

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE PRO-LIFE ESSAY CONTEST

Thank you for helping your students engage with the dignity and value of every human life through the Oregon Right to Life Essay Contest. It is our hope that your introduction will encourage students to reflect on our shared humanity and the worth of every person, both before and after birth.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Essays must clearly incorporate the theme and demonstrate originality.
- **"Human Like Me"** is this year's theme. Students are invited to explore the idea that every human being shares a common humanity, regardless of age, size, ability, circumstances, or developmental stage.
- "Human Like Me" invites us to consider what it means to be human and how that affects how we should treat others.
- Every human being is a member of the human family. While people may differ in age, appearance, abilities, experiences, or stage of development, our shared humanity gives each person inherent value and dignity.
- Human beings grow and change throughout life—from before birth through old age—but our humanity remains the same.
- Consider how recognizing someone as "human like me" might affect the way we treat them. How can understanding our shared humanity inspire compassion, respect, and care for others?
- You may choose to explore examples from your own life, your community, history, literature, current events, or personal observations to illustrate the theme.

Ideas for a Strong Essay

- **Know your audience.** You may write with your classmates in mind as your audience. You may also write as if your essay will be published in a local newspaper or read by members of your community. Choose your audience before you begin.
- **An essay explores an idea.** Rather than simply stating an opinion or sharing a story, explain your thinking and support it with examples, observations, stories, or research that help readers understand your perspective on the theme.
- **Avoid clichés.** Look for fresh ways to express your ideas and use your own voice.
- **Think of a strong opening.** A question, story, surprising fact, or vivid image can help capture your reader's attention. Bring your ideas together with a thoughtful conclusion that leaves readers with something to consider.
- **Use evidence carefully.** If you include research, statistics, or quotations, be sure to cite your sources appropriately.
- **Plan and revise.** Take time to brainstorm and organize your ideas before writing. Afterward, review your work for clarity, grammar, spelling, and overall effectiveness. An adult may provide feedback, but the writing must be your own.

All essays will be judged on these four factors

1. Effective introduction and conclusion
2. General organization
3. Focus and clarity of the message and theme
4. Originality