



The Best & Brightest Awards invites Leon County 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to recognize their potential and dream about their future by participating in the 2024 Best & Brightest Awards Essay Contest. This year, students are invited to compose their essays on the following topic:

***“What you do makes a difference,  
and you have to decide what kind of difference  
you want to make.”***

***-- Jane Goodall***

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

**The Best & Brightest Awards places a special emphasis on the dedication to community service. Analyze this quote and write an essay describing how involvement in community service can make a difference in our community and/or for yourself as you prepare to enter high school.**

**CONTEST DETAILS**

**Prizes:** The top three essay winners per school will be recognized with a certificate from the Best & Brightest Awards. These essays will be judged countywide against other school winning essays for the opportunity to receive Best & Brightest Awards 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest prizes. All school-based winners will be invited to attend the Best & Brightest Awards Ceremony where the final winners will be announced with prizes given on Wednesday May 15, 2024.

1. Winner - \$500
2. Runner-Up - \$250
3. Honorable Mention - \$100

**General Information:**

- The contest is open to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in accredited schools in Leon County.
- Essays should be no more than 500 words in length and typed with 12 font and double spaced format.
- All non-original work must be footnoted but will not count against the 500 word limit.
- Essays will be judged on creativity and originality of content, grammatical accuracy, logic and clarity.
- Only one essay per student.
- Essays will be judged at each school by a committee determined by that school's Language Arts Department Chair. The top three essays with entry forms will be submitted by the Language Arts Department Chair for county-wide consideration to the Best & Brightest Awards committee.
- Rubric for judging essays is provided for guidance in the selection process.

*(More information on back page)*

## Deadline

Entries must be turned in to the school Language Arts Department Chair by the date determined at each school. Selection for school based winners will be completed and the top three winning essay packets turned in to World Class Schools for the final selection by Thursday, February 29, 2024.

<i>By Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>Middle School Language Arts Department Chairs receive the information on The Best &amp; Brightest 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest via e-mail from World Class Schools.</i>
<i>By Monday, October 16<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>Department Chairs disseminate information to all 8<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts teachers at their site</i>
<i>By Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>Language Arts teachers remind students about Essay Contest.</i>
<i>By Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>Students turn in essays to teachers for competition.</i>
<i>By Thursday, February 22<sup>nd</sup></i>	<i>Department Chairs will hold a meeting with Language Arts teachers in order to discuss and select the school's top three essays for the award.</i>
<i>Thursday, February 29<sup>th</sup> by 5:00 pm</i>	<i>Principals submit top three school recipients' essays with corresponding entry forms to World Class Schools.</i>
<i>Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup> 6:30 pm</i>	<i>The Best &amp; Brightest Essay Contest presentation will be held during the Best &amp; Brightest Awards Ceremony at Ruby Diamond Concert Hall.</i>
<i>By Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>School winners will be recognized by World Class Schools with certificate awards for 8<sup>th</sup> grade commencement ceremonies.</i>

For more information:

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