

IISD Experimental Lakes Area (IISD-ELA) National Essay Competition 2016

Rubric

The essays will be graded based on the rubric below. The grade for each level represents the minimum grade that will achieve that level for a given criteria. For example, a 3, 4, or 5 out of 10 in the Spelling and Grammar category would be ranked at Level 2. Anything below the grade necessary for a Level 2 is a Level 1. Each essay will be read and marked by three referees. All essays graded as Level 4 by at least two referees will then be read by the entire five-member committee for consideration as winners. When evaluating the performance of schools, all essays ranking as Level 3 or higher will be considered in contribution to the performance of a school.

| Criteria | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Topic – History (/5) | The author has not chosen an appropriate freshwater body or has not provided sufficient history to attest to its role in the history of Canadian life. | The author has chosen an appropriate freshwater body and offered some description of its historical role in Canadian life. (2/5) | The author has chosen an appropriate freshwater body and outlined the cultural and environmental roles that this water has played in the lives of Canadians. (3/5) | The author has chosen an important freshwater body and succinctly (and with insight) outlined the cultural and environmental roles that this water has played in the lives of Canadians. (5/5) |
| Topic – Issue (/10) | The author fails to explore a relevant environ, or does so for topics loosely related to the essay topic and without relevance to freshwater ecology and sustainability. There are few references supporting basic scientific content. | A freshwater issue is explored coherently, but is not entirely relevant to the chosen body of water. Some references support science in the essay, but the author does not interpret the implications of this science in the context of the issue. (3/10) | The author explores relevant aspects of their freshwater issue, referencing some valid sources and conveying an understanding of the issue discussed. (6/10) | The author explores relevant aspects of their freshwater issue intelligently with reference to valid source information. A strong understanding of the issue discussed informs intelligent inferences. (9/10) |
| Topic – Solution (/15) | The proposed freshwater management solutions are unrealistic and there is little or no scientific evidence supporting the plan. | The author proposes possible solutions for freshwater management with some reference to science in support of their plan. (5/15) | The author proposes practical solutions for freshwater management. Proposed solutions address the freshwater issue with a well-developed discussion supported by science. (9/15) | The author proposes creative or innovative solutions for freshwater management. Proposed solutions address the freshwater issue with a management plan that is practical and supported by science. (13/15) |
| Content Total (/30) | | | | |

| Criteria | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 | Level 4 |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Formatting and length (/5) | Essay formatting is poor and demonstrates a lack of care, or essay is over 2,000 words. | Essay is formatted improperly and under 2,000 words. (2/5) | Essay is formatted well with a few minor inconsistencies and under 2,000 words. (3/5) | Essay is formatted properly and under 2,000 words. (5/5) |
| Spelling and grammar (/10) | Essay contains several blatant spelling and grammatical errors and has not been well proofread. | Essay contains some spelling and grammatical errors. (3/10) | Essay contains a few minor spelling and grammatical errors. (6/10) | Spelling and grammar are flawless throughout essay. (9/10) |
| Writing style (/20) | Writing is repetitive; sentence and paragraph structure is awkward. There is little discussion of scientific topics, and the author does not demonstrate an understanding of science. | Essay has some repetition and is unnecessarily wordy. Structure does not flow well. Scientific topics are touched on, but are not discussed intelligently in the context of the essay topic. (6/20) | Writing is fairly concise, and the flow of the essay makes sense. Science related to the topic of the essay is discussed with some intelligence and evidence of understanding. (12/20) | Writing is concise and well organized, and the essay has a logical flow. Understanding of scientific topics is apparent, and science is discussed intelligently in the context of the topic. (18/20) |
| Research and references (/10) | Few scientific claims are supported by citations, and references are incomplete, with formatting inconsistencies. | Some scientific claims are supported by an in-text citation. Citations are referenced, with some inconsistencies and errors. (3/10) | Most scientific claims are supported by an in-text citation. All citations are referenced in a consistent format. (6/10) | All scientific claims are supported by an in-text citation. All citations are referenced in a consistent format. (9/10) |
| Composition Total (/45) | | | | |

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