



RIVERSIDE COUNTY
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
KENNETH M. YOUNG
Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

Memorandum

TO: Academic Decathlon Volunteer – Essay Judge

FROM: Tracey L. Rivas, Programs and Student Activities Facilitator
Superintendent's Office
(951) 826-6570; FAX (951) 826-6951

SUBJECT: Academic Decathlon Competition

Thank you for volunteering to assist with this year's Riverside County Academic Decathlon. You have been assigned as an *Essay Judge*.

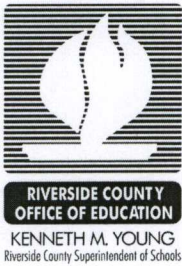
Please plan to arrive at Heritage High School, 26001 Briggs Road, Menifee, on Saturday, January 28, 2012, no later than 12 p.m. You will check in at the theater lobby and attend an orientation session beginning as soon as you arrive. We will provide lunch, and you will be finished at approximately 3 p.m.

We ask that you review the accompanying materials carefully before the event date and plan to arrive in plenty of time to attend the orientation session. Additional information will be provided to you during the session to help with your assignment.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (951) 826-6570, or via e-mail, trivas@rcoe.us. For your information, our office will be closed for the holidays beginning December 19, 2011, returning January 3, 2012.

This competition would not be possible without volunteers such as yourself, and we sincerely appreciate your willingness to spend your time supporting the event. Thank you very much!!

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**2012 Riverside County Academic Decathlon
Schedule of Events*
Saturday, January 28, 2012**

Heritage High School - 26001 Briggs Road, Menifee

8:45 a.m.	Speech and Interview Judges Check-In <i>(Continental breakfast for judges available in each orientation room.)</i>	Reagan Building -Theater Lobby
9:00 - 9:45 a.m.	Speech Judge Orientation Interview Judge Orientation	Teacher's Lounge – R1111 Career Center
10 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.	Judging*	Various Classrooms Lincoln Building
<p>*Break will be held from 11:00 to 11:15 a.m. and 2:00 to 2:15 p.m. *Lunch for judges will be held during the timeframe of 12:15 to 1:00 p.m. <i>(Lunch provided in Teacher's Lounge/Career Center.)</i></p>		
12:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Essay Judge Orientation/Judging	Choir Room
3:30 p.m.	All Scores Due	

8:30 a.m.	Coaches/Team Check-In for <u>Group 1</u> <i>(Group 1 = Teams beginning with numbers 01 through 09.)</i>	Reagan Building -Theater Lobby
8:45 – 9:45 a.m.	Students in Group 1 Complete Essays	Cafeteria – R123
9:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Group 1 Students Report for Speech/Interview	Various Classrooms Lincoln Building
11:15 a.m.	Coaches/Team Check-In for <u>Group 2</u> <i>(Group 2 = Teams beginning with numbers 10-18.)</i>	Reagan Building -Theater Lobby
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Students in Group 2 Complete Essays	Cafeteria – R123
12:45 – 3:00 p.m.	Group 2 Students Report for Speech/Interview	Various Classrooms Lincoln Building

*Subject to change.



Riverside County Academic Decathlon Essay Scoring Information

General Information

In the essay component of the Academic Decathlon, students have fifty (50) minutes to pre-write, plan, organize, draft, and write a final version of an essay in response to a specific prompt. After the allotted fifty (50) minutes has elapsed, the essays are collected and secured by the test room proctors and delivered to the essay scoring room. Essay scorers should be aware of the time that is allotted for the students to take the essay exam, so their scoring standard is set at an appropriate level, given the circumstances limiting the writing task – the standard of scoring for an essay written on demand in fifty (50) minutes is clearly different than that for a paper written over the course of several days.

Essay Prompts

The prompts will require students to write an expository essay, i.e., an essay that exposes information by explaining, defining, or interpreting the given subject. Essay scorers need not be familiar with all of the content covered in the language and literature and Super Quiz curricula for the Academic Decathlon event. The scorers' focus should be on how effectively and logically the information is presented more so than its correctness, and scorers should be reminded that they are not responsible for checking the accuracy of all the information presented in the students' essays.

Scoring Method

Following are brief explanations of each of the parts of the Riverside County Academic Decathlon Essay Scoring Sheet. To ensure fair and consistent scoring, it is essential that all essay scorers read and understand these descriptions.

Focus/Scope – Organization – Content/Development: Assesses how thoroughly the student addresses the given prompt and how successful they are in establishing a clear thesis or purpose. The student should make a point about a specific topic and should maintain this focus throughout the essay. Calls for judgment on the student's range of understanding of the given topic.

Assesses the manner in which the student presents ideas to the reader. Calls for judgment on the clarity, logic, and sequence of the ideas presented and the degree to which these ideas are developed and sustained within and across paragraphs using transitional devices. Assesses the quality of the student's introduction and conclusion and the effectiveness of these paragraphs in presenting and reinforcing the student's main point(s).

Assesses the quality of the student's ideas and the degree to which they are fully developed through facts, examples, anecdotes, details, opinions, statistics, reasons, and/or explanations. The reader will also assess the relevancy of the information presented to the overall focus of the essay.

Language/Style - Conventions: Assesses the effectiveness and appropriateness of the student's choice, use, and arrangement of words and sentence structures. The student's use of language should serve to create an effective and appropriate tone and a consistent and powerful voice. The student should use language to communicate ideas clearly and effectively. The reader will need to consider the student's choice of words, range, and specificity of vocabulary, as well as sentence variety.

Assesses the correctness of the student's grammar, mechanics (spelling, capitalization, punctuation), usage, and sentence formations.

