

## **Self Determination Essay Contest Criteria**

**Students are required to choose one option of political status given below and discuss what this option would mean for the United States Virgin Islands in 2017.**

### **Eligibility**

- Any student in Junior and Senior High School from Public, Private or Parochial Institutions.

### **Political Status**

- Option of Statehood
- Option of Free Association
- Option of Sovereignty or Independence

### **Originality**

All work must be written by the student with/without the assistance of parents. The entry must be conceptualized, developed, and completed by the student. If a parent or teacher has any doubt about the originality of the paper, it should not be submitted. No plagiarism will be accepted.

### **Guidelines**

- A student can only choose one option and discuss the advantages it would have on the United States Virgin Islands.
- If an enhanced territorial status that resembles one of the three options is chosen, the writer must explicitly state this.
- The essay must be type written, double spaced in font size 12. Margins are 1” on a standard 8” by 11.”
- Minimum words are 500, maximum are 1000.
- The Essay should have three parts: Introduction, Body and Conclusion.
- It will be graded for content and form. This means only Standard American English is accepted. More than three grammatical errors and the essay will be disqualified.
- Student’s name, school, teacher and grade level must be type written on a separate sheet.
- Students must include a reference page if references are used.

## Preparing Essay for Entry

The Essay submitted to the Student Essay Contest is grouped and judged in the following divisions:  
Division I: Grades 6-8, Division II: Grades 9-12

## Entry Fee

There is no entry fee for the Essay Contest.

## Forms

All entrants must accurately complete entry forms signed by student, parent/guardian and teacher. Forms should be affixed to the back of every essay that will be submitted for final judging. Please note that the students' essays will first be submitted to the school English/Social Studies teacher for pre-judging, and will then be forwarded for final grading and selection of winners.

## Judging Criteria:

Each essay will be read by three (3) judges and the following criteria will be applied:

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Grammar and Punctuation</b>             | <b>25%</b>  |
| <b>How well students address the topic</b> | <b>25%</b>  |
| <b>Organization and Clarity</b>            | <b>25%</b>  |
| <b>Originality</b>                         | <b>25%</b>  |
|  |             |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>100%</b> |

Note: Judges have the right to exclude any essay from consideration in the contest if there is proof of plagiarism. The judges will judge all essays based on the criteria listed under Judging Criteria.

## Final Selection

Final selections will be made solely on the consensus of the panel of jurors. The jurors will choose three essays in each Divisions for 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place. A total of six prizes will be awarded.

2016 Essay Contest Entry Form

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| First Name:                                  | Last Name (s):                        |
| Age:   | Grade Level:                          |
| Parent/Guardian:                             | Contact Number:                       |
| Name of School:                              |                                       |
| English/Social Studies Teacher Name:         | English/Social Studies Teacher Email: |
| Political Status Option:                     |                                       |
| <b>**For official use**</b><br><br>Comments: |                                       |