



WATER'S WORTH IT[®]

CSWEA ESSAY CONTEST

Illinois Students: Grades 6-8

Creative Writing and Research Prompts

\$1000 in Cash + other prizes!

Submissions accepted through April 15th, 2022

Central States Water Environment Association of Illinois Invites you to join the WATER'S WORTH IT campaign by writing a short essay about the human role in the water cycle.

Guidelines:

- **Students must reside in Illinois and be in grades 6-8th.**
- Select a Prompt for your essay: **research or creative writing**. Students may only submit one essay for the 2022 contest.
- Essays must be between 400-700 words. Source citations are suggested but not required. Citations do not count towards word count.
- Font size should be between 10-12 and font should be legible (ex: Arial or Times New Roman)
- **Essays must include a cover page containing: Essay Title, Student's Name, grade, school, and which prompt the student chose.**
- Essays must be submitted in Word or PDF format by the end of the day, April 15th, 2022.



Essay Submission Link:

<https://cswea.wufoo.com/forms/2022-waters-worth-it-essay-competition/>

Essay Topic: The Human Water Cycle

The natural water cycle is a vital process that enables the availability of water for all living organisms. In today's world, humans directly change the dynamics of the water cycle through the construction of dams for water storage and through water withdrawals for industrial, agricultural, and domestic purposes. Despite the importance, most of us rarely think of the efforts, energy, and vast infrastructure required for the treatment and transportation of drinking water and wastewater. The journey of water to and from your home (or a factory, store, or farm) is one full of impressive innovations and technology that, while important to modern civilization, can impact the water quality and environment in a number of ways.

Research Prompt

Research your local water supply. Where does it come from? Where does it go? Explain the journey of water before it reaches your home and after it goes down your drain. What happens next? Questions to consider while researching:

- Is the water cleaned in any way, when, and why?
- How and where is the water returned to nature?
- Does water used in an industrial setting need to be cleaned differently than water from your home?
- How is your water source different than other communities across the globe?
- What kind of infrastructure is required?
- Are there any impacts on the environment?

Conclude your essay by reflecting on the importance of what you learned during your research.

Creative Writing Prompt

The journey of water to and from your faucet is much more complex than many realize. **Envision yourself as a drop of water traveling to your home faucet.** Write a first-person essay about your journey. Questions to consider while writing your essay:

- Where have you traveled from?
- Where do you go?
- Who do you meet?
- What are you used for?
- Do you feel valued or disrespected in any way?
- How does today's journey differ from that of last week, year, or century?

Conclude your essay by reflecting on how your life (as water) has been impacted by those you have met on your journey and how you would like things to change for your future adventures.



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Regional Winners

Winning essays will be selected for both the Research and Creative Writing Categories! **Winners will receive a cash prize of \$50, swag bag, certificate of achievement, and will move on as finalists for the state-wide grand prize!**

State Winners

State-wide winners for both the Research and Creative Writing Categories will be selected from the three regional winners. Grand prize winners in each category will receive:

- \$300 cash prize + a swag bag!**
- Certificate of Achievement!**
- Their essay published in Central States Water Magazine!**

Regions by County

Northern Illinois

Counties: Boone - Bureau - Carroll - Cook - DeKalb - DuPage - Fulton - Grundy - Henderson - Henry - JoDaviess - Kane - Kankakee - Kendall - Lake - LaSalle - Lee - Marshall - McHenry - Mercer - Ogle - Putnam - Rock Island - Stark - Stephenson - Whiteside - Will - Winnebago

Central Illinois

Counties: Adams - Brown - Calhoun - Cass - Champaign - Christian - Clark - Coles - Cumberland - DeWitt - Douglas - Edgar - Ford - Fulton - Greene - Hancock - Henderson - Iroquois - Jersey - Knox - Livingston - Logan - Macon - Macoupin - Mason - McDonough - McLean - Menard - Montgomery - Morgan - Moultrie - Peoria - Piatt - Pike - Sangamon - Schuyler - Scott - Shelby - Tazewell - Vermilion - Warren - Woodford

Southern Illinois

Counties: Alexander - Bond - Clay - Clinton - Crawford - Edwards - Effingham - Fayette - Franklin - Gallatin - Hamilton - Hardin - Jackson - Jasper - Jefferson - Johnson - Lawrence - Madison - Marion - Massac - Monroe - Perry - Pope - Pulaski - Randolph - Richland - Saline - St. Clair - Union - Wabash - Washington - Wayne - White - Williamson

