



ESSAYS ON TECHNOLOGY

OVERVIEW

Participants will conduct research on specified subtopics of a broader technological area. The topic and subtopics will be posted on the TSA website under Competitions/Themes and Problems. Using the knowledge and resources gained through their research, participants will write a comprehensive essay on the one (1) subtopic that is designated on site.

ELIGIBILITY

Participants are limited to three (3) individuals per state.

TIME LIMITS

The allotted time for each phase (preliminary and semifinalist) of the event is one (1) hour.

ATTIRE

TSA competition attire, as described in the National TSA Dress Code section of this guide, is required.

PROCEDURE

- A. In preparation for the event, participants research the topic and related subtopics, creating a bulleted outline on 3" x 5" note cards using the format displayed on page 167. Participants will be permitted one (1) note card for each subtopic, which they are required to bring to the competition. The bulleted outlines must be handwritten on one side of the 3" x 5" note cards (one [1] for each subtopic), and the sources and references will be handwritten on the other side of the note card. Participants are not permitted to enter the competition area with computer-generated notes, notes that are not handwritten, or notes not contained on 3" x 5" note cards.
- B. Participants report to the event area at the time and place stated in the conference program.

 In this event, thorough preparation is the key to success!



- C. Each participant will be provided with lined paper. Participants are responsible for bringing a blue or black ink pen to the event site. The pen may be “erasable.” Participants may also bring correcting fluid or correction tape to the site.
- D. One (1) of the subtopics is randomly drawn, and it is this subtopic for which the participants prepare a detailed outline using the format displayed on page 167.
- E. Timing begins after the subtopic is announced.
- F. After one (1) hour the participants stop writing. Each participant turns in a detailed outline not to exceed two (2) pages, a one (1)-page reference list using MLA format, and the relevant note card.
- G. The detailed outlines and note cards are reviewed by evaluators. Neither students nor advisors are present at this time.
- H. Evaluators will determine twelve (12) semifinalists, who will write an essay on the subtopic as submitted on the detailed outline.
- I. Semifinalists will be given one (1) hour to write an essay on the subtopic. After one (1) hour, the participants stop writing. Each participant turns in an essay not to exceed five (5) pages.
- J. Evaluators review entries. Neither students nor advisors are present at this time. Ten (10) finalists are determined and ranked by the evaluators.
- K. Ten (10) finalists are announced at the awards ceremony.

It is essential that students and advisors routinely check the TSA website (www.tsaweb.org) for updated information about TSA general rules and competitive event guidelines. This information is found on the website under Competitions/ Competition Updates. When students participate in any TSA competitive event, they are responsible for knowing of all updates, changes, and clarifications related to that event.



REGULATIONS

Preliminary Round

- A. Each participant is required to bring one (1) 3" x 5" note card for each subtopic. All research material brought into the event area must be handwritten on the note cards. Each participant may also bring a dictionary and/or a thesaurus to the event. The dictionary and thesaurus must be in print format, not electronic format.
- B. Note cards are to contain a bulleted outline of the subtopic (one [1] card per subtopic) on one (1) side, with sources and references on the other side of the card.
- C. Note cards are not to contain introductory or concluding paragraphs, nor are details to be written in sentence form. The outline on the note card may contain a thesis statement.
- D. The bulleted outline for note cards is required to follow the format on page 167.
- E. Only participants are allowed in the event area. Should a participant finish before the allotted time expires, the participant is allowed to leave quietly but may not reenter the event room.
- F. Participants are responsible for bringing a blue or black ink pen to the event site. The pen may be "erasable." The participant may also bring correcting fluid or correction tape to the site.
- G. Each outline page submitted must have the participant entry number only (i.e. no other identifying information) written in the upper right-hand corner of each page.
- H. The length of the detailed outline is limited to two (2) handwritten pages, one (1) side of the paper only, single-spaced.
- I. With the outline, participants must turn in a one (1) page bibliography (written on one [1] side of the paper only, using proper MLA bibliography format), and the relevant note card.
- J. The relevant note card is to have the participant entry number written in the upper right-hand corner.
- K. The detailed outline for the preliminary round is required to include details for an introductory paragraph, a body (of the essay), and a concluding paragraph; all details are to be in sentence form.

- L. The detailed outline is required to follow the format displayed on page 167.
- M. Twelve (12) semifinalists will be determined; semifinalists will write an essay on the subtopic.

Semifinalist Round

- A. Each participant will receive his/her outline, bibliography, and note card submitted from the preliminary round.
- B. Each participant is allowed to bring a dictionary and/or thesaurus to the event. The dictionary and thesaurus must be in print format, not electronic format.
- C. Participants are responsible for bringing a blue or black ink pen to the event site. The pen may be “erasable.” The participants may also bring correcting fluid or correction tape to the site.
- D. Each essay must have the participant’s entry number only written in the upper right-hand corner of each page submitted.
- E. The length of the essay is limited to five (5) handwritten pages, one (1) side of the paper only, and double-spaced. The list of references (bibliography) is not included in the five (5) pages.
- F. With the essay, participants must turn in a one (1)-page bibliography (written on one [1] side of the paper only, using proper MLA bibliography format), the outline from the preliminary round, and the relevant note card.
- G. All essays, outlines, and note cards become the property of national TSA.

EVALUATION

Entries are evaluated according to the quality of the outline and essay. Please refer to the official rating form for more information.



OUTLINE FORMAT FOR NOTE CARDS

Title of Essay

I. Introduction

Thesis statement (may be written in sentence form)

II. Body

A. Point A

1. Supporting detail
2. Supporting detail

B. Point B

1. Supporting detail
2. Supporting detail

C. Point C

1. Supporting detail
2. Supporting detail

III. Conclusion

DETAILED OUTLINE FORMAT PRELIMINARY ROUND

Title of Essay

I. Introductory paragraph

II. Body

A.

1.
 - a.
 - b.

2.
 - a.
 - b.

B.

1.
 - a.
 - b.

2.
 - a.
 - b.

C.

1.
 - a.
 - b.

2.
 - a.
 - b.

III. Concluding paragraph

STEM INTEGRATION

This event has connections to the STEM areas noted below. Please refer to the STEM INTEGRATION section of this guide.

Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS (CCSS) INTEGRATION

Please refer to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Integration section of this guide for more information.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership skills promoted in this event:

- Communication — Students communicate through written language. Suggested leadership activities: *Communication Breakdown and Mirror Mirror*
- Critical thinking — Students conduct research to write a well-developed essay. Suggested leadership activities: *Fact or Fiction and Rebus Puzzles*
- Self-esteem — Students gain confidence in understanding a topic by conducting thorough research. Suggested leadership activities: *Name Game and Personal Inventory*

Additional leadership skills promoted in this event:

- Decision making
- Evaluation

TSA AND CAREERS

This competition has connections to one or more of the career areas featured in the TSA AND CAREERS section of this guide. Use *The 16 Career Clusters* chart and the *TSA Competitions and Career Clusters* grid as resources for information about careers.

CAREERS RELATED TO THIS EVENT

- Economist
- Engineer
- Research technician
- Scientist
- Technical writer



ESSAYS ON TECHNOLOGY

EVENT COORDINATOR INSTRUCTIONS

PERSONNEL

- A. Event coordinator
- B. Evaluators, two (2) or more
- C. Semifinalist evaluators, two (2) or more
- D. Timekeeper, one (1)

MATERIALS

- A. Coordinator's packet, containing:
 - 1. Event guidelines, one (1) copy for the coordinator and each evaluator
 - 2. TSA Event Coordinator Report
 - 3. List of evaluators/assistants
 - 4. Stopwatch
 - 5. Results envelope with coordinator forms
- B. Securable room (preferable) during time of the event
- C. Lined paper, five (5) sheets per participant in the preliminary round; ten (10) sheets per each twelve (12) semifinalists.
- D. Subtopics, one (1), which is chosen on site as the essay topic
- E. Paper clips and staplers for securing note cards, outlines, and essays
- F. Tables and chairs for event coordinator, evaluators, and participants

RESPONSIBILITIES

Preliminary Round

- A. Upon arrival at the conference, report to the CRC room and check the contents of the coordinator's packet. Review the event guidelines and check to see that enough evaluators/assistants have been scheduled.
- B. Inspect the area or room in which the event is being held for appropriate set-up, including room size, chairs, tables, outlets, etc. Notify the event manager of any potential problems.

- C. One (1) hour before the event is scheduled to begin, meet with evaluators/assistants to review time limits, procedures, and regulations. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the event begins.
- D. For participants who violate the rules, the decision either to 1) deduct twenty percent (20%) of the total possible points or 2) disqualify the entry, must be discussed and verified with the evaluators, event coordinator, and CRC manager, who all must initial either of these actions on the rating form.
- E. Begin the event at the scheduled time by closing the doors and checking the entry list. All participants should be in the room at this time. Participants not present may be disqualified. In order to compete, participants must be on the entry list or must have approval of the CRC. An individual who is not on the entry list is permitted to participate, but the coordinator **MUST** confirm the individual's eligibility. If it is found that the individual is not registered for the event, the individual is disqualified. Late entries are considered on a case-by-case basis and only when the lateness is caused by circumstances beyond the participant's control.
- F. Distribute five (5) sheets of ruled notebook paper to each participant. Provide additional paper as needed.
- G. Instruct participants to identify their outline with only their entry number written in the upper right-hand corner of each page submitted. No other identifying information may be included.
- H. Remind participants to single-space their outline and submit no more than two (2) pages for evaluation, plus a single page for references, and the note card used for research (each with their entry number in the upper right hand corner).
- I. Randomly select one (1) of the subtopics. This subtopic becomes the subject for all the entries.
- J. Instruct participants who finish before time is called that they may submit their work and leave quietly.
- K. Five (5) minutes before the hour is up, make an announcement that the participants have five (5) minutes to complete their outlines. Exactly one (1) hour after beginning, call time and collect the outlines, reference pages, note cards, and unused paper.
- L. Supervise and assist the evaluators during the evaluation of the outlines and note cards. Each entry must be read independently by two (2) evaluators. Evaluators keep working until each entry has been assessed twice.



- M. The two (2) scores for each entry are averaged and the top twelve (12) entries are determined. These twelve (12) entries are to be posted as semifinalists.

Semifinalist Round

- A. Distribute participant's outlines and note cards from the preliminary round as participants check in to the semifinalist round.
- B. Distribute ten (10) sheets of ruled notebook paper to each participant. Provide additional paper as needed.
- C. Instruct participants to identify their essay with only their entry number written in the upper right-hand corner of each page of the essay submitted. No other identifying information may be included.
- D. Remind participants to double space their written work and submit no more than five (5) essay pages, plus a single page for references (with their entry number in the upper right hand corner). Each participant is required to turn in the outline and the note card used for the preliminary round.
- E. Instruct participants who finish before time is called that they may submit their work and leave quietly.
- F. Five (5) minutes before the hour is up, make an announcement that the participants have five (5) minutes to complete their essays. Exactly one (1) hour after beginning, call time and collect the essays, reference pages, outlines, note cards, and unused paper.
- G. Supervise and assist the evaluators during the reading of the essays. Each entry must be read and assessed independently by two (2) evaluators. Evaluators keep working until each entry has been assessed twice. Evaluators discuss and break any ties, and determine the ten (10) finalists.
- H. Submit the finalist results and all related forms in the results envelope to the CRC room.
- I. If necessary, manage security and the removal of materials from the area.



Participant/Team ID# _____

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2016 & 2017 OFFICIAL RATING FORM

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Preliminary Round - Detailed Outline (80 Points)

| CRITERIA | Minimal performance 1-4 points | Adequate performance 5-8 points | Exemplary performance 9-10 points |
|--|--|--|--|
| Evaluators: Using minimal (1-4 points), adequate (5-8 points), or exemplary (9-10 points) performance levels as a guideline, record the scores earned for the event criteria in the column spaces to the right. The X1 or X2 notation in the criteria column is a multiplier factor for determining the points earned. (Example: an "adequate" score of 7 for an X1 criterion = 7 points; an "adequate" score of 7 for an X2 criterion = 14 points.) | | | |
| Format (X1) | Outline only minimally follows the required format. | Outline generally follows the format, with most items from the format included. | Outline clearly follows the format; elements are in the proper sequence, and all items are included. |
| Thesis (X1) | Thesis is not a complete thought and/or is inappropriate for the essay; essay title and thesis do not correlate with one another; thesis lacks creativity. | Thesis is evident, and the idea behind the thesis is generally clear, concise, and/or creative; essay title correlates with the thesis. | Thesis is well structured, concise, and creative; essay title correlates well with thesis. |
| Introduction (X1) | Introduction lacks detail; thesis does not help to establish the writer's position. | Introduction creates some interest; thesis clearly states the writer's position. | Introduction is well developed; thesis clearly states a significant and compelling position. |
| Body (of essay) (X1) | Outline of paragraphs lacks main points to support the thesis, and/or there is a poor development of ideas. | Outline of paragraphs includes main points that are related to the thesis; examples have adequate supporting details. | Outline of paragraphs provides well-developed main points directly related to the thesis; supporting examples are concrete and detailed. |
| Conclusion (X1) | Conclusion is recognizable, but it does not effectively summarize the topic. | Conclusion effectively summarizes the points of the topic. | Conclusion clearly wraps up the points of the topic and goes beyond restating the thesis. |
| Organization (X1) | No discernible organization is apparent. | There is a logical progression of ideas in the outline; some structure is evident. | The outline conveys a logical progression of ideas, with a clear structure that enhances the thesis. |
| Mechanics (X1) | Outline contains distracting errors in punctuation, grammar, and spelling; handwriting is messy and/or illegible. | Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are generally correct, with few errors; handwriting is adequate and/or mostly legible. | Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are correct, with no errors; handwriting is easy to read. |
| Bibliography (X1) | References are not used effectively and/or do not pertain to the topic; limited quality sources are used; bibliography is not in the proper MLA format. | Most sources used are credible and of good quality; most references help to support the essay topic; bibliography is in the proper MLA format but has some errors. | Outline includes multiple and varied sources, all of which are credible, appropriate, and support the topic; bibliography is in proper MLA format, with no errors. |
| | | | SUBTOTAL (80 points) |

Record scores in the column spaces below.

Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points for the above section) must be initialed by the evaluator, coordinator and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right.

Indicate the rule violated: _____



| Semifinalist Round - Essay (100 points) | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| CRITERIA | Minimal performance 1-4 points | Adequate performance 5-8 points | Exemplary performance 9-10 points |
| Thesis (X1) | Thesis is not a complete thought and/or is inappropriate for the essay; essay title and thesis do not correlate with one another; thesis lacks creativity. | Thesis is evident, but the idea behind the thesis may not be clear or concise, and/or it may be lacking in creativity; essay title somewhat correlates with the thesis. | Thesis is well structured, concise, appropriate, and creative; essay title correlates well with thesis. |
| Introductory paragraph (X1) | Introduction provides background but may lack detail; thesis does not help to establish the writer's position. | Introduction creates interest; thesis clearly states the position. | Introduction is well developed, it engages the reader, and it creates interest; the thesis clearly states a significant and compelling position. |
| Body paragraphs (X2) | Paragraphs lack main points to support the thesis, and/or there is a poor development of ideas. | Paragraphs include main points that are related to the thesis; supporting details are adequate. | Paragraphs provide well-developed main points directly related to the thesis; supporting examples are concrete and detailed. |
| Concluding paragraph (X1) | Conclusion is recognizable, but it does not effectively summarize the topic. | Conclusion effectively summarizes the topic. | Conclusion wraps up the points of the essay and goes beyond restating the thesis. |
| Organization (X1) | No discernible organization is apparent; transitions are not present. | There is a logical progression of ideas in the essay; transitions are present throughout the essay. | The essay conveys a logical progression of ideas, with a clear structure that enhances the thesis; transitions are mature and graceful. |
| Style (X1) | The style is confusing and hard to follow; it contains fragments and/or run-on sentences; word choice is simple, ordinary, and/or repetitive. | The style is generally clear, but sentences may lack variety; word choice is appropriate. | The style is smooth, skillful and coherent; sentences are strong and expressive, with varied structure; word choice is appropriate and mature. |
| Mechanics (X1) | Essay contains distracting errors in punctuation, grammar, and spelling; handwriting is messy and/or illegible. | Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are generally correct, with few errors; handwriting is generally legible. | Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are correct, with no errors; handwriting is easy to read. |
| Research base (X1) | Essay lacks an adequate research base, and/or very few credible sources are referenced. | Research is conducted appropriately, with generally credible sources. | Essay conveys a comprehensive research base that includes clearly credible sources. |
| Bibliography (X1) | References are not used effectively and/or do not pertain to the topic; limited quality sources are used; bibliography is not in the proper MLA format. | Most sources used are credible and of good quality; most references help to support the essay topic; bibliography is in the proper MLA format, with only minor errors. | Essay incorporates multiple and varied sources, all of which are credible, appropriate, and support the topic; bibliography is in proper MLA format, with no errors. |
| | | | SUBTOTAL (100 points) |



Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points for the semifinalist section) must be initialed by the evaluator, coordinator and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right.

Indicate the rule violated: _____

(To arrive at the TOTAL score, add any subtotals and subtract rules violation points, as necessary.) **TOTAL (180 points)**

Comments:

I certify these results to be true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Evaluator

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____