

“I am proud to be an American”

Essay Contest

Each year, people in the United States of America stand together to remember the country’s soldiers (fallen, venerated, and active), our flag, our hard-won independence, our freedoms, and our liberties. There are songs proclaiming the country’s proudness, the ability to come back stronger, to not back down without a fight, and our unending support for those fighting for everything we believe in. Holiday after holiday, song after song, moment after moment, we, as a nation, declare that we are proud to be American – but why?

Almost 250 years ago, our founding fathers declared our independence from Great Britain, forming the original thirteen colonies. Through hard work, determination, and a lot of bloodshed, the United States of America was born and has continued to work towards the ideal that everyone is and should be treated as equal as well as the fact that all people have the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Unfortunately, our world is troubled. What used to be considered basic rights are now being debated and fought against. With controversial subjects airing the news, it is not enough to simply say that “I am proud to be an American”.

In celebration of Memorial Day, the Clarion Free Library invites participants to question why they are proud to be an American and to proclaim their reasons through pen and paper. Hosting the “I am proud to be an American” Essay Contest, Clarion Free Library welcomes children and teens to think about what being an American means as well as what patriotism and nationalism are to them.

Essay Contest Details:

- Must be in high school (including those graduating at the end of the 22-23 school year) or younger to participate.
- Every essay should start with “I am proud to be an American...” From that point, it is up to the student to express their reasons, thoughts, and ideas.
- Essays should be between 250 to 500 words or up to 3 pages.
- The essay should be submitted as an attachment and sent to Rose Slike at rslike@clarionfreelibrary.org. All documents should include the student’s first and last name, their school, grade, and guardian contact information.
- 3 judges will review the essays and select the winners.
- One winner will be selected from Grades 3-6, Grades 7-9, and Grades 10-12 equaling a total of 3 winners. Runner ups will also be selected for each age group.
- The winners will have their pieces published by the Clarion News.
- Prizes remain to be determined.

Submissions are due: June 14, 2023

Winners will be notified around Independence Day