

**THE CRITICAL THINKING COMPANY™ ANNOUNCES
50th ANNIVERSARY ESSAY COMPETITION**

Prizes include: College Scholarships and Free Critical Thinking Products.

Seaside, California (September 22, 2008) – The Critical Thinking Company, award-winning publisher of complete curriculum and supplemental educational books, software and DVDs for all ages, announces The Critical Thinking Company 50th Anniversary Essay Competition for middle and junior high school students during the 2008-2009 academic year. The essay competition consists of two separate topics each with a limit of 500 words. The first topic challenges students to describe how they benefit in their everyday lives from critical thinking educational materials published by The Critical Thinking Company over the last 50 years. The second topic requires students to imagine how their everyday lives, 50 years from now, will benefit from strong critical thinking skills. Complete details for the competition can be found below.

50th Anniversary Essay Competition

Part of The Critical Thinking Company's mission is to inspire a love of thinking while developing important critical thinking skills. Our hope is that the essay competition will inspire and encourage middle school students to continue practicing higher order thinking in high school, college and beyond. The essay competition asks middle school students to write an essay, 500 words or less, in response to one of the following topics:

Topic #1

Describe how you benefit today in everyday life due to The Critical Thinking Company educational materials from the last 50 years. Utilize product information, articles, and research material found on the www.criticalthinking.com website, along with personal experience to outline gains from critical thinking materials that are common place in everyday life.

Topic #2

Describe, 50 years from now, how your everyday life may benefit from strong critical thinking skills. Utilize product information, articles, and research material found on the www.criticalthinking.com website, along with personal experience and your imagination to explain how your daily life will be better, 50 years from now due to highly-developed reasoning skills.

Students may submit two separate essays, each responding to a separate topic, if they so choose. For specific details on entry requirements, see the following sections.

Due Dates:

The Competition Opens on September 15, 2008
Final Entry Is Due on or Before January 15, 2009

Winners will be notified on or after February 15th, 2009, depending on the number of submissions.

Eligibility

Any U.S. student enrolled in middle school, junior high school or home school (under the age of 15) in the U.S. or its territories is eligible to enter the competition for cash prizes. Non-U.S. citizens and students in international locations can enter as well, but they are not eligible for cash prizes. Free product and certificates will be awarded to each winner, regardless of citizenship.

A teacher, parent or guardian must sponsor each entry. This means that a responsible adult must review and approve the student entry before it is submitted to The Critical Thinking Company. The adult should also affirm that the student did the research and writing themselves.

Submission Requirements

Note: Student submissions shall be treated as being free of restrictions and limitations on their use, reproduction and publication.

- **Title page listing:** Should list essay topic, student's name, school's name, teacher's name, complete mailing address of school, type of school (private, public or home school), grade level (6, 7, 8 or 9), and complete email and phone contact information for student and teacher.
- All papers must be submitted digitally as MS Word or Adobe PDF documents. Hard copies will be accepted but not preferred.
- **Individual entries:** No more than 500 words, typed, double-spaced, 12-pt. font, one-side only, will be accepted. The 500 word limit requirement excludes title page.
- Digital copies of file-size 5 megabytes or less should be sent via e-mail attachment to ideas@criticalthinking.com. **Subject line: The Critical Thinking Company 50th Anniversary Essay Competition**

Please copy the information from your title page into the e-mail message.

E-mail Submission Example:

To: ideas@criticalthinking.com

From: Name of sender

Subject line: The Critical Thinking Co. 50th Anniversary Essay Competition

Attached: Your essay attached as .doc or .PDF only

Body of message: Copy and paste your title page information into the body of the e-mail.

Do not put the essay itself into the body of the e-mail.

For hard copies, please mail your entry to arrive no later than the due date to:

The Critical Thinking Company
50th Anniversary Essay Competition
PO BOX 1610
Seaside, C.A. 93955-1610

Criteria for Evaluation

Each essay will be judged on its own merit by a group of educators and other expert representatives. Award-level entries must be well written, thorough and concise. Entries will be judged on how well students have focused their essay, and how well they have addressed four basic criteria: Informed Content*, Creativity and Imagination, Captivating and Inspirational, and Writing Technique.

Scores will be determined using the following guideline:

- Informed Content*, 30 points.
- Creativity and Imagination, 30 points.
- Essay is captivating and inspirational, 20 points.
- Organization and grammar of the essay, 20 points.

*Informed content means that the students have educated themselves about the products and the meaning of critical thinking, and the use of examples and product information are accurate.

ESSAY COMPETITION AWARDS

NOTE: ONLY U.S. CITIZENS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR CASH PRIZES

Each student that enters will receive a Participation Certificate from The Critical Thinking Company.

ELIGIBLE entries that receive the highest overall scores will receive certificates, product and scholarships.

The dollar amounts of prizes are subject to available funds.

We expect to be able to make the following awards to the **ELIGIBLE** middle and junior high school winners:

- First prize: \$500 college scholarship and \$100 in free product.
- Second prize: \$300 college scholarship and \$200 in free product.
- Third prize: \$100 in free product.
- Each student that enters will receive a Participation Certificate.

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About The Critical Thinking Company

Since 1958, The Critical Thinking Company has been a recognized leader in teaching critical thinking skills. The company offers fun, easy-to-use products that develop a wide-range of thinking skills and improve standards-based learning in reading, writing, math, science, and history. The company's award-winning books and software empower students with the problem-solving skills needed for success in school and in life. The Critical Thinking Company supplies educational materials to Sylvan Learning Centers, Club Z In-Home Tutoring, leading U.S. public high schools, and gifted & talented programs throughout the world. The Critical Thinking Company guarantees better grades and higher test scores, or your money back.

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