

OVERVIEW

Participants will write a research-based essay, using two (2) or more sources provided onsite, that makes insightful connections about a current technological topic.

ELIGIBILITY

Three (3) individuals per state are allowed to participate.

TIME LIMITS

1. The allotted time to complete the essay is two (2) hours.
2. Semifinalists will participate in a LEAP interview that will last a maximum of five (5) minutes.

LEAP

An individual LEAP Report is required for this event and must be submitted at event check-in (see LEAP Program).

ATTIRE

TSA competition attire is required for this event.

PROCEDURE

PRELIMINARY ROUND

1. Participants report to the event area at the time and place stated in the conference program.
2. Participants must submit a LEAP Report prior to receiving the writing prompt.
3. Participants prepare essays using a laptop computer (provided by participants).
4. Essays will be submitted in PDF format on a clean (unused) USB flash drive, provided by the participant.
5. Participants will be provided with a prompt and two (2) or more articles on a current technological topic.
6. Time begins after participants have received all materials.
7. After two (2) hours, participants stop writing. Each participant turns in an essay not exceeding three (3) typed pages, and one (1) works-cited page.

8. Entries are reviewed by judges. Neither students nor advisors are present at this time.
9. A list of twelve (12) semifinalists (in random order) will be posted by the CRC.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

1. Semifinalist teams will report at the time and place stated in the conference program to sign up for a semifinalist LEAP interview.
2. The top ten (10) finalists will be announced at the awards ceremony.

REGULATIONS

PRELIMINARY ROUND

- A. Participants are responsible for bringing a fully-charged laptop computer complete with software necessary to produce and convert documents for the final presentation. Participants who report without a laptop will not be permitted to compete.
- B. National TSA will NOT provide access to the Internet. All participants must download any and all software/programs onto their laptops prior to the event. Using a hotspot for this event will not be allowed.
- C. No power sources will be provided for participants. The laptop computer must be capable of being used for the entire two (2) hour time frame of the event, without needing a power source.
- D. Participants are responsible for bringing a clean (unused) USB flash drive to the event room.
 1. Flash drives must not contain any other documents, images, etc.
 2. Flash drives will not be returned to participants.
 3. Participants who report without a flash drive will not be permitted to compete.
- E. Only participants are allowed in the event area. Should a participant finish before the allotted time expires, the participant is allowed to leave quietly but may not re-enter the event room.
- F. Each entry must have only the participant identification number noted and centered directly below the title of the essay.

- G. The length of the essay is limited to three (3) typed pages, single-spaced. The list of references is not included in the three (3) pages.
- H. All essays must adhere to the following criteria:
1. 11pt Arial or Calibri font
 2. One inch (1") margins on all sides
 3. Single (normal) spacing
- I. With the essay, participants must turn in a one (1)-page typed bibliography, using proper MLA bibliography format.
- J. Essays must be submitted with a bibliography and in PDF format. Entries not following these guidelines will not be scored.
- K. All essays and USB drives become the property of TSA and will not be returned.
- L. LEAP Requirements
1. Participants document the leadership skills they developed and demonstrated while working on this event, and on a non-competitive event leadership experience.
 2. Semifinalists will respond to questions about the content of their LEAP Report as part of their event-specific presentation/interview.
 3. Specific LEAP Report regulations can be found in the LEAP Program section of this guide and on the TSA website.

EVALUATION

1. The criteria listed on the official rating form
2. The LEAP requirements

Please refer to the official rating form for more information.

STEM INTEGRATION

This event aligns with the STEM educational standards of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

CAREERS RELATED TO THIS EVENT

- Economist
- Engineer
- Research technician
- Scientist
- Technical writer

ESSAYS ON TECHNOLOGY

2019 & 2020 OFFICIAL RATING FORM

HIGH SCHOOL

Judges: Using minimal (1-4 points), adequate (5-8 points), or exemplary (9-10 points) performance levels as a guideline in the rating form, record the scores earned for the event criteria in the column spaces to the right. The X1 or X2 notation in the criteria column is a multiplier factor for determining the points earned. (Example: an “adequate” score of 7 for an X1 criterion = 7 points; an “adequate” score of 7 for an X2 criterion = 14 points.) A score of zero (0) is acceptable if the minimal performance for any criterion is not met.

Go/No Go Specifications

- Before judging the entry, ensure that the items below are present; indicate presence with a check mark in the box.
- If an item is missing, leave the box next to the item blank and place a check mark in the box labeled ENTRY NOT EVALUATED.
- If a check mark is placed in the ENTRY NOT EVALUATED box, the entry is not to be judged.

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- The participant has a fully charged laptop computer.
 - The participant has a flash drive.
 - The entry is submitted in PDF format with a bibliography.
 - Completed LEAP Report is present.
 - ENTRY NOT EVALUATED

ESSAY (110 points)				Record scores in the column spaces below.
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance	
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points	
Thesis (X1)	The thesis is not a complete thought and/or is inappropriate for the essay; the title and thesis do not correlate with one another, or the thesis lacks creativity.	The thesis is evident and the idea behind it is somewhat concise and fairly creative; the essay title correlates with the thesis.	The thesis is well structured, concise, positioned appropriately, and creative; the essay title is authentic and correlates well with the thesis.	
Introduction paragraph (X1)	The introduction explains the background but may lack detail; it does not help to establish the writer's position.	The introduction creates interest and generally states the position.	A well-developed introduction engages the reader and creates interest; the introduction states a significant and compelling position.	
Supporting paragraphs (X2)	Paragraphs lack main points to support the thesis, and/or there is a poor development of ideas.	Paragraphs include main points that are related to the thesis, with adequate supporting details and a fairly well-developed narrative.	Paragraphs provide well-developed main points directly related to the thesis; supporting examples are concrete and detailed; the narrative presents a consistent and effective point of view.	
Concluding paragraph (X1)	The conclusion is recognizable, but it does not effectively summarize the topic.	The conclusion generally summarizes the topic and restates the thesis.	The conclusion wraps up the point of the essay and creatively restates the thesis.	
Organization (X1)	There is no discernible organization; transitions are not present.	A logical progression of ideas is evident; transitions are present throughout the essay.	The essay conveys a logical progression of ideas, with a clear structure that enhances the thesis; transitions are mature and graceful.	
Style (X1)	The style is confusing and hard to follow; it contains fragments and/or run-on sentences; word choice is simple, ordinary, and/or un compelling.	The style is clear, sentences are somewhat expressive, and word choice is appropriate.	The style is smooth, skillful and coherent; sentences are strong and expressive, with varied structure; word choice is appropriate and mature.	
Mechanics (X2)	The essay contains distracting errors in punctuation, grammar, and spelling.	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are generally correct, with few errors.	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are correct with no errors evident.	
Research base (X1)	The essay lacks an adequate research base and/or uses minimal support from articles.	The research base is adequate, with support from articles.	The essay conveys a detailed research base that includes comprehensive support from articles.	

ESSAY (110 points) – continued			
Works cited (X1)	References are not used effectively, and/or they are not cited using proper MLA format.	Most sources cited are used effectively and help to support the essay topic.	The essay incorporates multiple sources that are credible, appropriate, and support the topic.
			ESSAY SUBTOTAL (110 points)
<p>Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points in the semifinalist section) must be initiated by the evaluator, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right.</p> <p>Indicate the rule violated: _____</p>			
			PRELIMINARY SUBTOTAL (110 points)

SEMIFINAL LEAP INTERVIEW (11 points)			
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points
LEAP Report/ Interview (10% of total event points)	The individual's efforts are not clearly communicated, lack detail, and/or are unconvincing; few, if any, attempts are made to identify and/or incorporate the SLC Practices and Behaviors.	The individual's efforts are adequately communicated, include some detail, are clear, and/or are generally convincing; identification and/or incorporation of the SLC Practices and Behaviors is adequate.	The individual's efforts are clearly communicated, fully-detailed, and convincing; identification and/or incorporation of the SLC Practices and Behaviors is excellent.
			SEMIFINAL LEAP INTERVIEW SUBTOTAL (11 points)
<p>Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points for the above sections) must be initiated by the judge, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right.</p> <p>Indicate the rule violated: _____</p>			
			SEMIFINAL SUBTOTAL (11 points)

Record scores in the column spaces below.

To arrive at the TOTAL score, add any subtotals and subtract rules violation points, as necessary.	TOTAL (121 points)
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Comments:

I certify these results to be true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

JUDGE

Printed name: _____ Signature: _____

ESSAYS ON TECHNOLOGY

EVENT COORDINATOR INSTRUCTIONS

PERSONNEL

- A. Event coordinator
- B. Judges:
 1. Preliminary round, two (2) for every twenty (20) entries for the first reading
 2. Semifinal round, two (2) or more for the reading of the top-rated twenty (20) essays
 3. Timekeeper

MATERIALS

- A. Coordinator's packet, containing:
 1. Event guidelines, one (1) copy for the coordinator and for each judge
 2. TSA Event Coordinator Report
 3. List of judges/assistants
 4. Pre-populated flash drives for judges
 5. Stopwatch
 6. Zip-lock snack bags – one (1) for each participant's USB flash drive
 7. Results envelope
 8. Envelope for LEAP Reports
 9. LEAP Interview Judging Protocol
- B. Tables and chairs for judges
- C. Tables and chairs for participants
- D. Securable room (preferable) for the duration of the event
- E. Two (2) or more articles on a current technological topic; one (1) set per participant and one (1) set per judge

RESPONSIBILITIES

AT THE CONFERENCE

1. Attend the mandatory coordinator's meeting at the designated time and location.
2. Report to the CRC room and obtain the coordinator's packet; check the contents.

3. Review the event guidelines and check to see that enough judges and assistants have been scheduled.
4. Inspect the area in which the event will take place for appropriate set-up including sufficient number and size of tables.
5. At least one (1) hour before the event is scheduled to begin, meet with judges/assistants to review time limits, procedures, and regulations. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the event begins.

EVENT CHECK-IN

1. Check in the entries at the time stated in the conference program.
2. Anyone reporting who is not on the entry list may check in only after official notification is received from the CRC.
3. Late entries are considered on a case-by-case basis and only when the delay is caused by events beyond participant control.
4. Place an entry number on each USB flash drive.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

1. Instruct participants that they must have their participant identification number only centered directly below the title of the essay. No other identifying information can be included.
2. Remind the participants to leave a one inch (1") margin on all sides of the essay.
3. Remind participants to single space their work using an 11pt Arial or Calibri font and to submit only three (3) essay pages, plus a single page for references.
4. Remind participants that they must save their work in PDF format on a flash drive.
5. Distribute both the prompt and the articles on a current technological topic to all participants. The prompt will indicate the topic and instructions for composing an essay related to the articles.

6. Instruct participants that those who finish before time is called must submit their work (on the flash drive) and leave quietly.
 7. Five (5) minutes before the two (2) hours is up, make an announcement that participants have five (5) minutes to complete their essays. Exactly two (2) hours after beginning, call time and collect the flash drives from participants.
 8. Supervise and assist the judges during the reading of the essays. Each entry must be read and evaluated independently.
 9. Decisions about rules violations must be discussed and verified with the judges, event coordinator, and CRC manager to determine either:
 - a. To deduct twenty percent (20%) of the total possible points in this round or
 - b. To disqualify the entry
 - c. The event coordinator, judges and CRC manager must initial either of these actions on the rating form.
 10. Judges determine the twelve (12) semifinalists.
 11. Review and submit the semifinalist results and all related items/forms in the results envelope to the CRC room for posting.
 12. Create semifinalist sign-up sheet for each team's final presentation.
5. Decisions about rules violations must be discussed and verified with the judges, event coordinator, and CRC manager to determine either:
 - a. To deduct twenty percent (20%) of the total possible points in this round or
 - b. To disqualify the entry
 - c. The event coordinator, judges and CRC manager must initial either of these actions on the rating form.
 6. Judges determine the ten (10) finalists and discuss and break any ties. (Determine the procedure for breaking ties before the onsite competition begins.)
 7. Review and submit the finalist results and all items/forms in the results envelope to the CRC room.
 8. If necessary, manage security and the removal of materials from the area.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

1. Meet with semifinalists at the time and place stated in the conference program to allow them to sign up for a semifinalist LEAP interview time.
2. Inspect the area in which the semifinalist LEAP interviews are to take place. Ensure that there is a table and seating for participants and evaluators.
3. Meet with semifinalist judges to review the LEAP Judging Protocol. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the semifinalist presentations begin.
4. Conduct semifinalist LEAP interviews. Interviews should be a maximum of five (5) minutes in length.