

# Mason County District Library

## Essay and Art Contest

“If the Declaration of Independence could talk,  
what story would it tell?”

**Age/Grade Divisions:** 5-8 grades  
9-12 grades  
Adults

**Materials:** You must use this entry form, and your piece must fit the requirements.

**Subject:** 250th Anniversary of the United States of America

**Deadline:** Friday, May 22, 2026

**Prizes:** Winners will have their piece shared at the Libraries in Ludington and Scottville. Prizes awarded for top three in each grade/age category.

**ONE ENTRY PER PERSON**

*\* Registration Must Be Complete \**

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

Phone/Parent Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

(leave blank if Adult)



## Requirements for the 250th Contest

### Essay

- open to Mason County District Library patrons or students in the county
- completed registration form
- name only on the registration form and not on the essay document
- theme relevant to the topic
- connection to the document in today's perspective
- 300-500 words
- on 8 1/2 x 11 paper
- size 12 in Times New Roman font
- double spaced
- one entry per patron/student
- no evidence of AI
- permission to share winning essay at MCD Library event
- Essay may be submitted at Ludington or Scottville Library or electronically to **250@mcclibrary.org**

### POEM

- open to Mason County District Library patrons or students in the county
- completed registration form
- name only on the registration form and not on the poem document
- theme relevant to the topic
- connection to the document in today's perspective
- approximately one page
- on 8 1/2 x 11 paper
- size 12 in Times New Roman font
- double spaced
- one entry per patron/student
- no evidence of AI
- permission to share winning poem at MCD Library event
- poem may be submitted Ludington or Scottville Library or electronically to **250@mcclibrary.org**

## **Song**

- open to Mason County District Library patrons or students in the county
- completed registration form
- name only on the completed registration form and not on the song document
- theme relevant to the topic
- connection to the document in today's perspective
- approximately one page (or more)
- on 8 1/2 x 11 paper
- size 12 in Times New Roman font
- double spaced
- one entry per patron/student
- no evidence of AI
- permission to share winning song at MCD Library event
- Song may be submitted at the Ludington or Scottville Library or electronically to **250th@mcclibrary.org**

## **Art**

- open to Mason County District Library patrons or students in the county
- completed registration form
- name only on the completed registration form and not on the art piece
- artistic expression that focuses on the question and tells the story
- theme relevant to the topic
- connection to the document in today's perspective
- creativity
- on 8 1/2 x 11 paper or larger
- one entry per patron/student
- no evidence of AI
- permission to share winning collage at MCD Library event
- Art may be submitted at the Ludington or Scottville Library or electronically to **250th@mcclibrary.org**

A panel of judges will determine the 3 overall winners in each age group (5-8 grades, 9-12 grades, and adults). Each winner winner will receive a prize as follows: \$100 - 1st place; \$50- 2nd place; \$25 - 3rd place

\*Note: If you have an out of the box idea or a media not mentioned that you'd like to submit, please contact us at [250@mcclibrary.org](mailto:250@mcclibrary.org) to discuss your idea for clarification or confirmation.

Registration is complete \_\_\_\_\_

Meets all requirements \_\_\_\_\_

If the Declaration of Independence could talk, what story would it tell?

Rubric for Submissions

Criteria	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Does the piece clearly tell the story of what the Declaration of Independence would say?	Powerfully and clearly tells a compelling story from the Declaration's "voice." The message is focused, meaningful, and emotionally engaging.	The piece clearly communicates a story related to the prompt with thoughtful detail.	The piece is somewhat unclear or underdeveloped. The connection to the "voice" is limited.	The piece does not clearly answer the question or lacks storytelling.
Does the piece show how the Declaration's message relates to modern times?	Insightful and meaningful connection between 1776 and today's world; demonstrates deep thinking.	Clear and thoughtful modern connection.	Basic or surface-level modern reference.	No clear connection to present-day relevance.
Is the piece imaginative and unique? *No evidence of AI	Highly original concept; demonstrates exceptional creativity and risk-taking.	Creative idea with thoughtful interpretation.	Some creative elements, but somewhat simplified. Unoriginal ideas.	Limited originality; minimal creative exploration.
Were the elements of the chosen medium effectively incorporated? Examples: Essay-organization, structure Art-Pattern, texture, unity Poem-flow, structure Song-lyrical, rhythm	Skillful and intentional use of multiple elements and principles to enhance the message and composition.	Effective use of elements and principles; composition supports the story.	Some awareness of elements/principles, but inconsistent or underdeveloped.	Minimal or unclear use of elements and principles; composition lacks organization.
Does the work show good craftsmanship? Is the work neat and complete?	The piece is carefully crafted, neat, and complete.	The piece is complete with good craftsmanship.	Piece feels rushed or incomplete in areas.	The piece appears unfinished.