

STUDENTS & PARENTS!

Share Your Story. Honor Their Service.

Your words can inspire America!

GRADES
6-8

PATRIOTIC WRITTEN ESSAY COMPETITION

THEME: *"What A Veteran
Taught Me About America"*

The Patriot's Pen is open to students in grades 6-8.

GRAND PRIZE:
\$5,000
AWARD



STUDENT ENTRY DEADLINE:
OCTOBER 31, 2026

Encourage your middle school student to write about the veterans in their lives and the lessons they've learned.

GRADES
9-12

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

— AUDIO ESSAY COMPETITION —

"What A Veteran Taught Me About America"

The Voice of Democracy is open to students in grades 9-12.

GRAND PRIZE:
\$35,000
AWARD



STUDENT ENTRY DEADLINE:
OCTOBER 31, 2026

High school students—use your voice to share your perspective and inspire our nation!

★ SUGGESTIONS: HOW TO REACH STUDENTS & PARENTS ★



WORK WITH SCHOOLS

- Deliver contest information to principals, counselors, and teachers.
- Ask teachers to announce the contest and include it in their lesson plans.
- Provide flyers, posters, and entry forms to display in classrooms and offices.



ENGAGE PARENTS

- Send information home in newsletters and emails.
- Share on parent-teacher groups and school websites.
- Encourage parents to talk with their children about veterans in their lives and the lessons they've learned.



USE SOCIAL MEDIA

- Post on Facebook, Instagram, and community pages.
- Share graphics, deadlines, and prize information.
- Encourage shares to reach more students and families.
- Use hashtags like #PatriotsPen #VFWAuxiliary #VoiceOfDemocracy



PARTNER WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

- Contact youth groups, libraries, churches, and community organizations.
- Ask them to help spread the word and encourage participation.
- Display posters in local businesses and community bulletin boards.



MAKE IT PERSONAL

- Talk to students about veterans in their families or community.
- Share stories of how veterans have made a difference.
- Remind them their words can honor someone special and inspire others.



PROMOTE THE PRIZES & PURPOSE

- Highlight the \$5,000 and \$35,000 Grand Prizes and other recognition.
- Explain how their words and voice can inspire others and honor America's veterans.
- Every entry is an opportunity to be heard and make an impact!



**HONOR THEIR SACRIFICE.
INSPIRE THE FUTURE.**



*Your story matters.
Make a difference.*