

This document is meant as a resource to assist in completing the Essay. This is not a submission form; only submissions made through the online portal will be accepted.

WSPTA Essay Contest – People Making a Difference in Children’s Lives

This statewide essay contest explores the important and varied influencers in the lives and education of children – from our children’s perspective. Every day children are exposed to a variety of people and each one has an opportunity to influence the path a child decides to take. Whether it is someone that sparks an interest in a new topic, helps them work through a problem, shapes the kind of person they want to become by modeling behavior, simply listens to them, or any number of other actions, this is the platform for students to share their appreciation (must be a real person, not a fictional character). This contest has multiple age divisions and reaches out to every local PTA, council, region and, ultimately, every family in our state.

- Essays will be scored on the current state learning standards for writing. Essays will be scored on content, organization, language/conventions, and style per the program judging form.
- Deadline for submissions: **submitted no later than March 12, 2026.**
- Entries must include a completed and signed WSPTA Essay Contest [online application form](#). The essay must be copied into the form and be no more than 650 words.
- Essays will not be returned, please keep a copy for your records.
- One entry per student, multiple entries from one student will be disqualified.
- Students can only win once in each category.
- Open to all Washington state children K-12 in public, private or home-school settings.
- Each entry must be an original, not written by a parent or professional, has not previously won a prize, and does not infringe the copyright or other proprietary rights of any third party.

Objective:

The contest is for students of all ages to write an essay about an influential role model that has had a profound impact on their life. The objective is to help celebrate the people that are most important in influencing the lives of children around the state of Washington.

When writing their essays, students can consider many questions including (but not limited to):

- Why is this role model important in your life?
- What life lessons, ethics, or skills has this influential role model taught you?
- Why do you look up to this role model and appreciate having him or her in your life?
- How would your life be different without this role model?
- How would other kids benefit from having a similar role model in their life?

Divisions:

For details on each division, visit the [Essay Website](#) Questions please email essay@wastatepta.org.

- Special Author – Elementary division (kindergarten - 5th grade) *
- Kindergarten
- Grades 1 - 2
- Grades 3 - 5
- Grades 6 - 8
- Special Author – Secondary division (6th – 12th grade) *
- Grades 9 - 12

**Special Author is an option for students with disabilities per IDEA or Section 504)*