

2026 KECSAC Student Essay Writing Competition

Entry Eligibility: State Agency students actively enrolled in any KECSAC program may enter

Accepting Entries: October 23 – November 20, 2026

Winners Announced: December 4, 2026

Categories: Grades 6-8

Grades 9-12

Essay Categories: Persuasive essay

Descriptive essay

Narrative essay

Length Requirements:

Grades 6-8 – Minimum of 1 page, up to 3 pages

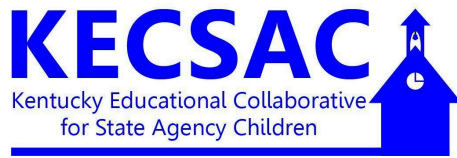
Grades 9-12 – Minimum of 1 page, up to 4 pages

Entry Rules:

- One essay per student.
- Entry form must be included.
- The essay in its entirety must be an original work by the student entering the contest. Plagiarism is a serious offense with serious consequences.
- Font size: 12; Font type: Times New Roman or Calibri.
- Title centered.
- Double spaced.
- No identifying name on pages of the essay.
- Any essay containing language that is vulgar, offensive, or inappropriate will not be accepted.

Send in Entries to Katie Helton by email at katie.helton@kecsac.org

Or mail to 260 Democrat Drive, Frankfort, KY 40601



2026 KECSAC Student Essay Writing Competition

Entry Form

Student's Name: _____

Student's Program: _____

Title of Work: _____

Student Contact Info: _____

Teacher/Principal Name: _____

Teacher/Principal Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

Grade Category: *(Circle one)*

Grades 6-8

Grades 9-12

Essay Category: *(Circle one)*

Persuasive

Descriptive

Narrative

Extra Information About Essay Categories from Skill Share Online Resources:

<https://www.skillshare.com/blog/the-5-types-of-writing-styles-with-examples/>

1. Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is storytelling at its most basic: it's all about sharing something that happens to a character. It can be an epic tale or a small anecdote; it can span years of time or a few minutes; it can be fact or fiction.

Narrative writing uses many of the most common elements of storytelling, such as plot, character, setting, conflict, emotion, and a core message you're trying to get across. There are also tried-and-true story archetypes or narrative structures you can use to shape your narrative writing, such as coming of age, rags to riches, or the hero's journey.

While narrative writing can take a lot of forms, one thing is always true: You should be taking the reader on a journey with a beginning, middle, and end. Even if you're just telling the story of a funny incident that happened to you yesterday, your character should start somewhere, run into some sort of conflict or interesting experience, and then ultimately reach a resolution.

When to Use Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is most commonly used in fiction and creative writing, but it can also be used in nonfiction to help make true stories more compelling to your reader. Whatever you're writing, the narrative style is worth mastering because people tend to connect best with stories. For instance, you might use narrative writing in:

Short stories

Memoirs

Creative essays

Feature stories

Presentations or speeches

2. Descriptive Writing

Descriptive writing involves capturing every detail of the place, person, or scene you're writing about. The goal is to really immerse the reader in the experience, making them feel like they are there.

When trying to achieve a descriptive writing style, think of it as painting a picture with your words. What can you say to help the reader truly envision the subject in their mind's eye? This usually involves crafting vivid descriptions using all five senses: sight, smell, hearing, touch, and taste. But it could also involve use of simile and metaphor to evoke a mood or feeling that's too hard to capture with physical descriptors. This can help elevate your writing from a simple description to something that connects with others on a deeper level.

According to [Skillshare teacher Kathy Fish](#), descriptive writing is about more than just making your story pretty. "Great description accomplishes four things. It immerses the reader and gives them a 'felt experience.' It also establishes, enhances, or changes the tone of the story. It can compel the reader

forward into the story, especially if you include something that’s surprising or unexpected into your description. It can give the reader a sense of the internal state of your character.”

When to Use Descriptive Writing

Descriptive writing is most often in creative writing and can be used along with narrative writing to build scene and setting. It can occasionally be seen used in more formal writing to help explain an idea more deeply or get the reader to emotionally connect with the story you’re telling. Some examples of where you might use descriptive writing include:

Poems or song lyrics

Fiction, such as short stories

Copywriting, such as when describing a product or travel destination

Narrative nonfiction, such as memoirs

3. Persuasive Writing

Persuasive writing is all about getting your point across. The goal is to share your opinion in a thoughtful way—or, even better, to actually convince the reader of a viewpoint or idea. Whether you have a strong stance on an issue or need to inspire people to take action towards a cause, persuasive writing is the way to do it.

Of course, you can’t expect to simply state your viewpoint and have everyone convinced—you need to effectively back it up to bring the reader over to your side. There several main types of evidence in writing you can use when trying to persuade, including:

- Statistical evidence, such as hard facts or studies (be sure you give your source)
- Anecdotal evidence, such as personal experiences or interviews
- Testimonial evidence, such as quotes from experts in the subject
- Textual evidence, such as passages from books or primary sources

Whatever evidence you use, it’s often best to keep emotions at bay in persuasive writing. While sharing a bit of your personal story can help build a compelling argument, too much emotion could cloud your key points and turn the reader off. Instead, try and think from the reader’s point of view and ask yourself: What are the most important things I could say to help convince them?

When to Use Persuasive Writing

Persuasive writing is often found in nonfiction and is almost never used in fiction. It’s particularly worth mastering if you do any kind of business writing—since clearly convincing people of your ideas or point of view can be so valuable at work. You’ll also see persuasive writing used in:

Essays

Speeches or presentations

Sales writing