



**Wabash County Museum  
6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest**

**2020 Theme – “Explore Home”**

**Essay Contest Cover Sheet**

- **STAPLE THIS COVER SHEET ON TOP OF YOUR ESSAY.**
- **Have your parent read and SIGN the statement below.**
- **Essays should be between 300 to 500 words.**
- **Students are encouraged to use MLA format when composing their essays.**
- **Essays are due to your teacher or directly to the Museum by Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**
- **PLEASE NOTE: Essays NOT containing this Cover Sheet will NOT be judged.**

**Full Name (First and Last):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address (Include City):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade (circle one):** 6<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> 8<sup>th</sup>

**Teacher’s Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Release:**

By signing the following release, I give consent for my child’s essay to become part of the collection of the Wabash County Museum and to be used for community enrichment such as exhibits, programs, and research.

I understand that by submitting this essay, I declare that I have full legal right to transfer custody and title of this essay. I hereby transfer such custody, title and interest, including copyright and trademark, willingly, unconditionally and without reservation, to the Wabash County Museum. I hereby consent to the unrestricted use of the information in furtherance of the mission of the Wabash County Museum.

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 2020 Theme – “Explore Home”

### **Background:**

The Wabash County Museum and Wabash Carnegie Public Library are currently exploring the idea of changes in rural America and the challenges facing small towns and communities. Over the past several decades, the landscape of America has changed with more and more individuals choosing to live and work in larger cities, impacting rural America with a continual loss of population.

To survive, rural America is now having to change how it looks at a variety of topics from agriculture, manufacturing, education, local government, land conservation, and more. While some towns in rural America continue to thrive, others continue to decline – leading us to wonder what are the most important issues facing those who live in rural America.

Throughout this theme, the Museum and Library will compare changes in areas of high impact such as farming, manufacturing, and education. These changes have drastically changed the climate of our local communities. The Museum will also feature an exhibit showing how common household and business items have evolved over time. In addition, through a variety of book discussions, read-a-likes, panel discussions, and community conversations, the two groups will discuss how we can all continue to shape the evolution in rural America, starting in our own backyards.

### **Writing Prompt:**

As part of this essay, the Museum and Library strongly encourage students to speak with family members, educators, friends, and/or community members to get a better understanding of what life in Wabash County used to be like. In addition, students should also consider learning about events that have driven the changes in our communities such as factories opening and closing, armed conflicts, waterways, and more.

After you have interviewed family members, educators, friends, and/or community members and learned about events that have changed our communities, you should choose a specific community and a series of events that have caused change within that community.

In your first paragraph, provide an introduction to your essay including an explanation of what community or communities within Wabash County you will be focusing on.

Next, describe what you learned about Wabash County through your discussion with others. What has been important to our county? What has set Wabash County apart from other communities?

As you continue your essay, consider how times have changed and what struggles now face our communities. This might include the loss of manufacturing opportunities, population decline, and a variety of other topics.

In your final paragraph, make a recommendation on how Wabash County can continue to thrive and what you enjoy most about living in Wabash County.

Use interesting vocabulary and communicate your ideas in a creative manner.

### **3 Winners per Grade Level**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$100    2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$50    3<sup>rd</sup> Place - \$25**

*Prizes will be paid as college scholarships through the Community Foundation of Wabash County.*

## 2020 Theme – “Explore Home”

### General Instructions for Teachers and Parents

- 1) READ the attached prompt and rubric before you discuss this contest with your students. You may wish to photocopy both the prompt and the rubric for your students to refer to as they write their essay.
- 2) **IMPORTANT INSTRUCTION: A COVER SHEET WITH PARENT RELEASE and SIGNATURE is required.** Remind your students that the **COVER SHEET MUST BE STAPLED** to the top of the essay.
- 3) READ the grading rubric to the students. This rubric is used to judge the essays.
- 4) If you choose to not do this as a classroom project, please share with students as they may enter on their own directly through the Museum.
- 5) When you receive the completed essays from your students, please put them in a large envelope. Please label the envelope the “WABASH COUNTY MUSEUM ESSAY CONTEST.”
- 6) **Essays** are due to classroom teacher by **Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020**. The Museum will collect essays from each school’s main office on Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020.
- 7) Essays may also be returned directly to the Wabash County Museum by **Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020**.
- 8) **All materials are also available on the Wabash County Museum’s website at [www.wabashmuseum.org](http://www.wabashmuseum.org).**
- 9) **Essays will NOT be returned. Please ask students to make a copy before they turn in their essays.**

**All essay participants, their parents, teachers, and principals are invited to attend an Ice Cream Social on Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The Ice Cream Social will be held at the Wabash County Museum at 6:00 p.m. Winning students will be asked to read their essays during the event.**

**Prizes will be awarded for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners from each grade (6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>) in the form of a college scholarship placed in a fund at the Community Foundation of Wabash County.**

The Wabash County Museum Essay Program is continued in the memory of Dr. Robert Becket. Dr. Beckett was a life-long advocate for history and education and served as the President of the Wabash County Historical Society before his passing in 2016.

## Rubric for Scoring

### 2020 Wabash County Museum Essay Contest

There will be a total of 30 points possible for an essay. These points will be allotted according to the following criteria:

	<b>8-10 points</b>	<b>4-7 points</b>	<b>0-3 pts.</b>
<b>Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Establishes a clear focus in each of your paragraphs</li> <li>-Uses descriptive language</li> <li>-Provides relevant information</li> <li>-Communicates ideas in a creative manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Focus in each of the paragraphs is somewhat clear</li> <li>-Uses moderate language</li> <li>-Provides some relevant information</li> <li>-Communicates ideas, but without much creativity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Does not establish a clear focus in paragraphs</li> <li>-Uses dull language</li> <li>-Information used is not relevant</li> </ul>
<b>Expression</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Uses interesting vocabulary</li> <li>-Uses a variety of sentences</li> <li>-Uses grade level spelling that does not interfere with your intended meaning</li> <li>-Uses grammar mechanics effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Vocabulary is average</li> <li>-Uses a moderate amount of sentence variety</li> <li>-Uses spelling and grammar mechanics that could be considered lower level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lacks interesting vocabulary</li> <li>-Lacks variety of sentences</li> <li>-Uses lower grade level spelling that interferes with intended meaning</li> <li>-Does not use grammar mechanics effectively</li> </ul>
<b>Organization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Follows the writing prompt guidelines</li> <li>-Groups information into the appropriate paragraph</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Somewhat follows the writing prompt guidelines</li> <li>-Information is somewhat organized, could use some fine-tuning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Does not follow the writing prompt guidelines</li> <li>-Fails to group information into appropriate paragraph</li> </ul>