

## RCPS Essay Contest Rubric

Directions: Use this rubric as a guide when writing your essay. Judges will be using it as a guideline during the judging process.

Traits	4	3	2	1
<b>Focus &amp; Details</b>	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main ideas are clear and are well supported by detailed and accurate information.	This is one clear, well-focused topic. Main ideas are clear but are not well supported by detailed information.	There is one topic. Main ideas are somewhat clear.	The topic and main ideas are not clear.
<b>Organization</b>	The introduction is inviting, states the main topic, and provides an overview of the essay. Information is relevant and presented in a logical order. The conclusion is strong.	The introduction states the main topic and provides an overview of the essay. A conclusion is included.	The introduction states the main topic. A conclusion is included.	There is no clear introduction, structure, or conclusion.
<b>Voice</b>	The author's purpose of writing is very clear, and there is strong evidence of attention to audience. The author's extensive knowledge and/or experience with the topic is/are evident.	The author's purpose of writing is somewhat clear, and there is some evidence of attention to audience. The author's knowledge and/or experience with the topic is/are evident.	The author's purpose of writing is somewhat clear, and there is evidence of attention to audience. The author's knowledge and/or experience with the topic is/are limited.	The author's purpose of writing is unclear.
<b>Word Choice</b>	The author uses vivid words and phrases. The choice and placement of words seems accurate, natural, and not forced.	The author uses vivid words and phrases. The choice and placement of words is inaccurate at times and/or seems overdone.	The author uses words that communicate clearly, but the writing lacks variety.	The writer uses a limited vocabulary. Jargon or clichés may be present and detract from the meaning.
<b>Sentence Structure, Grammar, Mechanics, &amp; Spelling</b>	All sentences are well constructed and have varied structure and length. The author makes no errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling.	Most sentences are well constructed and have varied structure and length. The author makes a few errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling, but they do not interfere with understanding.	Most sentences are well constructed, but they have a similar structure and/or length. The author makes several errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling that interfere with understanding.	Sentences sound awkward, are distractingly repetitive, or are difficult to understand. The author makes numerous errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling that interfere with understanding.
<b>Judge's Comments</b>				

\*Rubric was adapted from readwritethink and the International Reading Association