a person of color who illustrates the triumph of the human spirit over circumstances and prejudice in order to build a life of accomplishment. **Attached is a list of possible subjects for your essay. Don't be afraid to "think outside of the box".**

Any essays that do not follow the contest guidelines will be eliminated before judging.

Write your essay as an Historic Fiction:

Imagine yourself living at the time of your chosen person and being acquainted with him/her. You might be his/her child, parent, friend, boss or even an adversary. Write about him/her from your unique point of view.

Incorporate the points outlined in the scholarly biography

1. Who is the person about whom you want to write? When did he/she live?
2. What did your chosen person do to "triumph over circumstances and prejudice to build a life of accomplishment"? Tell why you feel particularly close to this individual.

Contest Rules:

The length of the essay (**essays too short or too long will be eliminated from judging**):

Middle School (grades 6 through 8) 300 to 500 words
High School (grades 9 through 12) 500 to 1000 words
College (Undergraduate only) 1000 to 2000 words

Home-schooled and Charter School students may also enter – please call 951-634-4048 for entry details.

Plagiarism (copying from the Internet or someone else's essay) is strictly forbidden. If you copy, you will be disqualified from the contest. You may insert a small quote from someone else's work, but you must state who said it and where you found it.

The deadline for submission of the essay is **5:00 PM on Monday, January 30, 2012**. Please submit **by email** to vrctwohip@aol.com. Send as a Word or text document attached to your email, please. If it is not possible to submit by email, please call Mary Morse at (951) 634-4048 for an alternate submission method.

Please make sure that each essay has the name of the student, home telephone number, his/her school, the teacher/counselor submitting the essay, and a teacher/counselor contact phone number, as well as an email address.

All entries will become the property of the Human Relations Council of the Greater Hemet, San Jacinto and Menifee Region. Entry into the contest grants permission for Human Relations Council to release any essay to the press for publication.

Contest Judging:

The judges will not know any of the students' names or schools while they are judging. Students will be judged on their ability to address the topic, to demonstrate original, creative thinking, and to express their ideas in a clear, articulate manner. There is also an award for the best presentation at the awards ceremony.

The judges' panel will be comprised of Human Relations Council members and other community members who are experts in Black History, long-time participants in the Civil Rights movement, sociologists, and/or educators.

Contest Prizes:

All entering students will be invited to attend the Awards Ceremony **on Friday, February 10, 2012**, to be held at 6:00 PM, at the Mt. San Jacinto College, San Jacinto Campus Library building. Every student who writes an essay will receive a Certificate of Participation which they will receive the night of the event or we will send it to them. **Winning students only will be asked to present their essays at the event.** Teachers, counselors, administrators and families are invited to attend. (RSVP to Mary at (951) 766-8659 x 224 or (951) 634-4048.)

High School:

- 1 Best High School essay \$150
- 1 Runner-up High School essay \$75
- 3 Honorable Mentions \$25 each
- 1 Best Presentation \$100

Middle School:

- 1 Best Middle School essay \$150
- 1 Runner-up Middle School essay \$75
- 3 Honorable Mentions \$25 each
- 1 Best Presentation \$100

College:

- 1 Best College essay \$150
- 1 Runner-up College essay \$75
- 3 Honorable Mentions \$25 each
- 1 Best Presentation \$100

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mary Morse at (951) 634-4048.

Language Arts--educators, writers, poets, playwrights, journalists, orators, novelists, editors, publishers, judges/justices, actors, scholars

Lucy Terry Prince, Poet

Phillis Wheatley, Poet

Frederick Douglass, Orator

Charlotte Forten Grimke, Educator, Writer, Abolitionist

*Booker T. Washington, Educator, Statesman

*Ida B. Wells-Barnet, Journalist, Civil Rights Leader

W.E.B. DuBois, Author, Editor, Civil Rights Leader

Robert Sengstacke Abbott, Newspaper Editor, Civil Rights Activist

Langston Hughes, Poet

Richard Wright, Novelist

Lorraine Hansberry, Playwright

James Baldwin, Novelist, Essayist

*Thurgood Marshall, U.S. Supreme Court Justice

Toni Morrison, Novelist, Editor

Zora Neale Hurston, Writer

Alaine Locke, Scholar

Constance Baker Motley, Lawyer/Justice

Maya Angelou, Writer, Poet

Mathematics--mathematicians, architects, astromers, businesspeople, engineers, aviators

Benjamin Banneker, Inventor, Surveyor, Astronomer, Mathematician

James Forten, Businessman, Abolitionist

*Madame C.J. Walker, Cosmetics Manufacturer, Humanitarian

*Bessie Coleman, Aviator

Philip Emeagwali, Computer Scientist, Engineer, Inventor, Scientist

Science--scientists/researchers, physicians, astronauts, astronomers, inventors, chemists, physicists

Norbert Rillieux, Inventor

Lewis Temple, Inventor

Jan Ernst Matzeliger, Inventor

Lewis Howard Latimer, Inventor
*George Washington Carver, Agricultural Scientist
Granville T. Woods, Inventor
Elijah McCoy, Inventor
Garrett A. Morgan, Inventor
Frederick McKinley Jones, Inventor
Percy Lavon Julian, Chemist
Guion Stewart Bluford, Jr., Pilot, Astronaut
Dale Emeagwali, Microbiologist
Ben Carson, Pediatric Neurosurgeon

Social Studies--leaders, civil rights activists, explorers, pioneers,
legislators, soldiers, historians, judges/justices

Estevanico, Explorer
*Peter Salem, American Revolutionary War Soldier
*James Armistead, American Revolutionary War Spy
** *York, Explorer, Scout, Interpreter
James Beckwourth, Scout, Explorer, Frontiersman
Lewis Hayden, State Legislator, Abolitionist
George Washington, Pioneer and Founder of Centralia, Washington
Robert Smalls, Congressman, Civil War Hero
*P.B.S. Pinchback, Congressman
George Jordan, Soldier
George Washington Williams, Soldier, Lawyer, Historian
Charles Young, Soldier
Matthew Henson, Explorer
Henry Johnson, Soldier
Ralph Bunche, Diplomat, Statesman
*Daniel "Chappie" James, Jr., Pilot, Four-Star General
*Thurgood Marshall, U.S. Supreme Court Justice
*Benjamin Quarles, Historian

Health--physicians, nurses, dieticians

Daniel Hale Williams, Physician, Educator
Charles Richard Drew, Surgeon, Scientist, Educator

Physical Education--athletes, physicians, cowboys,

Jesse Owens, Track-and-Field Athlete
Nat Love, Cowboy Range Rider
Joe Louis, Athlete-Boxer
Jackie Robinson, Major League Baseball Player
Wilma Rudolph, Athlete, Teacher, Coach
*Katherine Dunham, Dancer
*Alvin Ailey, Dancer

Art--painters, cartoonists, sculptors, illustrators

Edmonia Lewis, Sculptor
Brian Pinkney, Illustrator
Jerry Pinkney, Illustrator
Ashley Bryan, Illustrator

Music--composers, singers

*Scott Joplin, Pianist, Composer
William Christopher Handy, Musician, Composer
*Bessie Smith, Blues Singer
Louis Armstrong, Musician, Singer, Composer
Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington, Musician, Composer, Bandleader
Paul Robeson, Singer, Actor, Political Activist
*Marian Anderson, Opera Singer

Values/Morals/Beliefs--preachers, humanitarians, patriots, civil rights
leaders/activists, educators, advocates

Crispus Attucks, Mariner, patriot
Elizabeth Freeman, Abolitionist
Richard Allen, Bishop, Abolitionist
Paul Cuffe, Humanitarian, Merchant, Mariner
Gabriel Prosser, Slave Insurrectionist
Denmark Vesey, Slave Insurrectionist
Nat Turner, Slave Insurrectionist
Madison Washington, Slave Insurrectionist
Harriet Tubman, Abolitionist
Jermain Wesley Loguen, Abolitionist

John Anthony Copeland, Jr., Abolitionist
#Sojourner Truth, Abolitionist, Women's Rights Activist, Preacher
Mary Church Terrell, Women's Rights Advocate, Educator
Mary McLeod Bethune, Educator, Civil Rights Activist
Asa Philip Randolph, Union Organizer, Civil Rights Leader
Rosa Parks, Civil Rights Activist
Medgar Evers, Civil Rights Activist
Fannie Lou Hamer, Civil Rights Activist
Malcolm X, Civil Rights Leader
Roy Wilkins, Civil Rights Leader
Martin Luther, King, Jr., Preacher, Civil Rights Activist, Author