

PREPARED ESSAY

Format: Online

Early Submission Requirements:

- Competitors must submit their Prepared Essay 2 weeks before the Regional Tournament.

Registration Guidelines:

1. A limit of two (2) students from each team may register for this competition. Each student competes individually, so collaboration is not permitted.

Procedure:

1. Competitors shall write about any topic that reflects this year's theme.
 - a. The topic chosen must refer to authentic sources of Islamic knowledge, as well as to historical facts. These can include stories from trusted scholars or reliable Islamic institutions. Ex. Yaqeen Institute.
2. The written essay must be typed and double-spaced.
 - a. It must be on white, 8.5 X 11 paper.
3. The essay **MUST** have a cover page.
 - a. The cover page must include the title and MIST ID only.
 - b. The competitor's name must not appear anywhere on the submission.
4. If outside sources are used, proper MLA citations as well as a "Works Cited" page must be included in the essay.
5. No forms of AI are permitted for this competition. Any usage is grounds for point loss and/or disqualification.
6. A PDF copy of the prepared essay must be submitted via MyMIST two weeks before the Regional Tournament.
 - a. Late submissions will result in a point deduction on your final score.
 - b. Your region may have different deadlines for this competition. Contact your Regional Competitions Headquarters for more information.
7. This will be an entirely virtual competition. As such, competitors are not required to turn in a copy during the tournament.
 - a. Entries should be typed in black ink only.
 - b. Entries can be double or single-spaced.
8. The written essay shall be a minimum of 1,500 words and a maximum of 2,000 words.
 - a. All abbreviations and articles (excluding a, an, the) will be counted.
 - b. Only the first 2,000 countable words will be read.
9. Competitors will be judged according to the Prepared Essay Ballot.

Checklist:

- PDF copy of written essay and written statement submitted on MyMIST 2 weeks prior to the tournament.
- Written statement based on interview questions (Section D of Prepared Essay Ballot).
- Both the submission and the written statement should be clearly labeled with:
 - MIST IDs
 - Name of Competition

DETAILED BALLOT: PREPARED ESSAY

Section A: Technical

Conventions

Points: 5

- Is the essay mostly free of spelling mistakes?
- Is the essay mostly free of grammatical mistakes?
- Is the essay mostly free of punctuation mistakes?

Presentation

Points: 5

- Is the essay typed?
- Is the essay double spaced with type 12 font?
- Does the essay have a cover page with the title and the MIST ID only?
- Is the essay between 1,500 - 2,000 words?
- Are the quotes that have been used given due credit?

Section B: Content

Ideas and Development

Points: 25

- Did the writer address their topic with sufficient detail?
- Did the writer take a unique approach in addressing the topic?
- Did the writer stay on topic throughout the essay?
- Did the writer use a balance of showing and telling to paint a picture in the reader's mind?
- Was the theme or message clear to the reader?
- Was there outside information used and cited within the essay?

Organization

Points: 25

- Did the introduction include a unique start, a clear thesis statement, and concise controls that grabbed the attention of the reader?
- Was there an adequate amount of details, examples, and support for each control? Did the supporting details reflect the controls?
- Does the title stand for the entire essay and not just a part of it?
- Did the conclusion link back to the introduction and leave a lasting impression on the reader?

Sentence Fluency

Points: 10

- Did the writer vary sentence types by using a mixture of simple and complex sentences?
- Do most sentences begin with different words?
- When read aloud, does the reader hear a rhythm behind the sentence?
- Was there a logical progression of ideas?

Section C: Style

Word Choice

Points: 10

- Did the writer use thoughtful adjectives that helped create an image in the reader's mind?
- Did the writer use strong action verbs that help support the essay's message? (ex: "cruise" instead of "drive," "stroll" instead of "walk")
- Did the writer use precise nouns that helped present a clear and distinct message? (ex: "7th grade students" instead of "students," or "science project" instead of "project")
- Did the overall usage of words create color and texture in the description? Was it clear that the writer took risks

Voice**Points: 5**

- Does the reader show passion about his/her topic?
- Is the tone natural and consistent, reflecting original thinking and expression?
- Does the writer capture a tone or mood with his/her words?

Section D: Application of Theme**Written Statement****Points: 15**

- There is a strong, clearly evident relevance to the theme.
- The theme is expressed in a unique or outstanding way.
- Purpose and inspiration of writings are clearly articulated and show evidence of reflection and/or research.
- Essay is easily understandable for Muslim and non-Muslim alike.

PREPARED ESSAY BALLOT

		Subtotal
Section A	Conventions	_____ / 5 points
Section B	Presentation	_____ / 5 points
Section B	Ideas and Development	_____ / 25 points
Section B	Organization	_____ / 25 points
Section B	Sentence Fluency	_____ / 10 points
Section C	Word Choice	_____ / 10 points
Section C	Voice	_____ / 5 points
Section D	Application of Theme	_____ / 15 points

Total: _____/100 Points

Overall Judges Comments and Feedback
