

UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE

READY WRITING CONTEST

HIGH SCHOOL TOPICS

DISTRICT • 2025

Read both of the following statements carefully; then write an expository essay on a topic clearly related to one or the other of the two statements. **Provide your own title.** You are not expected to write on both topics.

Contestants who are hand-writing their compositions must use their own standard 8 1/2 x 11-inch ruled white notebook paper or typing paper, or the paper provided by the host school. Contestants shall write or print the composition **in ink and on only one side of the paper.** If contestants choose to use their own laptop computers, they must bring portable printers and associated hardware, software and paper. The typed entry must be single-sided and double-spaced, using any standard 12-point font on 8 1/2 x 11-inch white paper. When printing the contest on an electronic printer, the print command must be started by the time contest time expires. Students who opt to compose their entries on computers accept the risk of computer malfunction. In case of computer malfunction, the contestant may use the remaining allotted time to complete the composition in handwriting or compose on another computer (if available).

Ready Writing prompts are provided as springboards for thought, not to advocate particular points of view. Contestants should not conclude that quotations or statements used in prompts reflect the opinion of the UIL.

Topic I

“You go talk to kindergartners or first grade kids, you find a class full of science enthusiasts. And they ask deep questions! They ask: ‘What is a dream, why do we have toes, why is the moon round, what is the birthday of the world, why is the grass green?’ These are profound important questions! They just bubble right out of them. You go talk to 12th graders and there’s none of that. They’ve become incurious. Something terrible has happened between kindergarten and 12th grade.”

--Carl Sagan (1934-1996), American Astronomer/Planetary Scientist/Science Communicator

Topic II

“I’ll tell you a secret: we don’t read and write poetry because it’s pretty. We read and write poetry because we belong to the human race; and the human race is filled with passion. Medicine, Law, Commerce, Engineering... they are noble and necessary races to dignify human life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love are the things that keep us alive.”

--Robin Williams (1951-2014), American Actor/Comedian, *Dead Poets Society* (1989)