

Ideas Matter Essay Contest Rubric

Overview:

Arkansas students in the 11th and 12th grades are invited to write a 1,000-word (minimum) essay exploring one topic in one of three focus areas: [Creating Economic Opportunity](#), [Improving Public Health](#), [Inspiring Civic Engagement](#). Students are asked to define a challenge, propose an idea to alleviate the challenge and develop a strategy for putting the idea into action.

Focus Area: Creating Economic Opportunity

Examples: US Homelessness, Global Poverty, Renewable Resources

Focus Area: Improving Public Health

Examples: Healthy Schools, Opioid Crisis, Healthy Communities

Focus Area: Inspiring Civic Engagement

Examples: Creative Leadership, Intentionality-Putting People First, Service Projects

FOCUS AREA EXAMPLES ARE INSPIRED BY THE "2017 IMPACT REPORT" - [HTTPS://2017.CLINTONFOUNDATION.ORG/IMPACT-REPORT/](https://2017.CLINTONFOUNDATION.ORG/IMPACT-REPORT/)

Criteria for Judging:

Define a Challenge (25%)

- Fully explain the challenge.
- Provide relevant research that helps to establish the validity of the challenge.
- Provide current data on the impact of the challenge. (Within 2-4 years)
- State how the challenge is affecting their community. (neighborhood, culture, generational group, etc.)

Propose an Idea to Alleviate the Challenge (25%)

- Student exhibits a clear line of reasoning by thoroughly showing his/her steps in processing the idea.
- Compare and contrast any current or past efforts that may address this challenge.
- Provide a sound argument for what makes the idea compelling.

Develop a Strategy for Putting the Idea into Action (35%)

- Provide clear steps for how your idea can be implemented.
- Is this a revamp of an old idea or a completely new approach?
- Level of stakeholder involvement (community, churches, businesses, individuals, leaders, etc.)
- Sustainability (forecasting, longevity- Is this something that will be ongoing or can be repeated on a consistent basis)
- Describe the resources that are used or needed for optimal outcome

Presentation (15%)

- Quality of writing (clarity, style, flow, vocabulary)
- Organization (structure, introduction, body, conclusion)
- Conventions (syntax, grammar, spelling, punctuation)