



## Honored Teacher Essay Contest Entry Form

*Please complete all information listed below. Complete details on contest eligibility and requirements are found on the back of this page.*

Honored Teacher's First & Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Honored Teacher's School: \_\_\_\_\_

Honored Teacher's School Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's First & Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's School: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Best family email to notify winning student: \_\_\_\_\_

*By signing below I am acknowledging that this essay is written in my own words or, in the case of a parent/guardian signing for a younger child, in the words of my child.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Form must be completed and sent with essay. Email completed entry to [zelder@mrlib.org](mailto:zelder@mrlib.org), drop off in-person at any MRL branch location, or send by mail to arrive no later than 4PM, Saturday, March 28, 2026 to:**

**Zach Elder  
Massanutten Regional Library  
174 S. Main Street  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801**

## 29th Annual Robert B. and Gladys Hopkins Strickler Honored Teachers Essay Contest

**Is there a teacher who has made a difference in your life?** A teacher who encouraged you, who stuck with you, who made you feel special? A teacher who went the extra mile to help you learn a subject or finish a project? A teacher who challenged you to write, explore, or create? A teacher who inspired you to follow a dream? Let's honor your teacher!

**Tell us your story by handwriting or typing a one-page essay that honors the special teacher in your life and you and your teacher may win a cash prize! Here's all the important details:**

**3/23/26** : Essay writing workshop for students with DANI from 5-7:30PM @ Central Library in Downtown Harrisonburg

**3/28/26** : Deadline for written entries is 4PM, Saturday, March 28, 2025

**4/27/26** : Awards Ceremony for all winning essayists and the teachers they honor takes place at 7PM @ Central Library in Downtown Harrisonburg.

**PRIZE Categories – one winning essay and one runner up are selected per the following grade levels:**

- **K-2nd:** \$150 winning essay \$100 runner-up
- **3rd-5th:** \$150 winning essay \$100 runner-up
- **6th-8th:** \$150 winning essay \$100 runner-up
- **9th-12th:** \$150 winning essay \$100 runner-up
- **Honored Teacher of the Year: \$1,500!** *One of the teachers honored from all categories above will be selected as the "Honored Teacher of the Year" and will receive a cash prize of \$1,500 to be used for their own professional development. The Honored Teacher of the Year is kept secret until the end of the Awards Ceremony event.*

### **CONTEST GUIDELINES**

The Robert B. and Gladys Hopkins Strickler Honored Teachers Essay Contest is open to all K-12 students in the City of Harrisonburg, Page County and Rockingham County, whether they attend public, private, or home schools.

- Entry form must be completed in its entirety, accompany the essay, and be signed by the student entering (or by proxy of parent/guardian name as noted on the form). No electronic signatures will be permitted.
- Essays must be original work by the student; parents and/or teachers should refrain from assisting with content, word choice, or other editorial input.
- Only one entry allowed per student.
- Submitted entries cannot be returned but will be sent to the teacher honored within one month of the Awards Ceremony.
- Due to volume of essays received, receipt of entries cannot be confirmed.
- Winning essayists will be notified at the email listed on the form. Please do not use a restricted school email address.
- **Deadline for submissions: 4PM Saturday, March 28, 2026.**

**Grades 9-12:** 250-500 words total telling us about a teacher who has really made a difference in your life.

**Grades K-8:** 250 words or less telling us about your favorite teacher. Children in grades 2 or younger are permitted to have an adult transcribe their dictated essay and may also include any artwork that relates to their teacher, along with their essay.

### **CONTEST JUDGING**

Members of the Harrisonburg Kiwanis Club annually volunteer to judge MRL's contest. Every year we receive hundreds of outstanding entries, and the judges often have to make very hard decisions between many deserving essays. All decisions of the judges are final however, and we thank you for your understanding. When reading the essays, the judges look for:

- well-planned themes
- excellent grammar and spelling skills, and word choice
- essay originality
- specific evidence of outstanding teaching and student appreciation.

**Questions may be directed to: Megan Medeiros, MRL Director of Advancement [mmedeiros@mrlib.org](mailto:mmedeiros@mrlib.org) Good luck and happy writing!**