

Norwegian National League Scholarship Writing Guide

Thank you for giving consideration to submitting an essay for the Norwegian National League's Scholarship Program. The essay topic is "Your Family's Norwegian Heritage" and could include:

- Who were your Norwegian ancestors and where did they live?
- When and why did they come to America?
- What Norwegian traditions does your family follow to keep your heritage alive?
- Describe how your Norwegian ancestry influenced your life.

Here are some guidelines and thoughts as to what the judges are looking for when reading essays.

1. Originality:

- a. Tell a story; create a visual image with *your* words so the reader can *see* in his/her mind what you are writing about.
- b. Why is the topic of interest to you; family connection, personal involvement, career goal?
- c. What impact does the topic have on you, on your family today, or in the past?
- d. How have you been enriched by your research; has it changed your appreciation for Norway?
- e. Avoid using cut and paste from external sources. Use the research information you locate and put it into your *own* words. (The judges regularly check the internet to discover where information is coming from, especially if they think it has been copied directly).
- f. Avoid the embarrassment of plagiarism: *a piece of written work or an idea that somebody has copied and claimed as his or her own*, Encarta Dictionary. If you are using facts you have found during your research, list (cite) your sources.

2. Pertains to a topic regarding Norway:

- a. That should be your primary focus, the reason why you are writing your essay. State your topic in the first paragraph, and use it as a thread that weaves its way through-out your essay.

b. Select your topic carefully. Remember, many other people are also submitting essays, so give careful thought to the selection of your topic (see item #1 on originality).

c. It's perfectly alright (encouraged) to talk about your experiences as it applies to your topic (see item #1 on originality).

3. Hold the reader's attention:

a. The judges have never met you; they know nothing about you, your family, or your experiences. This is your chance to captivate their attention and to tell your story.

Captivate: to attract and hold somebody's attention by charm or other pleasing or irresistible features Encarta Dictionary.

b. Like a good book, make them want to read on and to beg for more!

4. Clarity:

a. Provide a logical progression from one thought to another.

b. Keep track of the topic of your essay, avoid straying to other topics.

c. Avoid trying to impress the reader with your ability to locate and use complex words and phrases that add nothing to your story. Keep it simple!

5. Presentation

a. Proofread your essay, use spell check, and make sure you are using the correct word for the thought you are trying to convey. Give your essay to a parent or someone else so they can give you their thoughts and suggestions. Look for missing words; your mind can play tricks on you.

b. Make it easier on the judges to read your essay: use paragraphs, use type fonts that are plain and easy to read (size 12 works good), and use line spacing of 1.5 to 2.0.

We hope this information will be helpful as you begin the process of writing your essay. We wish you the best of luck with your project, and in all your future endeavors.