

8th Grade Essay Contest  
Best and Brightest Awards 2018

Student #:
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Criteria	Point Value	No/Limited Proficiency	Some Proficiency	High Proficiency	RATING
1. Thesis statement is clearly stated and relates to the writing task.	1 - 5 points	Thesis is missing OR thesis has no relation to the writing task.	Thesis and the writing task are somewhat vague OR only loosely related to the writing task.	Thesis and the writing task are clear to the reader; closely match the writing task.	
2. The essay is organized to support the thesis.	1 - 10 points	Unclear organization OR organizational plan is inappropriate to thesis.	Some signs of logical organization. May have abrupt or illogical shifts and ineffective flow of ideas.	Fully & imaginatively supports thesis and the writing task. Sequence of ideas is effective. Transitions are effective.	
3. The essay shows reasoning and develops the writer's ideas.	1 - 10 points	Offers simplistic, undeveloped, or cryptic support for the ideas. Inappropriate or off-topic generalizations, faulty assumptions, errors of fact.	Offers somewhat obvious support that may be too broad. Details are too general, not interpreted, irrelevant to thesis, or inappropriately repetitive.	Substantial, logical, & concrete development of ideas. Assumptions are made explicit. Details are germane, original, and convincingly interpreted.	
4. There is a connection to the importance of community service.	1 - 15 points	Unclear or very little evidence offered about community service.	Some signs of service referenced. May have areas of interest of future involvement.	Multiple references and examples to support community services.	
5. The writing is strong, words well-chosen, and grammar conventions are accurate.	1 - 10 points	Essay is simplistic or underdeveloped.	Essay shows effort and thought.	Expresses ideas through quality writing.	

TOTAL SCORE:
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**“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”**

Leo Buscaglia

**The Writing Task:**

The Best & Brightest Awards places a special emphasis on dedication to community service. Analyze this quote and write an essay describing how involvement in community service can make a difference in our community and/or for yourself as you prepare to enter high school.

