



2018 Law Day Theme



**Spartanburg County
Bar Association**

Law Day Essay Contest

2018 Awards Packet

Open to all 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th Grade
Public School, Private School, and
Homeschooled Students

The American Bar Association's Law Day 2018 Theme

Separation of Powers: Framework for Freedom

The Law Day 2018 theme enables us to reflect on the separation of powers as fundamental to our constitutional purpose and to consider how our governmental system is working for ourselves and our posterity. The U.S. Constitution sets out a system of government with distinct and independent branches—Congress, the Presidency, and a Supreme Court. It also defines legislative, executive, and judicial powers and outlines how they interact. These three separate branches share power, and each branch serves as a check on the power of the others. "Ambition must be made to counteract ambition," James Madison explained in Federalist 51. Why? Madison believed that the Constitution's principles of separation of powers and checks and balances preserve political liberty. They provide a framework for freedom. Yet, this framework is not self-executing. We the people must continually act to ensure that our constitutional democracy endures, preserving our liberties and advancing our rights.

WHAT IS LAW DAY?

Established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1958, Law Day celebrates the American heritage of liberty, justice and equality under the law. In 1961, Congress issued a joint resolution designating May 1 as the official date for celebrating Law Day. Every year, Law Day provides legal professionals and others with opportunities to help students and the public understand how the law protects our freedoms.

2018 LAW DAY ESSAY TOPIC INTRODUCTION

When announcing the 2018 Law Day Theme, Hilarie Bass, American Bar Association President, stated the following:

When the framers were considering how to structure the government during the constitutional convention in Philadelphia in 1787, there was little debate about the need to divide power within the federal government. James Madison wrote, "The accumulation of all powers legislative, executive and judiciary in the same hands may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny." A divided federal government, he explained, was stamped with the authority of more enlightened patrons of liberty. Thomas Jefferson called the distribution of power the first principle of good government. Our national government consists of three branches, executive, legislative, and judicial. Each branch is separate from the other and retains distinct powers that the other branches do not have. For the system to work properly all three branches are needed and no one branch should have too much power. As one Supreme Court Justice put it "without this separation the Bill of Rights would be worthless". The constitutional structure of our three part government provides a framework for our freedom, preserving liberty and advancing our rights.

The Law Day 2018 theme challenges us to reflect on the principles of separation of powers and our role in the government of citizens. Let us take this opportunity to consider how power is shared in our government and how we can work together to preserve our liberties and advance our rights.

2018 LAW DAY ESSAY TOPIC

Each student participant must write an essay of 1,000 words or less on this topic:

Explain how the Separation of Powers is one of the primary safeguards of our democratic system of government.

The following discussion points have been provided as a suggested approach; however, they are not mandatory, and creativity is encouraged:

- a) **Discuss a right contained in the Bill of Rights and how the Separation of Powers protects that right.**
- b) **Discuss the powers of the three branches of government and their respective responsibilities.**
- c) **How is our democratic system of government protected by having an independent judiciary?**
- d) **Why is the right to a jury trial important to the Separation of Powers protection of freedom?**

ESSAY DIRECTIONS

Each essay writer is required to adhere to the following:

- 1) Submit a typewritten essay in a 12-point font and include all attached documents:
 - The student's name, home address, home phone number, and grade level
 - Essay title.
 - School name, address, phone number, and educator's name (if applicable)
 - Name of local newspaper(s)
 - Documentation of all research on the enclosed Works Cited page or an attached sheet (if applicable).
- 2) Forward all to an English Language Arts (ELA) or Social Studies (SS) teacher to submit the given essays and application forms.
- 3) **DO NOT PUT THE STUDENT'S NAME ON THE ESSAY ITSELF**

SELECTION CRITERIA

Each English Language Arts and/or Social Studies teacher may submit two (2) essays per grade level from his or her respective school for consideration for the pre-selection judging. However, it is appropriate that more than (2) essays can be submitted if it is the teacher's opinion that additional essays are worthy of consideration. The essays will be read and assessed by Judge Hayes and members of the Spartanburg County Bar Association. The overall winner, each grade winner, each grade runner-up and the highest scoring essay winner from each school will be invited to a special recognition reception. At the special recognition reception each student will be presented to the Spartanburg County Bar Association when receiving their respective awards. The teachers of the winning students will also be recognized at the reception.

Winning Essays and other qualifying essays from the Local Law Day Contest will be submitted to the South Carolina Bar Senior Lawyers Division to compete in the Statewide Law Day Essay Contest.

All public school, private school and home-schooled participants' essays must be submitted to Judge Mark Hayes by **noon on Friday, April 6, 2018**. All essays along with the appropriate cover sheets are to be submitted to the following address:

Judge J. Mark Hayes, II
Spartanburg County Courthouse
180 Magnolia Street
Spartanburg, SC 29306
Office: (864) 562-4144 Fax: (864) 562-4142

AWARDS

9 th Grade	\$100
10 th Grade	\$100
11 th Grade	\$100
12 th Grade	\$100
Overall Winner	\$500

Cash awards, medals and certificates will be presented to the recipients at the reception. Family members and school officials are also welcome to attend the reception. Winning essays may be submitted to the local newspaper for publication and also to other organizations for possible publication and release to the general public.

ESSAYS FROM PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

Students from participating schools will submit essays to a school official (teacher, administrator, etc.) for pre-selection.

School submissions should include:

- 1) Essays and corresponding entry forms, including any source citations and parental release forms (if applicable);
- 2) A list of all other students who prepared essays for this contest. (Judge Hayes would like to recognize the efforts of all participants.)

ESSAYS FROM STUDENTS WHOSE SCHOOLS ARE NOT PARTICIPATING OR WHO ARE HOME-SCHOOLED

Students whose schools are not participating or who are not affiliated with a school may send entries directly to Judge Hayes for consideration.

- 1) Essays and corresponding entry forms, including any source citations and parental release forms (if applicable);
- 2) A student who is affiliated with a non-participating school or class must provide the school's name, address, telephone number, and indicate on the form that the school or class is not participating.

Essay Title: _____ Entry #: _____

2018 Law Day Essay Contest Judging Criteria
ESSAY THEME:
Separation of Powers: Framework for Freedom

Assign a point value (1 – 10) to each of the following questions. One point indicates the lowest mark and 10, the highest.

Structure/Content

- _____ Does the essay contain an introduction, a descriptive body and a conclusion?
- _____ Is the data correct and in a clear and logical and/or sequential order?
- _____ Does the essay exhibit good language skills: proper spelling, syntax and grammar?
- _____ Are the references to sources (Constitution, Bill of Rights, cases, etc.) correct?

Creativity/Originality

- _____ Does the essay have some sense of originality and creativity?
- _____ Are the ideas good and well-developed?
- _____ Does the essay creatively develop the theme and does not deviate?
- _____ Does the essay contain the writer's personal views and comments?

General Appearance

- _____ Is the format neat/typed or written legibly?
- _____ Is the cover sheet attached and correct?

_____ **Total Points (100 points maximum)**

COVER SHEET

2018 Law Day Essay Contest
DEADLINE: APRIL 6th, 2018 AT 12:00 NOON

A copy of this sheet must accompany each essay submitted in the 2018 Law Day Essay Contest. All of the information on this sheet must be completed and must not appear on the essay.

Entry Number: _____ (will be assigned by Law Day Essay Contest Committee)

Please PRINT all information in blue ink.

Grade Category: Grade 9 _____ Grade 10 _____ Grade 11 _____ Grade 12 _____

ESSAY TITLE: _____

Student's Name: _____

Student's Address:

_____ (Street/PO Box) _____ City _____ State _____ Zip

Student's Phone Number (_____) _____

Parent(s) Name: _____

School: _____

School Address:

_____ (Street/PO Box) _____ City _____ State _____ Zip

Name of Teacher Submitting Essay: _____

Teacher's E-mail: _____

Name of Local Newspaper: _____

Number of Words: _____ (not to exceed 1,000)

Mail the completed cover sheet ATTACHED to your essay to:

Judge Mark Hayes
180 Magnolia Street
Spartanburg County Courthouse
Spartanburg, SC 29306
Office: (864) 562-4144 Fax: (864)562-4142

