4th Grade Student Essay Competition

Proud to be an American, Proud to be a Hoosier!

First Place - 2026

Molly Egenoff
White River Valley Elementary School
Worthington, Indiana
Greene County

Have you ever stopped and thought about what makes your home special? I am proud to be a Hoosier and an American because of the kind people, beautiful land, and freedom we have.

One reason why I am proud to be a Hoosier is because of our kind people. I have met many people from different states, but none are quite like Indiana's. For example, I have kind neighbors, and every year they invite us over for lemonade and a picnic. Though we don't have many neighbors, the ones we do have are very kind. Their kindness makes Indiana feel like home and proud to live in Indiana.

Another reason I'm proud to be a Hoosier is Indiana's beautiful landscapes. For example, I enjoy visiting Spring Mill State Park. I have been there many times, and it has beautiful gardens, old fields, and even old mills. Though it is not a forest or a field of daisies it is still beautiful and enjoyable to see. Every time I visit, I am reminded of how beautiful Indiana is and why I am proud to live here.

The last reason I am proud to be an American is because of our freedom. It is important to have freedom because we have rights to choose our future, speak freely, have a loving home, and have a loving family that we can spend time with. These freedoms are important to me because they allow us to make choices about our lives. Indiana may be one state out of fifty, but there sure are a lot of reasons to be proud to live here.

From our kind neighbors to our beautiful landscapes and the freedoms we enjoy, I am proud to call Indiana my home and America my country.

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Second Place - 2026

Charlie Herre
Van Rensselaer Elementary School
Rensselaer, Indiana
Jasper County

I Am Proud to be an American Hoosier

I am a proud American and a proud Hoosier, because I am a fifth generation farmer in Rensselaer, Indiana. I farm with my Dad and Grandpa. We raise cows, show Boer goats, and chickens on our farm. Also, we farm around 1,500 acres of corn, soybeans, and hay. We use Case IH equipment on the farm. I am proud that we help feed America's people. As I get older I plan to keep feeding America's people through farming.

Every year on the 4th of July weekend we always camp at my Aunt Kim's house and celebrate our freedom as Americans. As Americans, we celebrate Labor Day on September 7th to honor the people who work in America. Americans celebrate Memorial Day on May 25th to honor the one's who have served and lost their lives for our country. Americans celebrate Veterans Day on November 11th to honor the ones who are serving or who have served our country in the military.

Indiana is a part of the corn belt. The corn belt is where the majority of the corn is raised in America. This time of year, during the Fall season, is when we harvest our crops for Americans. I am glad that we can grow crops to feed our livestock that we sell to feed Indiana and America. This is why I am proud to be an American Hoosier.

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Third Place - 2026

Erleen Sandhu
Ray Crowe Elementary
Greenwood, Indiana
Johnson County

Proud to be a Hoosier!

Have you ever wondered what makes Indiana so special? I am proud to be an American because we live in a land of freedom. I am even more proud to be a Hoosier because Indiana is a fantastic state filled with exciting sports, amazing agriculture, and great people.

One reason Indiana is special is because it is filled with exciting sports such as basketball and the Indy 500. Basketball is very popular in Indiana, and almost everyone enjoys playing it at the park or watching it on TV with their family. Indiana is also famous for having the Indy 500. It is the world's largest sporting event, and it is exciting to see so many people come to our state just to watch the race cars.

Another reason to love Indiana is all the fresh foods we get from our farms. Indiana grows a lot of corn, and our state is always one of the top five places in the whole country for growing the most corn. In addition, Indiana farms provide fresh meat from their animals, making our state famous for its high quality foods.

Finally, the best part about Indiana is its wonderful community of friendly and sweet people. Hoosiers always share kindness and step up to help whenever someone is in need, especially when caring for our elderly neighbors. This helpful spirit is truly what keeps our communities happy and connected.

I am deeply grateful to be a Hoosier because of our sweet people, the excitement of the Indy 500 and basketball, and the fresh foods from our farms and community gardens. I wish everyone in Indiana to stay happy, kind, and always grateful for what they have in the amazing state we share.