

**Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association
Youth Essay Contest and Guidelines**

Topic:

You may be creative with your title however all entries must be relevant to the topic for this year's contest:

What lessons have you learned from being involved in the ranching community? How do you think that will shape your future?

Share your real-life experiences to inspire or entertain others. We encourage you to use your most engaging writing style to make your essay stand out to the reader. Tell us interesting – perhaps little-known-facts, compelling anecdotes, and your opinion related to the essay subject. Most importantly, share your passion for the beef industry and the ranching way of life.

Age Categories:

This essay contest is open to youth in the following age categories. Age as of June 1, 2023.

- Age 5 – 8
- Age 9 – 13
- Age 14 – 18

Guidelines:

By submitting an entry, contestant accepts and agrees to comply with these rules.

- All contestants must be a member of OCA (either a student member, child or grandchild of a member or whose parents are employed by an OCA member). Proof of membership must be submitted with entry, such as membership #.
- Essays should be 1,000 words or less and written in English.
- Entries must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman with a one-inch margin on all sides of the page.
- Each essay should have a cover sheet stating the contestant's name, address, phone number, email address, the title of their essay and the age division in which they will be competing and parent or guardian's name.
- **Do not** place your name on any of the pages of the essay. Only the cover sheet should include this information. **Do** include the title of your essay on each page.
- No substitutions of new drafts or corrected pages will be accepted once you have submitted your original essay.
- All entries are the property of OCA and will not be returned.
- Winning essays may be used for OCA promotional purposes at its discretion.
- Essays must be completely the original work of the contestant entering the contest and cannot have been published previously. No assistance of other parties, including but not limited to brainstorming, editing, or proof reading, is permissible. Any essay containing plagiarized text will automatically be disqualified.
- Only one (1) essay may be submitted by each contestant.
- Your essay will be disqualified if it does not meet the requirements or is submitted after the submission date of 5:00 pm (CST) on June 30, 2023.

Judging

- Essays will be judged on writing ability, creativity, originality of thought, grammar, spelling, logic, clarity, writing style, and content.
- An anonymous panel will judge entries prior to arrival at Convention and only the people's choice award will be judged at convention by popular vote
- All judgments are final, and interpretations of the guidelines are at OCA's sole discretion.

Awards

The top two individuals in each age category will receive an award. Award winners will be notified prior to the OCA Convention and will be recognized during the Opening Session at the OCA Convention. Winning essays may also be published in *The Oklahoma Cowman* magazine.

People's Choice Award

Artwork will be displayed for review by attendees during the OCA Convention. Selection of the winning entry for the People's Choice award shall be determined by popular vote, with the award given to the entry with the greatest number of votes received. The People's Choice Award winners will be recognized during the Closing Session at the OCA Convention.

The People's Choice Winner for each contest will receive an additional \$50 prize and coverage in our post-convention issue of *The Oklahoma Cowman* magazine. There will only be one People's Choice Winner for each contest selected from all ages combined.

Deadline

Your essay must be submitted electronically on June 30, 2023. Submit your essay as a **PDF**. Late entries will not be accepted. Complete the Google Form found <https://forms.gle/3mejT8cD1YwJbKj8> or scan QR Code to access form:



Questions regarding the OCA Essay Contest may be directed to cmcniff@okcattlemen.org or 405.613.0239

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