

The Battle of Flowers® Association

...celebrating Texas history

Post Office Box 6432 • San Antonio, Texas 78209

Member, Fiesta® San Antonio Commission

October 9, 2019

Dear Principals, Curriculum Directors and Seventh Grade History Teachers,

The Battle of Flowers announces its 25th Annual Texas History Essay Contest for all seventh grade students from San Antonio area schools. **Please encourage your students to compete** for the honor of representing their school in this contest by writing an original 350 to 700 word historical essay.

The **BENEFITS** FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR SCHOOLS entering this prestigious contest are:

- **INCREASED WINNINGS:** For the 2020 contest, the 1st place winner will receive a **lap top computer**; the 2nd place winner will receive **\$250**; and 3rd place will receive **\$150!**
- **\$1000.00 will be given to the Social Studies Department** of the school the 1st place winner attends!

The mission of The Battle of Flowers® Association is “to teach the history of our state and to keep alive the patriotic traditions of Texas and San Antonio.” In keeping with this tradition, the Battle of Flowers® Association is proud to present the topic for the 25th annual Essay Contest:

Texas Tough—How Texas’ Military Leaders Shaped the State, Nation & World

The War for Texas’ Independence, Mexican-American War, WW I and II, Korean War, and the early years of the Vietnam War up to 1970, are just a few of the conflicts Texans—born and raised or immigrants who identified as Texans—have served their state and country with courage and conviction.

Throughout the state’s history, Texans have influenced and changed the likely outcome of skirmishes and battles and ultimately the course of war. Men of valor have shown miraculous courage defending their brothers-in-arms and holding the battle lines. While others have brilliantly maneuvered military personnel and their war-machines, not unlike a chess game played on an epic scale, these leaders go on to strategically win battle after battle and defeat a vast and powerful foe.

Texas women have served selflessly as well. One such individual left her Texas home at the request of the War Department to serve in Washington D.C., building a capable army of women, who stepped into positions once held by men in support of the war effort—both at home and abroad. Texas women served in the military as engineers, non-combat pilots and nurses caring for the injured near the frontlines, and in many instances, paid the ultimate price for their service to their country.

Not all leaders are high-ranking officers. In fact, many who served lead by necessity, often standing in the gap protecting wounded fellow soldiers against enemy fire and with courageous leadership holding a position against overwhelming odds. These ordinary men, placed in extraordinary circumstances, saved countless lives. It is at times such as these, in the midst of a firefight that the leadership qualities and true character of an individual shine through.

There are many fascinating individuals throughout our state’s history, whose influence shaped our state or the nation or the world. At the very least, their actions impacted the men and women they served with in a powerful way. The Oratorical Committee encourages you to delve into one individual’s life, researching their background, their branch of military service and how their wartime efforts, whether on U.S. soil or abroad, forged a place in history. A list of suggested leaders and heroes is given; however, you are not limited to only these individuals. You may select another Texan, as long as they meet the criteria that their military career and the significance of their achievements occurs prior to 1970.

Suggested Texas Military Leaders:

General Samuel Houston	Lieutenant Warren Gamaliel Harding Crecy
Major General William S. Graves	Brigadier General David Lee "Tex" Hill
Colonel Oveta Culp Hobby	Lieutenant Colonel William Barrett Travis
Fleet Admiral Chester William Nimitz, Jr.	Master Sergeant Raul Perez "Roy" Benavidez
Major General James Earl Rudder	Private Marcelino Serna
First Lieutenant Audie Leon Murphy	General Ira Clarence Eaker
Colonel Lloyd Millard Bentsen, Jr.	Lieutenant Colonel William Edwin "Ed" Dyess
Colonel Juan Nepomuceno Seguin	

"Texan," represents many things to those who call the state, home. As Texans, we believe in the inalienable rights and freedom of all men and women. It is a belief that a Texan does not cower in the face of adversity. It is the belief that one comes to the aid of their neighbor. It is the belief that when we stand together, we are a united force. Above all, it is a state of mind nurtured by our independence.

Please select your school's two best essays and submit them to contest chair, Tricia Tobin, at the address below. The deadline for essay submission is **Monday, January 13, 2020**. Include the attached statement of originality, signed by each student whose essays you select. Entries will be judged on content, creativity, the interest generated, accuracy and appropriateness of topic(70%), and neatness of presentation, grammar, spelling and quality of research(30%). Resource materials should be listed in standard bibliographic form on a separate page(not counted toward the length of the essay). References will be checked for accuracy. Please note that essays must fall within the 350 to 700 word length to qualify for the contest. **Please make sure your essays are titled!**

The first place winner of the Essay Contest will be invited to ride in the 2020 Battle of Flowers Parade!

The Texas History Essay Contest is held in conjunction with the Battle of Flowers Annual Oratorical Contest in which Texas college students research, write and deliver original speeches on the same topic. We invite the winners and their teachers to attend the Oratorical Contest Luncheon at the Witte Museum in San Antonio on Friday, February 21, 2020, as our **Guests**. Essay guests will check in at 11:45 a.m. and then have lunch. PROMPTLY at 1:00 p.m. the first, second and third place winners, and the winning school will receive plaques and their monetary awards. Winning essays and participation awards will be also be presented. In addition, the first place essay will be published in the Battle of Flowers Parade program. We invite any other interested teachers, principals, and parents to attend the Oratorical Luncheon by making a paid reservation for lunch (\$25) by mailing a check to Mrs. Josephine Cothren, 320 Abiso Ave, San Antonio, Texas 78209.

We hope you encourage your students to compete! Please complete the attached participation form and send it to the address below if you plan to participate. To help you publicize the Essay Contest, we have enclosed a flyer for you to copy, post and distribute.

Please contact me if you have questions or need more information.

Sincerely,
Tricia Tobin
Battle of Flowers® Association
2020 Essay Contest Chair
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