

ROTARY 4-WAY TEST ESSAY CONTEST

The District 5580 4-Way Essay Contest materials are now available and ready for you to open, download and share. The essay contest is open to students in their final 2 years of high school. District awards are: 1st place, \$1,500; 2nd place, \$1,000; 3rd place, \$500; and 4th-7th place, \$250 each. Local Rotary clubs may also offer local awards.

Clubs are encouraged to begin contacting their schools and distributing materials as soon as possible. Your club's participation is a statement of interest in the ideas of our young people and demonstrates our belief that it is important to reward our youth for expressing their views in a constructive and meaningful way.

Students in their final 2 years of high school are eligible to participate, preparing an essay of 500 to 1,000 words in length, double-spaced and using a topic of their choice that incorporates the use of the Rotary 4-Way Test:

Ø IS IT THE TRUTH?

Ø IS IT FAIR TO ALL CONCERNED?

Ø WILL IT BUILD GOODWILL AND BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?

Ø WILL IT BE BENEFICIAL TO ALL CONCERNED?

Topics of recent winning essays can be found in the Student Guidelines.

TO DOWNLOAD the documents you will need, either retrieve them from the distributed email packet, or find them at www.rotary5580.org then locate the YOUTH dropdown menu and select 4-Way Essay Contest. Document links are found on the left side of that page.

A prior video message may remain available on the website as a background resource. For the 2026-2027 contest, follow the current packet documents and the District submission portal.

Specifically, students will need the **Student Guidelines** and **Student Entry (Information) Form** and will submit their essay WITH the information form (required). Essay chairpersons will make appropriate adjustments to the poster, press-release and student guidelines documents. Please be sure that students use YOUR name as the Rotary Club Contact and Phone on the Student Information Form.

Students, school counselors and Rotary clubs should direct submissions and contest inquiries to the District 5580 Essay Contest portal: <https://web-production-9a2ad.up.railway.app>. Complete entries must include the Student Information Form and essay, and must be submitted through the portal by November 30, 2026. Club-level judging will take place December 1-15, 2026, District-level judging will take place December 16-31, 2026, and club-level and District-level winners will be announced in early January 2027. NO LATE ENTRIES, PAPER COPIES OR ENTRIES WITHOUT THE STUDENT INFORMATION FORM WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Submit entries and direct inquiries through the District 5580 Essay Contest portal: <https://web-production-9a2ad.up.railway.app>

ENCOURAGE YOUR LOCAL HIGH SCHOOLS to promote this opportunity and ENCOURAGE YOUR AREA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS to participate. Current submissions and inquiries should go through the District portal. We look forward to seeing essays from students across District 5580!

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AI Use, Original Work and Disqualification Policy:

Students may use AI tools for brainstorming, research assistance, organization, grammar, spelling, punctuation, clarity edits, citation formatting and logic checks. AI may not write the essay, replace the student's ideas or ethical reasoning, invent personal experiences, opinions or reflections, or answer the prompt in place of the student's own values and application of the Four-Way Test. Final ideas, analysis, conclusions and content must be the student's original work. Any AI assistance must be disclosed briefly on the Student Information Form. Plagiarism, undisclosed AI-generated content, or essays that do not reflect the student's own work may be disqualified, and any announced prize placement or prize money may be forfeited.