

## **2026 Essay Contest Instructions**

In celebration of Black History Month, the Russell Grove Association is pleased to sponsor the 2025 Essay contest to recognize the contributions of African Americans. This year's essay competition, "The Success of African American Entrepreneurs," is open to elementary students in grades 4-5 and middle and high school students. The essay contest will start on January 8th and end on February 7<sup>th</sup>.

Prizes will be awarded for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place essays for secondary students. Winning essays may be posted on the RGA website and submitted to the Amelia Bulletin Monitor.

Prizes for Middle and High School students are:

1<sup>st</sup> Place      \$100.00

2<sup>nd</sup> Place      \$75.00

3<sup>rd</sup> Place      \$50.00

### **Contest Guidelines - Secondary**

1. Essays must focus on the theme "The Success of African American Entrepreneurs," with a minimum of 250 words (about one page) for middle school students, and 350 words for high school students (approximately one and half pages). All essays should be typed and double spaced. The essays should discuss the history of African Americans in business and highlight at least one successful entrepreneur. Please include a brief bio of the person selected, their success story, and their impact on the community. Also, give your opinion about what can be done to provide more support for entrepreneurs, particularly minorities.
2. Essays must be the student's original work and may not include third-party or AI/chat GPT writings.
3. Submit entries to [jacksonp@ameliaschools.com](mailto:jacksonp@ameliaschools.com). Be sure to attach the entry form located on the RGA website. Essay submissions are due by February 7, 2025, and late submissions will not be judged.

For additional information, see the Russell Grove Association website at [russellgroveweb.com](http://russellgroveweb.com) or contact Dr. Ernestine Scott at [escott9221@gmail.com](mailto:escott9221@gmail.com)

## **2026 Essay Contest Instructions - Elementary**

In celebration of Black History Month, the Russell Grove Association is pleased to sponsor the 2025 Essay contest to recognize the contributions of African Americans. This year's essay competition, "The Success of African American Entrepreneurs," is open to elementary students in grades 4-5 and middle and high school students. The essay contest will start on January 8th and end on February 7<sup>th</sup>.

Prizes will be awarded for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place essays for elementary students. Winning essays may be posted on the RGA website and submitted to the Amelia Bulletin Monitor.

Prizes for Elementary students are:

1<sup>st</sup> Place      \$75.00

2<sup>nd</sup> Place      \$50.00

3<sup>rd</sup> Place      \$25.00

## **Contest Guidelines - Elementary**

1. Essays must focus on the theme "The Success of African American in Business," with a minimum of 150 words (half page) for elementary school students. In grades 4-5. All essay entries should be typed and double spaced. The essays should discuss African Americans in business. Students should select one successful Business owner and share their business success story. Include a brief description of the business owner and the product or service that they provided.
2. Give your opinion about how this business helped the community.
3. Essays must be the student's original work and may not include third-party or AI/chat GPT writings.
4. Submit entries to [jacksonp@ameliaschools.com](mailto:jacksonp@ameliaschools.com). Be sure to attach the entry form located on the RGA website. Essay submissions are due by February 7, 2025, and late submissions will not be judged.

For additional information, see the Russell Grove Association website at [russellgroveweb.com](http://russellgroveweb.com) or contact Dr. Ernestine Scott at [escott9221@gmail.com](mailto:escott9221@gmail.com)

## **2026 Black History Essay Contest Judging Criteria**

### Judging Criteria:

1. Essays should be typed and double spaced.
2. Essays should meet the word requirements: 150 words for elementary students, 250 words for middle school and 350 words for high school.
3. They will be judged on **organization and relevance** (introduction, relevance, and clarity of content).
4. Judging will focus on demonstrated accuracy in **writing mechanics** (use of grammar, spelling & punctuation) and how well the student addressed the topic.
5. Essays will be judged on originality and points will be taken for essays that are copied and pasted from another source.
6. Essays submitted after the February 7<sup>th</sup> deadline will not be evaluated.