

MLK Day Essay Contest

Rules and Regulations

Essay Prompt/Guidelines

Conner Prairie invites students to write a piece in which they reflect on this year's Martin Luther King Jr. Day theme: love. Author and activist, bell hooks, describes love as "a combination of trust, commitment, care, respect, knowledge, and responsibility" (*all about love*, p. 54). Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. also established the "Beloved Community", in which he called on people to "BE LOVE". In your essay, reflect on how you have experienced love in your life, as well as how you can pledge to "BE LOVE" for yourself, family, community, and this world.

Elementary School

- Grades 3-5
- Word Count: 200-400 words

Middle School

- Grades 6-8
- Word Count: 300-500 words

High School

- Grades 9-12
- Word Count: 400-600 words

Deadline/Submission

This essay contest will close at **11:59 PM, February 14, 2023**. Eastern Standard Time. To be considered, all entries should be submitted to beloveessay@connerprairie.org prior to this date and time. **In your submission, please include the following: name, age, grade level, and county of residence.**

Eligibility

Conner Prairie will have three separate competition categories: Elementary School students (grades 3-5), Middle School students (grades 6-8), and High School students (grades 9-12). This essay contest will be open to home-schooled students and students in local school districts in the following counties: Hamilton, Marion, Tipton, Boone, Hendricks, Madison, Morgan, Johnson, Shelby, and Hancock.

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How will this be judged?

The education team at Conner Prairie will review submissions and determine which essays will advance to the final round. The selected essays will then be read by the Curatorial Department who will determine the winners in each category.

Winners/Prizes

Winners will be notified via email **Friday, February 28, 2023**. Winners will have their essays published on Conner Prairie's website **and displayed at Conner Prairie's MLK Day celebration on January 15, 2024**.

Winners* will receive a year-long, **PLUS** membership. Includes benefits for two (2) members **within the same household** and all dependent children OR grandchildren ages 21 and younger:

- Unlimited daytime general admission for one (1) year
- 10% discount in the **Conner Prairie Store** and **Café on the Commons**
- **Exclusive** Members-only hours and events
- Discounts on **camps, classes** and **programs**
- Free admission to **Headless Horseman** festival (hayride tickets available for an additional fee)
- Half-price tickets to **A Merry Prairie Holiday**
- Free or discounted admission to over 100 museums throughout the U.S. through the Time Travelers reciprocal network

*If a winner is currently a member of Conner Prairie, they will receive complimentary tickets to access the 1859 Balloon Voyage during regular daytime museum hours, as well as other Conner Prairie swag.

Note to Teachers

Dear teacher,

This year to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Conner Prairie is hosting an essay contest encouraging students to explore this theme of love and how it has been present in their lives. In addition to this reflection, we also challenge them to "BE LOVE" and delve into how they can embody love for themselves and others.

While we'd love this essay prompt to be incorporated as a project in every classroom, we understand that it might not be feasible for your curriculum. Instead, we hope that you promote this to your students and their families, encouraging them to participate.

Lastly, thank you so much for all that you do for your students, especially in educating them on the significance and importance of Martin Luther King Jr. and the many activists that helped lead

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the Civil Rights Movement. We hope you'll join us Monday, January 16, 2023 in celebrating the legacy of love that they left behind.

With gratitude,
The Conner Prairie Education Team