**UIL Essay Competitions**

Essay deadline\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Topic Analysis**

**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 positive, significant contributions to African American history or culture in Texas. Students should look first to their local communities for possible essay topics.

**Latino History 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 positively and significantly influenced today’s Latino communities?

**Sample Introduction**

“Making a Difference: No Sweat for Sweatt”

At a time when opportunities for higher education were limited for African American residents in the state of Texas, Heman Marion Sweatt, was surrounded by college graduates. His father, James Leonard Sweatt, graduated from Prairie View Normal School, “the first state supported college in Texas for African Americans” (History N.P.), making him one of the trailblazers of higher education for African Americans in the state. As a trailblazer, James Sweatt encouraged all of his children to go to college, and they did:

“John, his oldest son, attended Iowa State College in Ames, where he studied under George Washington Carver. Erma went to Columbia University; Jack, to the University of Michigan; and Wendell, to the University of Nevada” (Barr and Calvert 163).

Sweatt, the fifth of six children, would follow the path of his siblings, but he would also achieve much more. Like his father, Sweatt would secure his education in the state of Texas--not at Prairie View but at Wiley College, the first black college in the state to receive accreditation--and he would make history as a trailblazer for the integration of graduate level programs in Texas.