



**RIVERSIDE**  
School of Education

# ESSAY SCHOLARSHIP

OPEN TO ALL 6<sup>TH</sup> - 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS IN THE INLAND EMPIRE



**1st Place** \$200 PRIZE MONEY

**2nd Place** \$75 PRIZE MONEY

**3rd Place** \$50 PRIZE MONEY

All winners and their families are invited to visit UCR and have lunch with the UCR School of Education dean.

**Due 4/6/26; 350-500 words; 12 pt. type**

FIND COMPLETE RULES AND DETAILS ON  
[HTTPS://EDUCATION.UCR.EDU/MIDDLE-SCHOOL-ESSAY-CONTEST](https://education.ucr.edu/middle-school-essay-contest)

## ESSAY PROMPT

**Stories Rule! How Your Voice Can Stand Up for What's Right**

Stories are powerful. They help people remember their history, protect their culture, and stand up to unfairness.

- In this essay, you will explain how storytelling can make a difference. You may choose one or more examples:
  - Petra's cuentos from *The Last Cuentista*
  - The real-life story of Sylvia Méndez
  - Duncan Tonatiuh's books or mural that share Sylvia Méndez's story

Use these examples to support your ideas—not to retell the stories.

Then, connect storytelling to your own life by sharing a story from your family, culture, or community and explaining why it matters.

Your goal is to show how stories can help people remember, speak up, and create change.

## GUIDELINES / RUBRIC

Your essay will be reviewed using simple guidelines. Reviewers will look for a clear main idea about the power of storytelling, thoughtful explanations in your own words, and strong connections between the book, real-life examples, and your own story. Your essay should also be well organized and clearly written, with careful attention to grammar and spelling.



**FINAL ESSAYS ARE DUE ON  
MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2026**