



Essay Contests

Barbara Jordan Historical Essay Competition
Latino History Essay Competition

Lisa Parker

lparker@uiltexas.org

UIL A + Academics Coordinator and
Essay Contest Coordinator

Let's talk about the lottery.

POWERBALL

TEXAS
LOTTERY

MEGA
MILLIONS

\$

Estimated
Annuitized
Jackpot

700

MILLION

\$

Estimated
Annuitized
Jackpot

885

MILLION

LAMAR

Around *1 in 10* essays were chosen
as finalist essays in 2016-17.

Yes-*1 in 10!!!*

There are *many* reasons to enter the essay competitions.

- ONE essay to become a UIL Academic State Finalist



There are *many* reasons to enter the essay competitions.

- TILF scholarship eligibility (aka *dollar bills*)

There are *many* reasons to enter the essay competitions.

2014	Kelly Jennings	Lewisville HS	Barbara Jordan	\$1000
2014	Jessica Alls	Wheeler Kelton HS	Barbara Jordan	\$1000
2015	Desarae Carter	Houston Aldine HS	Barbara Jordan	\$1000
2016	Anthony Garcia	Harlingen South HS	Latino History	\$1000
2016	Karina Garcia	Center HS	Barbara Jordan	\$1000

There are *many* reasons to enter the essay competitions.

- Competitions are relatively new (aka competition is *not yet fierce*)

There are *many* reasons to enter the essay competitions.

- Learn about extraordinary people you might not know in your community

There are *many* reasons to enter the essay competitions.

- Become a part of *history*
- Barbara Jordan finalist essays are archived at [The Briscoe Center](#).
- Latino History finalist essays are archived at the Benson Collection.

There are *many* reasons to enter the essay competitions.

- Attend the *Academic State Meet* and be recognized

Strengths of the Essay

Good organization and unity. Coherent except for the relation of thesis to actual subject of essay. Good use of vocabulary and sentence variety.

Areas Needing Improvement

The style used is neither APA nor MLA. Check instructions for style guides in submissions.

Constructive Comments and Suggestions for the Contestant

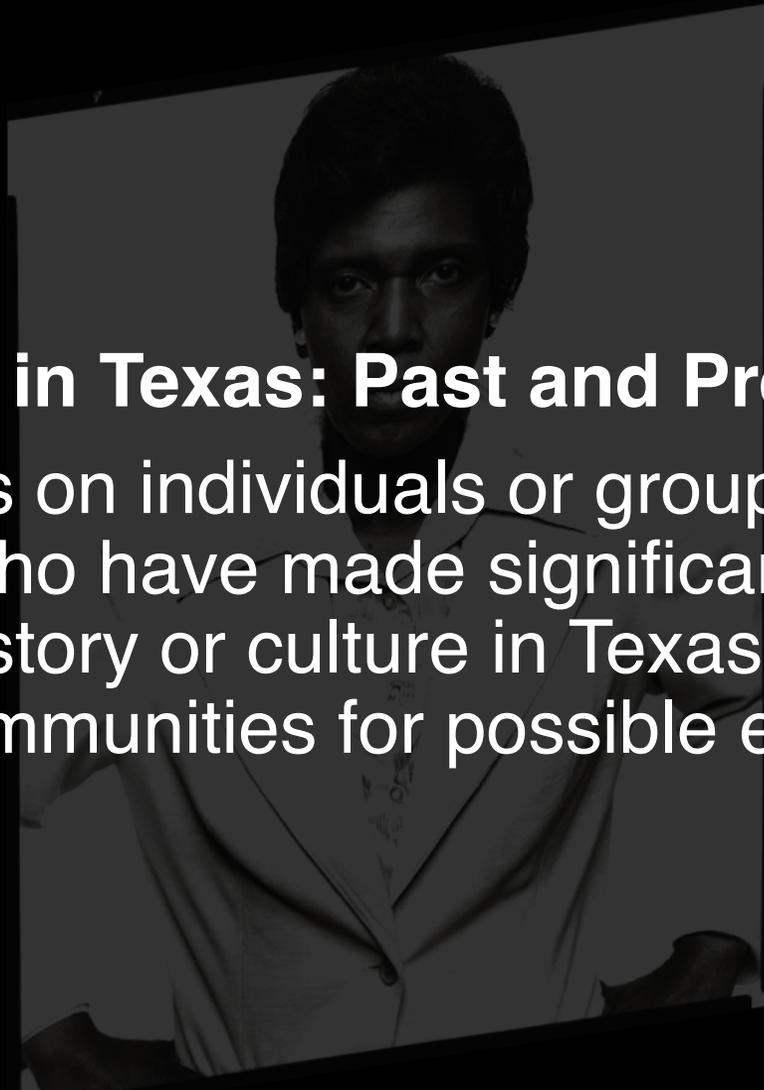
Good quotations but work on incorporating them into your own comments. Quotations should support your thoughts instead of simply being inserted into a paragraph as stand alone sentence. Work on sentence writing style; some sentences are technically correct, but they are awkwardly worded so the reader has to work to decipher meaning (see sentence 5 in the introduction). The thesis statement does indicate a broad topic but is loosely related to the topic of the essay: a single important person. The essay should include a variety of research; most of the essay was anecdotal about the subject instead of incorporating first-hand accounts.

Two *essay* contests to enter..

Barbara Jordan Historical Essay Competition

African Americans in Texas: Past and Present

Essays should focus on individuals or groups who are not well-known figures but who have made significant contributions to African American history or culture in Texas. Students should look first to their local communities for possible essay topics.



Just who is Barbara Jordan?

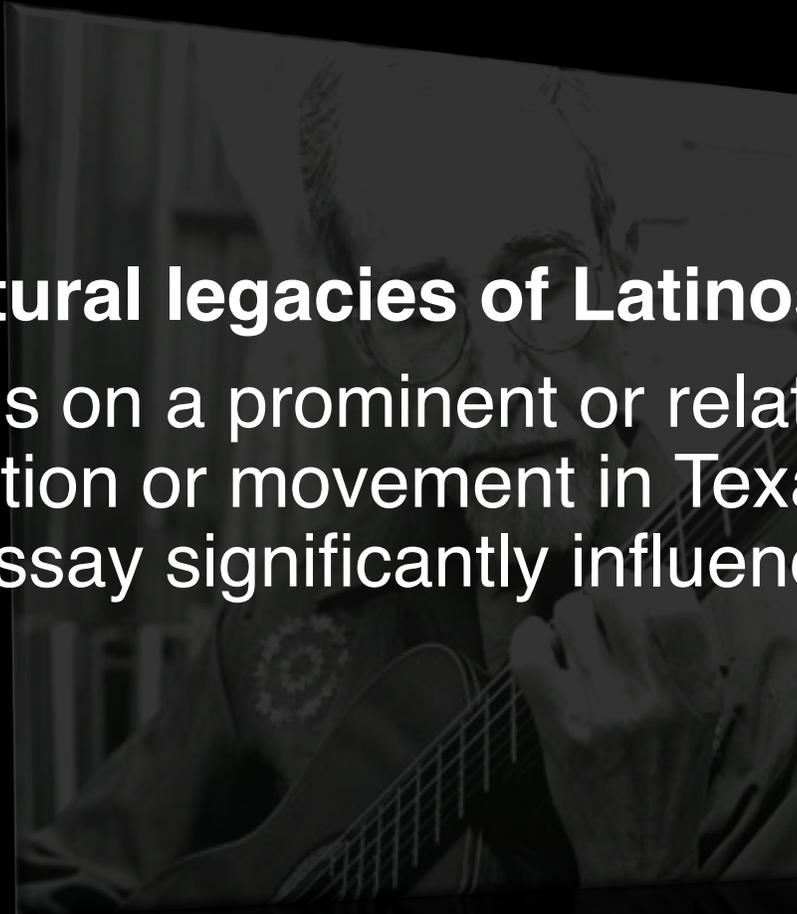




Latino Historical Essay Competition

Historical and cultural legacies of Latinos in Texas history

Essays should focus on a prominent or relatively unknown Latino individual, organization or movement in Texas history. How has the subject of the essay significantly influenced today's Latino communities?



Essay Tips for Both Contests

- Content
- Style
- Mechanics

Essay Tips for Both Contests

Content

Essay Tips for Both Contests:

Content

- Essay topic

- Notable Texan figure of significance to a large group of people



Essay Tips for Both Contests:

Content

- Thesis statement
 - What is my essay about? What am I trying to prove?

Essay Tips for Both Contests:

Content

- Concrete details AND student commentary
 - Concrete detail= quotes, paraphrases, and summaries from your research
 - Commentary= original insight, your analysis, opinions (based on concrete details)

Essay Tips for Both Contests: Content

Concrete details AND student commentary

The one thing Carver always kept in mind with his experiments was that it had to be obtainable to reach by the poor farmers with little equipment (Carver 18). The creation of new products and proving how his ideas would help the poor farmers was only part of Carver's accomplishments. He looked at himself as not only a scientist but as someone who was meant to help the poor blacks.

Essay Tips for Both Contests

Style

Essay Tips for Both Contests:

Style

- Clichés (avoid completely)
- Scott Joplin is **one in a million**. To make a long story **short**, his music career dubbed Joplin the “king of ragtime.”
- Scott Joplin’s musical influence is a unique and powerful one that led to his becoming the “king of ragtime.”
- <http://bit.ly/2fwPtOR>

Essay Tips for Both Contests:

Style

- Chattiness (giving a grand tour of your essay)
- I understand that the Barbara Jordan Historical Essay competition is supposed to be written about a single African American that is important to Texas history, but one cannot write about one particular individual without the entire family.
- Just to add a little spice to my paper I will give a brief description of Friona. Friona is a very small farming town that can be found in Palmer County, Texas.
 - Don't "point at" the essay. Try not to use first person. Don't worry about spicing things up- it's already plenty hot in Texas.

Essay Tips for Both Contests:

Style

- Wordiness
- Collins wrote, proposed, and introduced an influential piece of legislation having to do with equal pay (“Paving the Way” 14). This legislation provided the way for documentation regarding workers’ salaries so that valuable and much needed information could be obtained about this type of data.
- <http://bit.ly/2fojFaW>

Essay Tips for Both Contests: Style

- Word Choice

Essay Tips for Both Contests

Mechanics

Essay Tips for Both Contests:

Mechanics

- Proofread, proofread, proofread.
- Proofread, proofread, proofread.
- Proofread, proofread, proofread.

Essay Tips for Both Contests:

Mechanics

- Include a variety of quality sources.
- Many students incorporate a personal interview, which is a great way to include a primary source.
- However, besides that interview, there needs to be a variety of credible sources.

Essay Tips for Both Contests:

Mechanics

- Cite correctly and consistently. Choose a citation method and apply its formatting rules (APA, MLA, etc...).
- Many papers have sparse citations that were used only for direct quotations.
- Your paraphrases and summaries need in-text citations (or end notes) as well.

Essay Resources

- Essay Rubric
- [UIL Essay Contest Webpages](#)
- [Primary Sources](#)



Essay Competition Rubric

Entry Number: _____

Entry Score: _____

Use the checklist below to score the essay from a 1-9.

High Range Essays 9-8

- ___ Effectively proves thesis statement about a far-reaching topic
- ___ Purposefully utilizes a variety of research with a focus on primary sources
- ___ Is clear, well organized, and coherent
- ___ Concrete details (quotes, paraphrases, and summaries) are effectively incorporated
- ___ Includes ample commentary that bolsters concrete details
- ___ Contains very few errors or flaws, if any
- ___ Parenthetical citations are effectively utilized that refer to an accurate Works Cited page
 - *A 8 and 9 paper have a mature, sophisticated writing style rarely seen in a 7 paper*

Middle Range Essays 7-6-5

- ___ Adequately proves thesis about a far-reaching topic
- ___ A variety of research is incorporated and/or attempted including primary sources
- ___ The argument is generally convincing but less cogent or developed; 5 essays may be somewhat weak
- ___ Concrete details (quotes, paraphrases, and summaries) are incorporated
- ___ Includes sufficient commentary that supports ideas in concrete details
- ___ Contains only minor errors or flaws
- ___ Citations are mostly accurate that refer to an attempted Works Cited page
 - *A 7 paper demonstrates a more consistent command of writing conventions than does the 5 or 6 paper.*
 - *A 5 paper does the minimum required by the assignment. It often loses focus and includes unnecessary details.*

Low Range Essays 4-3-2-1

- ___ Inadequately attempts to prove thesis; topic might not be far-reaching
- ___ Researched material is lacking in variety and/or primary source material
- ___ Writing demonstrates consistent weaknesses such as a lack of organization, awkward sentences, and word choice
- ___ Concrete details (quotes, paraphrases, and summaries) are either excessively used or mostly absent
- ___ Commentary about research material is lacking.
- ___ Contains multiple errors that might hinder understanding of essay
- ___ Multiple problems exist surrounding parenthetical citations and Works Cited page (example: a majority of the citations and/or Works Cited page is missing)
 - *A 3 or 4 have a major error preventing this essay from being adequate.*
 - *A 1 or 2 indicates major lack of understanding and control. It may also indicate severe writing problems.*

1st Place Essay from 2016–2017

- “Making a Difference: No Sweat for Sweatt”
by Averri LeMalle II from Klein High School
- Strengths:
 - Student effectively wove CONCRETE DETAIL AND COMMENTARY throughout paper (did not just recite facts).
 - Topic is a far-reaching person of Texas influence
 - Vivid word choice
 - Topic and concluding sentences in paragraphs- makes it easy to read
 - Citations attempted and a correctly formatted Works Cited page
- <http://bit.ly/2xKsE0u>

Submitting your essay

- Deadline is Wednesday, February 21
- 2018 essay contest entry form:
- <https://www.uiltexas.org/machform/view.php?id=294060>

Questions?

- Lisa Parker
- UIL Essay Contest Coordinator
- lparker@uiltexas.org
- 512-471-5883