

# WSST & Wisconsin Water Week



Brought to you by WSST

Present  
the 2023  
Essay Contest

Deadline: February 20, 2023

BUILDING TRUST  
AROUND WATER



TOGETHER

Write an essay on the topic given for your grade level

K-1	<p>Every living thing on Earth needs water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· What are the different ways we use water every day? (drinking, showering, cooking, laundry but also for recreation and relaxation)</li><li>· What would happen if we didn't have clean water?</li></ul>
2-3	<p>Every living thing on Earth needs water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· What are the different ways we use water every day? (drinking, showering, cooking, laundry but also for recreation and relaxation)</li><li>· What would happen if we didn't have clean water?</li><li>· Who in our communities do we <b>trust</b> to make sure we have clean water? (water department, health department, city, county) - they could explore the different roles each of these has in both our domestic water use and also the water we use for enjoyment (protecting our rivers and lakes)</li></ul>
4-5	<p>We all like to have fun in the water.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Do you like swimming, boating, or fishing?</li><li>· Is it important that the water you swim, boat, and fish in is healthy?</li><li>· What does it mean for a lake or river to be healthy? How do you know if it's healthy?</li><li>· Whose job is it to make sure lakes and rivers stay healthy? Who do we <b>trust</b> to do these jobs?</li></ul>

Upper Levels next page. 

<p>6-8</p>	<p>Wisconsin has over 15,000 lakes and thousands of miles of rivers and streams. All of these "navigable" waters belong to everyone in Wisconsin. Our rights to enjoy water is protected through the Public Trust Doctrine.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Explain the Public Trust Doctrine and its importance to all people.</li> <li>· It takes both scientists and the general public working together to protect our water resources. Research an agency or organization in Wisconsin that helps to protect our surface waters. How do they gain our (the public's) trust so we feel they are doing the best job?</li> <li>· Write an essay that suggests the importance of water conservation and sustainable use of water resources based on the information you found.</li> </ul>
<p>9-12</p>	<p>Wisconsin has over 15,000 lakes and thousands of miles of rivers and streams. All of these "navigable" waters belong to everyone in Wisconsin. Our right to enjoy water is protected through the Public Trust Doctrine.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Explain the Public Trust Doctrine and its importance to all people.</li> <li>· It takes both scientists and the general public working together to protect our water resources. Research an agency or organization in Wisconsin that helps to protect our surface waters. How do they gain our (the public's) trust so we feel they are doing the best job?</li> <li>· Write an essay that suggests the importance of water conservation and sustainable use of water resources based on the information you found.</li> </ul>

## Awards

The winning essay in each category will receive a \$100 prize and publication in the WSST newsletter and website. The teacher of the winning submission will also receive a \$100 prize. Honorable mention in each category will receive \$50 prize.

Additional highly rated essays may be published to the WSST website at the discretion of the contest organizers, as well as shared with the water community through the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Partnership's Lake Tides publication

(<https://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/UWEXLakes/Pages/resources/newsletter/default.aspx>). Results will be shared at the 2023 WSST Conference in Madison, the 2023 Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention in Stevens Point, and on Wisconsin Society of Science Teachers Website, [www.wsst.org](http://www.wsst.org). The events and postings will be held in March and April of 2023.

## Eligibility

Any classroom teacher in Wisconsin can submit one student essay for each science course they teach. Student essays must be original work and be submitted in one of four categories: K-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

\*Submitting teacher is required to be a current WSST member.

## Format

- K-1 category: Essays should be between 150-300 words and can include a picture. K-1 teachers can help with the conversion of spoken essay to text.
- All other essays should be **500 words or less** in length. The essays are required to be typed, 12 point font, and double spaced.
- Text to speech and other adaptations may be made at any grade level based on a student's Individualized Education Program.

## Submission

Submissions should be emailed as **ONE** file that includes both the essay and release form in .pdf format to [essay@wsst.org](mailto:essay@wsst.org). All submissions must be received by 5:00 pm (CST) on February 20, 2023.

Essays submitted after 5:00 pm (CST) on February 20, 2023 are longer than 500 words, or do not include a signed release form may be disqualified. Submissions that cannot be read will not be judged. The decisions of the judges are final.

## **Judging Criteria\***

### **Adherence to Topic (50%)**

The essay clearly addresses the theme of the competition and answers the question specified for each grade level. In addition to answering the question, the essay provides a clear understanding of the process of science and is scientifically accurate.

### **Creativity (30%)**

Points in this category are awarded to essays that provoke a lot of thought by the reader, express ideas in novel ways, make clever use of vocabulary, or use interesting metaphors or poignant stories.

### **Structures (20%)**

The essay is organized in a way that makes it easy for the reader to follow. In addition, the essay shows grade level appropriate use of grammar, vocabulary, and writing conventions. The essay must be typed using 12-point font, double spaced and less than 500 words. Teachers of students in the K-1 category can help with conversion of spoken essays to text.

\*Text to speech and other adaptations may be made at any grade level based on a student's Individualized Education Program.

WSST will notify the submitting teachers of winning essay prior to the conference to obtain student and teacher photos to create displays for the conferences.

# Rubric for Science Matters Essay Contest

Entry Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria	Exemplary (8)	Proficient (6)	Basic (4)	Not Demonstrated (Less than or equal to 2)	Points
<b>Adherence to Topic</b> (Development of Ideas & Content)	<p>Well-developed ideas; introduces ideas, and responds to Essay prompts connecting with core content of the topic.</p> <p>The essay provides a clear understanding of the process of science and is scientifically accurate.</p>	<p>Developing ideas, sometimes connecting with core content of the Essay topic.</p> <p>The essay provides some understanding of the process of science and is mostly scientifically accurate.</p>	<p>Ideas are there but not fully developed; does not connect with core content of the Essay topic.</p> <p>The essay provides limited understanding of the process of science and is barely scientifically accurate.</p>	<p>Poorly developed ideas, which do not add to or connect with core content of topic.</p> <p>The essay does not provide an understanding of the process of science and is not scientifically accurate.</p>	
<b>Creativity</b> (Critical Thinking)	<p>Clear evidence of critical thinking application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Essay entry characterized by clarity of argument, depth of insight into issues, originality of treatment, and relevance. Sometimes include unusual insights. Arguments well supported.</p> <p>Essay entry has clever use of vocabulary, or uses interesting metaphors or uses poignant stories.</p>	<p>Beginning of critical thinking, Essay entry tends to address peripheral issues. Generally accurate, but could be improved with more analysis and creative thought. Tendency to recite facts or textual information rather than address issues.</p> <p>Essay entry is articulate and understandable, but there are minor errors in clever use of vocabulary or, interesting metaphors or, poignant stories.</p>	<p>Critical thinking evidence not fully formed in Essay entry. Several tangential issues addressed. Some accuracy, but much more analysis and thought needed. Almost exclusively repeating information from the text's materials rather than addressing issues.</p> <p>Essay entry is well written but does not include clever use of vocabulary or use interesting metaphors or use poignant stories.</p>	<p>Poorly developed critical thinking.</p> <p>Essay is poorly written and does not include clever use of vocabulary or use interesting metaphors or use poignant stories.</p>	
<b>Structures</b> (Writing Mechanics, Clarity, Format & layout, timeliness)	<p>Essay entry is well articulated and understandable; flawless grammar, punctuation, and usage.</p> <p>Follows the format and layout according to guidelines provided.</p> <p>Essay entry completed and submitted on time.</p>	<p>Essay entry is articulate and understandable, but there are minor errors in grammar, punctuation, and/or usage.</p> <p>Follows the format and layout according to guidelines provided but there are minor errors.</p>	<p>Essay entry is occasionally difficult to understand with several errors in grammar, punctuation, and/or usage.</p> <p>Follows the format and layout according to the guidelines but there are several errors.</p>	<p>Essay entry is difficult to understand with many errors.</p> <p>Follows the format and layout according to guidelines, but has many errors.</p>	
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# Essay Contest

## Participant Release Form

Your essay may be published and/or displayed on a public internet website ([www.wsst.org](http://www.wsst.org)) as well as in other formats, including the WSST newsletter. By signing this release form you and/or your parent or legal guardian acknowledge that the essay may be made publicly available and you and/or your parent or legal guardian consent to this use of your essay. The scanned release must be received by WSST as part of your essay submission by 5:00 pm (CST) on February 20, 2023.

I agree that my essay may be used, edited, reproduced, distributed, and presented in any non-commercial educational way deemed proper by the contest organizers without any additional consent, or payment to me or anyone else. There is no time limit on the validity of this release nor is there any geographic limitation on where my essay may be used, distributed or presented.

Entrant photos may be collected to be used at both the WSST Conference and the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention in Stevens Point. Winning entrant names and schools may be published on our website and Facebook page.

In addition, I certify that the essay submitted for this contest is my own work.

Name of Student (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_