

Save Texas History Essay Contest

**Attention all Texas 4th & 7th Grade Students
- Public, private, and homeschooled!**

An original essay on Texas History could earn you either a \$500 or \$100 gift card, various prizes, and a two-night hotel stay in Austin.

Students

You are invited to submit a research essay in English on any topic in Texas history. It can be on any historical person, event, place, group, or cultural tradition, however big or small, that helped shape Texas. In the essay, students should demonstrate what makes their chosen subject historically significant and provide details.

Teachers

This is a great opportunity for your students to practice their research and writing skills, share finished work with classmates, and reinforce TEKS topics ahead of tests and assessments. We will also be providing teachers of the winning students with gift cards and other prizes.

Submissions will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **Adherence** to guidelines and requirements
- **Originality**
- **Essay main idea** and use of supporting evidence
- **Writing** skills (spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.)

More Info:



glo.texas.gov/sth-essaycontest

All electronic submissions should be uploaded at:
glo.texas.gov/sth-essaycontest

Contest Opens:
January 12, 2026

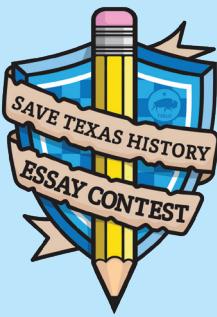
Submission Deadline:
April 1, 2026

Announcement of Winners:
After May 7, 2026

The Texas General Land Office (GLO) Archives and Records is the custodian of over 37 million historical documents and maps spanning six centuries. The GLO's Save Texas History Program is a statewide initiative to rally public support and private funding for the preservation, digitization, and promotion of these important items so they can continue to be a vital educational resource for future generations.

Sponsored by these generous donors:

- Chris Cantu of Kingsview Partners in Georgetown, Texas
- Hampton Inn and Suites University/Capitol in Austin, Texas
- Sons of the Republic of Texas – Moses Austin Chapter



Guidelines And Requirements

4th Grade

- Only fourth-grade public, private, or homeschooled students residing in Texas are eligible
- Must be on a **Texas history topic** (any subject)
- **400 – 500 words** (not including bibliography)
- Typed or handwritten essay format in English
- Must include an original title
- Bibliography as separate page required. Chicago, MLA, APA accepted.
- Must include a cover page with student's name and school. Student's name must not appear on any of the following essay pages
- Must be in Word or PDF
- Must be student's original work. Plagiarized material is not permitted. This includes copying and pasting words from books, websites, or other sources, and/or someone other than the student writing the essay, including artificial intelligence (AI)
- Essay must be accompanied by a completed and signed permission form (both guardian and student must sign)
- Contestants are strongly encouraged to review the essay contest rubric before submission

Essays and permission forms can be submitted by the deadline in either of the following ways:

Online: glo.texas.gov/sth-essaycontest

By Mail: Texas General Land Office, Attn: Archives and Records / STH Essay Contest, P.O. Box 12873, Austin, TX 78711-2873

7th Grade

- Only seventh-grade public, private, or homeschooled students residing in Texas are eligible
- Must be on a **Texas history topic** (any subject)
- **750 – 1,000 words** (not including bibliography)
- Typed (not handwritten) essay format in English
- Must include an original title
- Bibliography as separate page required. Chicago, MLA, APA accepted.
- Must include a cover page with student's name and school. Student's name must not appear on any of the following essay pages
- Must be in Word or PDF
- Must be student's original work. Plagiarized material is not permitted. This includes copying and pasting words from books, websites, or other sources, and/or someone other than the student writing the essay, including artificial intelligence (AI)
- Essay must be accompanied by a completed and signed permission form (both guardian and student must sign)
- Contestants are strongly encouraged to review the essay contest rubric before submission



Contest Rubric

	WEAK	STRONGER	STRONGEST
MAIN IDEA OR ARGUMENT (Sentence that addresses what is historically significant about the essay topic)	Main idea or argument of the essay is nonexistent, unclear, or the topic is too broad or vague.	Main idea or argument of the essay is clear, but not as focused or developed throughout the essay.	Main idea or argument of the essay is clearly stated in the first paragraph, remains focused throughout the supporting paragraphs, and is emphasized again in the concluding paragraph.
USE OF EVIDENCE (Details/facts that support the main idea)	Insufficient evidence of what makes the subject historically significant, OR essay has an excessive amount of evidence that is not supporting a main idea (i.e. information dump). Evidence is not specific or well chosen.	Some factually correct evidence is provided which shows why the topic is historically significant, but evidence may be limited or include irrelevant information.	Each supporting paragraph provides factually correct evidence that supports a main idea and explores a different reason the topic is historically significant.
WRITING MECHANICS (Correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, etc.)	Essay has a lot of mistakes, such as typos, misspellings, sentence fragments or run-ons, punctuation or capitalization errors, or other grammar issues.	Essay has occasional mistakes, such as typos, misspellings, sentence fragments or run-ons, punctuation or capitalization errors, or other grammar issues.	Essay has very few or no mistakes, such as typos, misspellings, sentence fragments or run-ons, punctuation or capitalization errors, or other grammar issues.
SOURCES / BIBLIOGRAPHY	Essay includes fewer than three sources on the bibliography page, and/or uses Wikipedia as a source.	Essay uses at least three (4th grade) or four (7th grade) sources, none of which are from Wikipedia.	Essay uses at least four (4th grade) or five (7th grade) sources, none of which are from Wikipedia.
DISQUALIFYING	Not following all the contest guidelines and requirements		



Save Texas History Essay Contest

Entries must be received by April 1, 2026

Winners will be announced after May 7, 2026

Student Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Parent / Guardian Name _____

Parent / Guardian Phone Number _____

Parent / Guardian Email _____

Home Address _____

City _____ Zipcode _____

School Name _____ City _____ Zipcode _____

Teacher Name _____ Teacher Email _____

***All fields are required**

I, _____ (parent/guardian) give _____ (student) _____

permission to enter their essay in the Save Texas History Essay Contest. The Texas General Land Office (GLO) or its agents may use the attached essay and entry and my child's name and likeness for Save Texas History purposes including advertising, publicity, and other media. Entries will be the property of the GLO and will not be returned. I understand that certain winners may be invited to attend Save Texas History events. Participation in such events is voluntary and travel expenses will not be reimbursed if the winners or finalists choose to attend. Plagiarized, incomplete, lost, or late entries are not eligible. Household family members of GLO employees are not eligible. The parent or guardian of the winner is solely responsible for all taxes on prizes and must meet eligibility requirements as determined by the contributors. This contest is void where prohibited.

Parent / Guardian Signature: _____ Date _____

PLEDGE OF ORIGINALITY: I DECLARE AND AVOW THAT THE ESSAY I AM SUBMITTING TO THE TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE SAVE TEXAS HISTORY PROGRAM'S ESSAY CONTEST IS MY OWN ORIGINAL WORK AND NOT DERIVED FROM (BASED UPON) ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) SOFTWARE OR WRITTEN BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN ME:

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

Submit Entries: Deadline April 1, 2026

By Mail: Texas General Land Office

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