



4th Grade Student Essay Competition

Proud to be an American, Proud to be a Hoosier

It's great to be a Hoosier! Write an essay about why you are proud of your state, and you could be honored at a Statehood Day celebration!

The **Indiana Center for the Book** is hosting an essay competition to commemorate Indiana's 210th Statehood Day! This year's theme is ***Proud to be American: Proud to be a Hoosier*** in conjunction with America's 250th Anniversary, the Semiquincentennial. Winners of the essay contest will be honored on Thursday, December 11, 2026 at the Indiana State Museum and the Indiana Statehouse. Questions? Email icb@library.in.gov.

Three winners will be selected. EACH WINNER will be invited to read their essays at Statehood Day events at either the Indiana Statehouse or the Indiana State Museum and will receive an Indiana529 Deposit of \$529.00 made possible by the Indiana Education Savings Authority!

Entry forms are available here:

<https://www.in.gov/library/icb/statehood/>

Any Indiana school is welcome to attend Statehood day celebrations, regardless of whether or not they participate in the contest or have a winner. Registration is required to attend events. Contact the Indiana Statehouse or the Indiana State Museum for details.

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— ESSAY CONTEST RULES AND DEADLINES —

The competition is open to any Indiana 4th grade public, private, or homeschooled student, in the 2026-2027 school year. A panel of judges from the Indiana Statehouse, Indiana State Museum, Indiana State Library, and the Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center will choose 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. Winners must submit a permission release form.

Essays must range from 100 to 300 words, handwritten or typed.

Essays must be submitted with an entry form. Individual entries should use the **2026 Individual Entry form**. Class sets should use the **2026 Group Entry Form**.

Essays should be well organized and reflective of the theme: *Proud to be an American: Proud to be a Hoosier*. Judges are looking forward to seeing your students' interpretation of the theme. What makes you proud to be an American, and more specifically, proud to be a Hoosier? Our theme is connected to the American 250th Anniversary, the Semiquincentennial, but we want students to focus more on their pride for their state than for their country. This could be based on a wide range of options from history, geography, tourism, famous people, or anything else your student is proud of his or her state!

Through this program, we value a student's authentic voice and honest, original thoughts. We value unique perspective more than perfect prose or grammar. Plagiarism, including the use of AI to generate an essay is not permitted. Entries must be the student's own original work. Submissions that, after review using multiple evaluation methods, are determined by the Indiana Affiliate Center for the Book to have been plagiarized or generated or substantially assisted by AI tools will be disqualified.

This contest supports Indiana Educational Standards for Language Arts and Social Studies.

Mail your entries to: Indiana Center for the Book
Indiana State Library
140 N. Senate Ave
Indianapolis, IN 46204

OR Email your entries as an attachment to icb@library.in.gov.

Mailed essays must be postmarked by **Monday, October 20, 2026.**

Emailed entries must be received by **Monday, October 20, 2026.**



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