

# Essay

## Theme: "Home is Where the Habitat is"



Rules: For a complete list of rules and/or updates, please contact us at (352) 438-2478 or visit our website: [www.marionswcdfl.gov](http://www.marionswcdfl.gov)

- 1 Open to any Marion County student in grades 4 through 12, and the work must be the individual student's own.
- 2 Contestants must submit four (4) typewritten copies of their essay, double-spaced on 8 ½ x 11 inch plain white paper, with a one-inch margin.
- 3 Essays must be typed using a standard size 12 font (suggested: Times New Roman, Arial, Trebuchet MS, or Corbel).
- 4 Essays must be a minimum of four (4) pages and a maximum of five (5) pages in length. The cover page and bibliography do not count toward the page requirement.
- 5 Entries must include a cover page with the following information: contestant's name, address, telephone number, school or club name, teacher or advisor's name, and grade level. Do not include your name or any other identifying information on the essay pages.
- 6 Points will be deducted if rules are not followed, or if the essay is submitted after the deadline.

### JUDGING CRITERIA

Three competent and impartial judges will be selected. Their decisions are final.

A standard score sheet will be used, based on the following criteria:

#### **Content – 50 points:**

Knowledge of subject; develops and follows the theme; presents accurate facts; stimulates thinking; originality (no plagiarism)

#### **Composition – 30 points:**

Innovative style (keeps interest, clear message, easily understood); effective opening and closing; proper transitions; correct use of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation

#### **Organization – 20 points:**

Neatness, legibility, correct cover page, conformance to length

### AWARDS

Winners chosen from two divisions: Grades 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> and Grades 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>

1<sup>st</sup> Place – \$100

2<sup>nd</sup> Place – \$75

3<sup>rd</sup> Place – \$50



### DEADLINE

Essays must be (e)mailed or hand-delivered no later than: **Friday, December 13, 2024 – 4 p.m.**

Marion Soil and Water Conservation District

2710 East Silver Springs Blvd; Ocala, FL 34470

Mailed entries must be postmarked on or before the due date.

MSWCD is not responsible for essays lost in the mail.

For additional information, contact MSWCD at (352) 438-2478 or [Stefani.Duarte@MarionFL.org](mailto:Stefani.Duarte@MarionFL.org)

Participation earns points toward the Youth Conservationist of the Year Award.