



Eastern Caribbean Central Bank

OECS ESSAY COMPETITION



*Guidelines for
Preparing Your Essay*



Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Essay Competition

The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) launched the OECS Essay Competition in 1996 as part of its community outreach programme. The competition is geared towards stimulating discourse among young people on issues that impact the socio-economic landscape of the region.

The competition is launched in November each year, and is open to students of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) member countries from ages 14 to 19 years.

Prizes

| Prizes | Student | School |
|------------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1st Prize | EC\$2,500 Grant | EC\$1,500 Grant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd Prize | EC\$1,500 Grant | EC\$1,000 Grant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd Prize | EC\$1,000 Grant | EC\$500 Grant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The school with the most entries in the top 10 receives EC\$500 | |

Since the inception of the competition, the ECCB has awarded grants amounting to over EC\$280,000.00 to students and their respective schools.

Terms of the Competition

- ❑ The competition is open to students of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) aged 14 - 19.
- ❑ Essays must be between **750 and 1,000 words**, and must be **type-written, double spaced on letter size paper**, with a **separate cover sheet giving details of the name, age, and school attended** by the student. *(Check the ECCB's website for the cover sheet. Sample on page 10.)*
- ❑ Each page must be numbered.
- ❑ Essays must be written on one of the topics for the 2017 competition.
- ❑ Essays will be judged in two categories: students aged 14 - 16 and 17 - 19. The essays will be assessed for content and soundness of points (20), logical development (20), clarity (20), knowledge of the subject (25), command of language (10) and presentation (5).
- ❑ Children or dependents of ECCB staff are not eligible to enter the competition.
- ❑ Prize winners may be asked to submit their birth certificates.
- ❑ Essays for the 2017 competition must be submitted to the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, P O Box 89, Basseterre, St Kitts, or to the ECCB Agency Office in the student's respective country, no later than **Thursday, 31 March 2017**.

2017 OECS Essay Competition Topics

1. A country's standard of living is linked to its ability to produce its own goods and services. Discuss.
2. In this age of modern technology, libraries are obsolete and work needs to be done to make them more relevant. Discuss.
3. Britain's withdrawal from the European Union can negatively impact the economies of the OECS. Discuss.

Checklist for Writing Your Essay

Before handing in your essay, check the following:

Understanding the topic

- Do I fully understand the topic?
- Have I done enough reading on the subject?
- Are my sources appropriate and credible?

Defining and Introducing the Topic

- Have I identified the key terms and important issue(s) to be addressed?

Note: The definition of key terms should speak to the entire topic and not just individual words. Many times essay

writers make the mistake of defining the topic word-for-word but fail to hit on the key issue(s) to be explored. While a discussion of key words in the topic may be useful this should only occur to the extent that it helps to clarify the main issue for discussion.

- Does the introduction have a clear, direct and arguable statement that answers the question and offers a decisive opinion?
- Does the introduction grab the reader from the onset?

Structure and Argument

- Is my essay divided into clear paragraphs?
- Have I adequately developed each point to support my position without being repetitive?
- Have I provided illustrative evidence to support my position?
- Have I developed my points in a manner that attracts and holds the readers' interest?
- Does my argument follow a clear line of reasoning?
- Have I used quotations and references in the text correctly?
- Have I paraphrased sufficiently from my research sources?

Summary

- Is the conclusion effective? That is, does it provide a convincing summary of the significant points made in developing the position adopted?

Essay writers often fail to summarise their main points. A good summary can add considerable cohesion to an essay.

Accuracy

- Are my sentences complete and correct?
- Have I used the spell-check? (*Do I need to use the grammar-check?*)
- Is the writing style appropriate for the assignment and the reader?
- Has the essay been proof-read?
- Have I used double-line spacing and numbered the pages?
- Have I attached a cover sheet with my name, age and the name of my school?

Bibliography/Referencing

- Does the bibliography follow correct conventions of layout? Here are some referencing examples for various sources using the MLA method taken from the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*:

1. A Page on a Website

Last name, First name. "Document title if available." Title of the overall Website. Version or edition if available. Publisher or N.p. to designate no publisher, publication date or n.d. to mean no date. Web. Date of access.

If you cannot find some of the information, include only what is available.

"Joyce Wieland." *Celebrating Women's Achievements: Women Artists in Canada*. National Library of Canada, 2000. Web. 29 Mar. 2004.

Cassidy, Penny. "You Can't Read That." *NBC New York*. NBC Universal, 18 Apr. 2009. Web. 29 Apr. 2009.

2. A Book by a Single Author

Michio Kaku, Hyperspace: A Scientific Odyssey through Parallel Universe, Time Warps and the Tenth Dimension (New York: Oxford UP, 1994) 32.

3. A Book by Two or More Authors

James W Marquart, Sheldon Ekland
Olson, and Jonathan R Sorensen, The
Rope, the Chair, and the Needle:
Capital Punishment in Texas, 1923-
1990 (Austin: U of Texas P, 1994)
52-57.

4. An article in a Reference Book

"Mandarin," The Encyclopedia
Americana, 1993 ed.

5. A Pamphlet

Best Museums: New York City (New
York: Trip Builder, 1993)

6. A Government Publication

United Nations, Centre on
Transnational Corporations, Foreign
Direct Investment, the Service
Sector and International Banking
(New York: United Nations, 1987) 4-
6.

7. An article in a Newspaper

Catherine S. Manegold, "Becoming a Land of the Smoke-Free, Ban by Ban," New York Times 22 Mar. 1994, late ed.: A1. Paul Taylor, "Keyboard Grief: Coping with Computer-Caused Injuries," Globe and Mail [Toronto] 27 Dec. 1993: A1

8. An Article in a Magazine

Hara Estroff Marano, "Domestic Violence," Psychology Today Nov. - Dec. 1993: 48

9. An Editorial

"Death of a Writer," editorial, New York Times 20 Apr. 1994, late ed.: A18.

10. A Letter to the Editor

Cynthia Ozick, letter, Partisan Review 57 (1990): 493-94.

11. A Television or Radio Programme

"Frankenstein: The Making of the Monster," Great Books, narr. David Sutherland, writ. Eugenie Vink, dir. Jonathan Ward, Learning Channel, 8 Sept. 1993.

12. An Interview

Federico Felloni, "The Long Interview," Juliet of the Spirits, ed. Tullio Kezich, trans. Howard Greenfield (New York: Ballantine, 1966) 56.

13. An Advertisement

Chanel for Men, advertisement, GQ Dec. 1993: 125-26.

14. A Lecture, a Speech or an Address

Margaret Atwood, "Silencing the Scream," Boundaries of the Imagination Forum, MLA Convention, Royal York Hotel, Toronto, 29 Dec. 1993. Studs Terkel, address, Conf. on Coll. Composition and Communication

Convention, Palmer House, Chicago,
22 Mar. 1990.

Guidelines

- Have I followed the *Guidelines for Preparing Your Essay*?
- Have I followed the *terms of the competition*?

Students' Guidelines for Preparing Your Essay

1. Essay Topic

Give a concise definition of the topic. Consider what the question is asking. The key words in the question or topic will indicate the type of approach that is required. Are you *describing* a topic (that is, relating events in a sequence as you would in a story), or *evaluating* it (giving the pros and cons, advantages and limitations)?

2. Relevance and Coherence

Relevance: If you do not understand the question or topic (what should be included and what should not be included), ask your teacher for advice on the specific essay topic. The essay should be 'focused' on the precise topic. All of the content must be

relevant to the topic and the relevance of each point must be clearly established. Get to the topic immediately and try to cover all of the key issues.

Coherence has two dimensions: whether your text makes sense to a reader and whether it flows and holds together well (cohesion). With respect to the text making sense, re-read, analyse and judge your essay with the eye of a critical reader. Write in a way that shows familiarity with the issues. When you make a point, try to think of some good examples to illustrate it, and discuss these to show your understanding. As for cohesion, organise your materials as effectively as you can to support the development of an orderly argument. Do not leap from point to point.

3. **Knowledge and Understanding**

Show evidence in your essay of having read widely but also critically. Demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the relevant issues - give your opinion on the subject. State the points for and against, quote supporting evidence from experts, studies or experiments. Show especially the similarities, but also point out the differences

between two issues. Try to be balanced and impartial. Support with facts, figures, evidence and examples. Your argument may be considerably strengthened by your inclusion of appropriate illustrations.

4. Conclusion

Give a brief account of the main points, with your own conclusions. Give good reason(s) for your conclusion. Conclusions must follow coherently from the evidence. Evidence is provided by drawing upon analysis and interpretation of findings.

5. Presentation

Present your essay in a tidy and well organised way. The essay pages should all be numbered. Check that you have included your bibliography at the end. Always check your spelling, punctuation and grammar carefully.

6. Common mistakes

Logical Development

- Weak introductions which affected the general development of the essay

- Points presented lacked coherence and were vaguely discussed
- No logical organisation of points. Ideas were simply stated in the essay without proper organisation.
- Poor conclusions which did not offer a summary of the main ideas of the essay

Soundness of Points

- Lack of research leaving essay based solely on own opinions
- Sources not properly referenced
- Quotes used but showing no relevance to the topic
- Bibliographies incorrectly structure or inadequate
- Failure to justify points or ideas in order to strengthen argument
- Insufficient resources used as reference/research material
- Failure to ensure credibility and reliability of sources
- Little or no use of statistics where necessary
- Ineffective use of researched information
- Lack of inclusion of definitions and key terms

Clarity

- Rambling, repetition and ambiguity
- Outlining a lot of information on the topic but not answering the question

- Unclear arguments
- Failure to state position on the topic
- Use of words in the wrong context

Knowledge of Subject

- Not enough research done to gain knowledge on the topic
- Plagiarism of some parts of essays
- Use of weak and/or inappropriate examples
- Omission of key points and definitions

Command of the Language

- Poor spelling
- Challenges with verb and subject agreement
- Poor sentence and paragraph structure
- Frivolous use of quotations and exclamation marks
- Use of colloquial terms and slangs
- Casual instead of an academic tone in the essay

Presentation

- Failure to follow the guidelines outlined in the terms of the competition
- Untidy submissions
- Different font size and style within the essay

2016 OECS Essay Competition

In 2016, 156 students from the eight ECCU member countries submitted entries. The topics were:

1. Heads of Government of OECS countries can serve as many terms in office as the electorate will allow. Should there be term limits for Heads of Governments in the OECS? Discuss
2. With the rise in juvenile delinquency and anti-social behaviour among teenagers, parents who condone criminal acts committed by their children should be prosecuted. What are your views?
3. Financial management should be part of the secondary school curriculum to help equip students to make sound decisions in all aspects of their lives. Discuss.

Winners: Age 14 - 16 Category



1st Place – Sarai Hutchinson
Cayon High School, St Kitts and Nevis

"No longer must the electorate stifle its desire for a more competitive electoral process. The argument that representatives must be in place for a long time in order to fully appreciate how to get things done is inherently flawed."



2nd Place – Lyndon Cesar
Charles E Mills Secondary School, St Kitts and Nevis

"The effectiveness or efficacy of holding parents legally accountable for the actions of their teens is not substantiated by empirical data. In the absence of this data, then the claims are unfounded. That being the case, why pursue this course of action of holding parents criminally liable especially if there are other siblings in the home? Why deprive the other children of their parent? Without the parent in attendance the likelihood of history repeating becomes real."



3rd Place – Ariana Joseph
Christ the King High School, Antigua and Barbuda

Amending the constitution to bring about term limits could place our democracies on the horns of a dilemma, for according to Wellington: "term limits attack the problem of incumbency by subverting electoral responsibility." Maurizio and his colleagues put it this way: "term limits may reduce the disciplinary effect of electoral accountability as politicians who cannot be reelected have little to lose from displeasing voters and may thus behave in a more self-interested way."

Winners: Age 17 - 19 Category



1st Place – Chrisel Telemaque

Albena Lake Hodge Comprehensive School, Anguilla

“We must reasonably conclude that implementing term limits reduces the risk of power abuse, prevents cronyism and nepotism, reduces the advantages derived from incumbency to win elections and forces the leaders to focus more intently on the public’s interest. Many successful countries implement term limits. This may be a major reason for these countries’ economic and social success.”

2nd Place – Arianna Woodley

Albena Lake Hodge Comprehensive School, Anguilla



“Concluding one asks: Why is all of this information presented? This is just to provoke thought. The best case scenario for deciding term limits, according to Dr Kenny Anthony, should be decided by the people. One must not forget that our countries in the OECS are democratic in nature; by the people, for the people. If it is decided that that particular leader is doing a good job in the uplifting of a country, then his term limit should be extended.”

3rd Place – Allen Paul Mullings

Montserrat Community College



“A parent’s role transcends simply being the source of half of a child’s DNA. Though one can be a parent in the biological sense, it does not always follow that one parents their children. Often, children are raised by persons who are not their biological parents, and as such those biological parents lack the position of influence on the child’s life that they normally would have. Such a parent’s condoning of their child’s criminal behaviour, though tragic, cannot form the basis for their prosecution, as they are not responsible for the child in the eyes of the law. If anything, the parent’s absence is of legal interest, but mainly if the charge of neglect is levied.”

The full text for the winning essays can be accessed at:
www.eccb-centralbank.com/community_essay_2016.asp

Best in-Country Winners

The table below shows the best in-country winners from each country.

| 2016 OECS Essay Competition - Best in Country Winners | |
|---|--|
| Name of Student | Country/School |
| <i>Category: Age 14 – 16</i> | |
| Natalia Antoine | <i>Commonwealth of Dominica</i> – Pierre Charles Secondary School |
| Tara McQueen | <i>Grenada</i> – McDonald College |
| Jessica Tolan | <i>Montserrat</i> – Montserrat Secondary School |
| Kareem Bowe | <i>Saint Lucia</i> – St Mary’s College |
| Rochelle Kennedy | <i>St Vincent and the Grenadines</i> – St Vincent Girls’ High School |
| Chrislon Froser | <i>St Vincent and the Grenadines</i> – St Vincent Grammar School |
| <i>Category: Age 17 - 19</i> | |
| Chelsea Lawrence | <i>Commonwealth of Dominica</i> – Northeast Comprehensive School |
| Kendra DeCoteau | <i>Grenada</i> – Grenada SDA Comprehensive School |
| Ozari Gurley | <i>St Vincent and the Grenadines</i> – St Vincent and the Grenadines Community College |



2016/2017 OECS Essay Competition **Cover Sheet**

This sheet must be attached to each essay submitted

Essay Topic _____

Student's Name _____ Age _____

Email Address _____

Contact Number _____

Name of School _____

School's Principal _____

Student's Teacher _____

School's Mailing Address _____

School's Email Address: _____

I declare that I _____ conducted the research for this essay and that the essay was written solely by me. I understand that the ECCB may publish this essay in whole or in part. There are _____ words in this essay.

Student Signature

Date

Notes

Notes



MISSION STATEMENT

To maintain the stability of the EC dollar and the integrity of the banking system in order to facilitate the balanced growth and development of member states

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