

This research contest is named in honor of the White Rose resistance movement of German university students. Hans and Sophie Scholl, Christoph Probst, other friends, and their professor were arrested and executed for distributing leaflets denouncing the policies of the Nazi regime. May memories of these brave young people inspire us to reflect upon our own responsibilities as citizens in a democratic nation.



Left to Right: Hans and Sophie Scholl, Christoph Probst

FOUR CONTEST CATEGORIES

Lower Division: Grades 8 and 9

1. **Essay** with Works Cited
2. **Documentary** with Film Introduction and Works Cited

Upper Division: Grades 10, 11, and 12

3. **Essay** with Works Cited
4. **Documentary** with Film Introduction and Works Cited

Students may submit one entry in one contest category per year. Students may enter the contest every year they are enrolled in grades 8–12.

Sponsoring teachers may enter the ten best essays and ten best documentaries created by their assigned students during a contest year. (See scoring rubrics for criteria.)

CONTEST GOALS

- ❖ Increase understanding of the Holocaust.
- ❖ Promote interest in historical research.
- ❖ Develop skills in analyzing sources and using primary source materials.
- ❖ Practice critical thinking, including synthesizing info from multiple sources.
- ❖ Practice citing and documenting sources.
- ❖ Provide a “real world” audience for academic work and the incentive of public recognition.

“Somebody, after all, had to make a start. What we wrote and said is also believed by many others. They just don’t dare express themselves as we did.”

Sophie Scholl

AWARDS

Lower Division Essay Winner.....\$300

Lower Division Documentary Winner.....\$300

Upper Division Essay Winner.....\$300

Upper Division Documentary Winner.....\$300

The sponsoring teachers of contest winners will be awarded a \$150 voucher they may use to purchase Holocaust-related books, instructional materials, or use for professional development.

Contest finalists and their sponsoring teachers will be recognized at an Academic Awards Ceremony in early May where the winners will be announced and invited to read their essays or screen their documentaries.

Following the ceremony, winning documentaries and essays will be available on the MCHE website.

The White Rose Research Contest is made possible by generous financial benefactors of the Midwest Center for Holocaust Education and many volunteers who evaluate submissions.

Failure to follow these rules may cause entries to be disqualified.

GENERAL CONTEST RULES:

- ❖ Contestants must base their entry on at least three of the provided contest documents (sources).
- ❖ In addition, contestants must use at least two additional sources obtained through research.
- ❖ All information beyond common knowledge must be cited—following MLA, APA, or CMS format.
- ❖ No portion of the work may be plagiarized—a problem most often caused when sources are not properly credited.
- ❖ Sponsoring teachers may instruct, guide, and review, but may not rewrite or extensively edit student work.
- ❖ Entries must be submitted through the MCHC website by the contest deadline.
- ❖ Entries will not be returned.
- ❖ Entrants give MCHC permission to publish winning entries.
- ❖ Decisions of the judges are final.

CONTEST RULES FOR ESSAYS:

- ❖ **1,600 words maximum are allowed for an essay.** At minimum, one-fourth of the total length of the essay (400 of 1,600 words) must be reserved for the reflection portion of the contest prompt. The maximum word count need not include the Works Cited.
- ❖ Essays must be the original work of a single student.

CONTEST RULES FOR WORKS CITED:

- ❖ The **Works Cited** is the last page of the essay or Film Introduction. It lists—in alphabetical order—all and only the sources cited within the essay or used in the documentary. **Bibliographies are not allowed.** All citations—in the text and Works Cited—must be consistently formatted in MLA, APA, or CMS style.

CONTEST RULES FOR DOCUMENTARIES:

- ❖ A documentary is an audio/visual presentation that uses many types of sources such as still images, video, and sound to communicate a historical argument, supported by research, and a reflection on this year's contest prompt.
- ❖ **Documentaries should be at least seven minutes but no longer than ten minutes in length.** At minimum, one-fourth of the total length of the documentary (2.5 of 10 minutes) must be reserved for the reflection portion of the contest prompt.
- ❖ The last portion of the documentary must be a list of acknowledgments and credits for sources of still images, moving images, interviews, music, and narration that comprise the documentary. These source credits must be brief—not full bibliographic citations and not annotated. **Full credits, in MLA, APA, or CMS style, must be given in a Works Cited attached as a last page to your Film Introduction.**
- ❖ 800 words are allowed for a **Film Introduction**; this word count need not include the Works Cited.
- ❖ Documentaries should be saved in mp4 format, submitted as a YouTube link. Finalists may be asked to submit the mp4 files of their documentaries to MCHC.
- ❖ Documentaries and their accompanying Film Introductions must be the original work of one student or no more than two student partners.

- ❖ **What grade levels are eligible to participate?**
Students currently enrolled in grades 8–12 may submit an entry.
- ❖ **How many entries may one student submit?**
Students may submit one entry per year – either an essay or a documentary.
- ❖ **May a student enter the contest during more than one year?**
Yes, students may submit one entry each of the five years they are eligible. Previous winners may enter the contest again.
- ❖ **May a student enter the contest without the sponsorship of a teacher?**
White Rose is academically rigorous. Therefore, students would be wise to ask an educator to serve as an advisor/sponsor if they choose to undertake the contest independently.
- ❖ **Are students who attend alternative schools, home schools, online schools, or other non-traditional schools allowed to participate?**
All students in grades 8–12 are welcome to participate.
- ❖ **May a group of students work together and submit one essay or documentary as a team?**
Essays must represent the work of one student working independently. Two students may collaborate on a documentary entry.
- ❖ **How many entries may a school submit?**
Each teacher who incorporates the White Rose contest into their instructional program and supervises students' work is eligible to submit the 10 best essays and 10 best documentaries that their students create in an academic year. Please consult the scoring rubrics for criteria.
- ❖ **Do students need to cite the sources used in their contest submissions?**
Students must cite sources in the text of their essays using MLA, APA, or CMS format AND include a Works Cited page (not a Bibliography) with their essay or Film Introduction.
- ❖ **How are entries evaluated?**
Every entry is evaluated by three volunteer judges—retired language and history teachers, professional writers, librarians, lawyers, rabbis, ministers—using the same scoring rubric published for use by teachers and students. The three scores for each paper are added. Then the highest composite scores in each category are declared **finalists**. These entries are passed on to a small group of history professors who serve annually on a Blue Ribbon Panel of judges. They use the contest rubrics to select the **contest winners**.
- ❖ **Will students receive feedback on their entries?**
Sadly, the number of entries received makes it impossible for us to return scores to students.
- ❖ **How will contest results be communicated?**
Finalists will be invited to attend MCHE's Academic Awards Ceremony held in early May. Contest results will appear on our website shortly after the ceremony.
- ❖ **What happens to contest entries?**
Entries will not be returned. Entrants give MCHE permission to reprint and publish entries.
- ❖ **Do you offer professional development for teachers to help them prepare for the contest?**
Yes! MCHE offers a "Preview the Contest" workshop for teachers via Zoom in late October. The video of the Zoom is available afterward. Check our website for specific dates and registration.
- ❖ **Are there limits on the geographic location of entrants to MCHE's contest?**
Although we primarily expect to serve students in the midwestern states, students from any U.S. states and territories are welcome to participate.
- ❖ **Does a Holocaust Center near me have a White Rose contest?**
Maybe. MCHE has helped other centers launch their own research contests, although they may have given it a different name. If you live outside the Midwest, contact us for more information.

FORMAT GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN WORK:

Essay or Film Introduction

All written work should be formatted for printing and anonymous evaluation. Most judges choose to print their assigned entries before reading, annotating, and scoring them. To help the judges remain as objective as possible, we do not want them to have significant information about the identity of the authors.

- ❖ Type written work in standard 8.5 x 11-inch document format. Allow 1-inch margins on all sides.
- ❖ Double-space text and use Times New Roman or Garamond font in a 12-point size. We recommend these fonts because the regular and italic type styles are easy to distinguish from one another.
- ❖ Indent the first line of each paragraph. Use the "Tab" key rather than pushing the space bar five times.
- ❖ Create a header in the upper right-hand corner that numbers all pages consecutively. Students are allowed to use their last names along with the page number in this header. (The chance is slim our judges will know you by last name only. If they do recognize a name, they are instructed to inform us. We then have an alternate evaluator score that paper.) Teachers who have more than one student with the same last name may permit addition of a first name initial.
- ❖ The title of the essay or film/film introduction should be centered on the first line of the first page. A double-space is permitted after the title. The title should be relevant to the thesis of your paper. "White Rose Essay" or "White Rose Documentary" are not appropriate titles.
- ❖ Other than the header described above, there should be no other identifying information on the entry—no first name, teacher's name, course title, grade level, school name.
- ❖ Please do not create a cover page.
- ❖ **Entrants who fail to follow the directions above cause MCHE staff to take time re-formatting their papers before distributing them to the judges. This problem becomes more complicated when papers are submitted as PDFs.** Please note the accepted file extensions on the contest submission form.

Additional Instructions for Film Introductions

- ❖ Film Introductions must answer the following questions:
 - How did you choose the topic of your documentary; how does it relate to the contest prompt?
 - What is the thesis (historical argument) of your documentary?
 - Describe the process you used to create your documentary. Were there any special problems you had to solve? Were there lucky breaks or good surprises that benefitted your film?
- ❖ Add the title of the documentary and its YouTube link one double-space below the title of the Film Introduction. Two single-spaced lines of text may be used—one for the documentary title and one for the link. Double-space again before starting the first paragraph of the paper.

HOW TO CREATE A CONTEST-WINNING ENTRY:

Besides following the rules, these insider tips can help you create a winning a contest entry.

- ❖ **The scoring rubric is the secret to success.** Having the scoring rubric in advance allows students to see exactly how their work will be evaluated. Use the rubric as an asset.
- ❖ **Stick to the topic.** Essays and documentaries that fail to address the research and reflection prompts will not score well—no matter how creative or well-composed they are.
- ❖ **This is a research contest.** Notice on the scoring rubric that accurate historical research is weighted times three! Demonstrating comprehensive and accurate historical research is vital to success.
- ❖ **Form an opinion about the topic. Persuade the reader or viewer to agree.** A winning essay or documentary does more than describe or summarize what the author learned from the research process; it takes a stand on the topic—formed as a result of the research. A statement of that opinion is called a thesis.
- ❖ **The ability to create new ideas formed from multiple sources of information is the most complex of the thinking skills.** The research process demands exercise of these skills. Contest entrants will be given a list of primary sources that may include documents, photos, films, maps, artwork, poems, or transcripts of speeches that were created during a specific historical period. Audio- and video-taped testimonies of people who were eyewitnesses of historical events are also considered primary sources. Students must synthesize information from—and cite—at least three of the provided primary sources in their essays or documentaries. In addition, students must search for and use information from a minimum of two additional sources to prove the thesis of their essays or documentaries.
- ❖ **Prove it!** If authors or documentarians fail to credit their sources, their readers or viewers can't see their research. Consequently, their audiences have no obligation to believe the information presented and accept the thesis of the essay or documentary. Nonfiction writing and documentaries require accurate and complete citation of sources.
- ❖ **Use technology to your advantage.** Almost all students will be creating their projects using computers. Use the spell-check and grammar-suggestion tools in these devices! But don't let technology tools take the place of your brain and old-fashioned proofreading. For example, spell check may not help you with Nazi's, Nazis' or Nazis; you simply need to understand and correctly use the possessive and plural forms.
- ❖ **Don't bore the teacher or the judge.** Students, you must create one essay or documentary and Film Introduction. Your teacher and the contest judges must read or view many! Ask yourself: "Will this paper or documentary be interesting to my reader or viewer? Will my reader/viewer be persuaded to accept my thesis? Will my work stand out for positive reasons?" Ask a few objective, honest people to read or view your work and provide suggestions for improvement.
- ❖ **Does this sound like a lot to manage? It is!** The skills you will practice working on your White Rose contest entry are challenging, but they are skills you will use for a lifetime. The sense of pride earned by a job well-done is worth the effort. And you could even earn some cash!