

2020

Virginia Municipal League If I Were Mayor ESSAY CONTEST

Deadline to enter: January 31, 2020

The Virginia Municipal League (VML) invites all eligible* Virginia 7th Graders to join its "If I were Mayor" essay contest.

Regional winners selected from around the state will each receive a \$150 cash prize and plaque. One statewide winner chosen from the regional winners will receive a \$250 cash prize and plaque. The runner-up from the region that receives the statewide award will become that region's winner.

Winning essays will be featured in the May issue of VML's magazine *Virginia Town & City*.

**See first bullet under "Rules & Regulations" below for eligibility requirements.*

2020 Essay Contest

Being a mayor or community leader is a challenging but rewarding job. It's challenging because you must balance the needs and requests of different people in your community who don't always agree with each other. It's rewarding because, along with your city or town council or county board, you get to be one of the people who ensures that the best solutions are used to address the problems that affect everyone.

VML wants to give you a chance to show what you would do to solve a problem in your community.

Here's how it works:

- 1. What's the problem?** If you were a community leader like a mayor, what's a problem in your locality you would want to solve? It could be something big that affects the whole community or something small that affects only a few people. If you are having trouble thinking of something, ask an adult (teacher, parent, guardian, relative, friend) for ideas.
- 2. Listen to "community" members:** Tell three people (teachers, parents, relatives, classmates, friends, etc.) about the problem and ask what they think should be done to solve it. Write down their answers in your own words.
- 3. Decide:** Does one of the proposed solutions sound better than the others? Or, does some combination of the solutions make more sense? Or, do you think there is a better way that nobody else suggested? It's up to you!
- 4. Put it all together:** Write a brief (200-500 words) essay in which you:
 - Identify the problem.
 - Summarize the ideas you heard to solve the problem.
 - Offer your opinion of how best to solve the problem.

How to enter

All entries must be received by end of day on Friday, January 31st. There are 2 ways to submit your entry:

- 1. Fill out and submit our online form available at www.vml.org/education/essay-contest/.**

- You can do this yourself or you can have your teacher or someone else help you.
- At the top of the form you will need to provide your full name, the name and location of your school, and your teacher's full name and email address.
- Copy and paste your essay into the "Essay" box in the form.
- After VML receives your entry, your teacher will get a confirmation email.

OR

- 2. Mail your essay with a filled-out entry form** (see back of this flyer) attached to:

**VML, Attn: 7th Grade Essay Contest
P.O. Box 12164
Richmond, VA 23241**

Rules & Regulations

- The contest is open to all Virginia students from VML member municipalities enrolled in the 7th Grade during the 2019-2020 school year.
 - If you are not sure if you live or go to school in a member municipality, check the list at www.vml.org/organization/local-government-members.
- All essays should be typed. Handwritten essays must be legible to be eligible for review.
- Only one essay may be submitted per student.
- Entries will be judged based on content and style.
- Essays must be submitted by the end of the day on Friday, January 31st. Winners will be notified in March. VML will present the awards to the winners at one of their local council or school board meetings.
- VML retains the right to publish essays along with the names of each student.

View a sample essay and
enter online at vml.org



2020 Entry Form

Student's Name: _____

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

School Phone: _____

Teacher's Name: _____ Teacher's email: _____



2020 Entry Form

Student's Name: _____

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

School Phone: _____

Teacher's Name: _____ Teacher's email: _____



2020 Entry Form

Student's Name: _____

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

School Phone: _____

Teacher's Name: _____ Teacher's email: _____



If submitting your essay by mail, please fill out one of the above forms completely and attach to your printed* essay.

****Handwritten essays will be accepted but must be legible to be considered.***

Mail to: VML, Attn: 7th Grade Essay Contest, P.O. Box 12164, Richmond, VA 23241