

**UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE
READY WRITING CONTEST**

HIGH SCHOOL TOPICS

REGION • 2025

Read both of the following statements carefully; then write an expository essay on a topic clearly related to one or the other of the two statements. **Provide your own title.** You are not expected to write on both topics.

Contestants who are hand-writing their compositions must use their own standard 8 1/2 x 11-inch ruled white notebook paper or typing paper, or the paper provided by the host school. Contestants shall write or print the composition **in ink and on only one side of the paper.** If contestants choose to use their own laptop computers, they must bring portable printers and associated hardware, software and paper. The typed entry must be single-sided and double-spaced, using any standard 12-point font on 8 1/2 x 11-inch white paper. When printing the contest on an electronic printer, the print command must be started by the time contest time expires. Students who opt to compose their entries on computers accept the risk of computer malfunction. In case of computer malfunction, the contestant may use the remaining allotted time to complete the composition in handwriting or compose on another computer (if available).

Ready Writing prompts are provided as springboards for thought, not to advocate particular points of view. Contestants should not conclude that quotations or statements used in prompts reflect the opinion of the UIL.

Topic I

“It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat.”

--Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), American
President, Speech at the Sorbonne, Paris (1910)

Topic II

“There is a crime here that goes beyond denunciation. There is a sorrow here that weeping cannot symbolize. There is a failure here that topples all our success. The fertile earth, the straight tree rows, the sturdy trunks, and the ripe fruit. And children dying of pellagra* must die because a profit cannot be taken from an orange. And coroners must fill in the certificate- died of malnutrition- because the food must rot, must be forced to rot. The people come with nets to fish for potatoes in the river, and the guards hold them back; they come in rattling cars to get the dumped oranges, but the kerosene is sprayed. And in the eyes of the hungry there is a growing wrath. In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage.”

*a disease caused by a vitamin deficiency

--John Steinbeck (1902-1968), American
Novelist, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939)