

The Global Kids' Digital Media Initiative's **Digital Media Essay Contest**

Supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Educator's Guide

Purpose

The MacArthur Foundation wants to learn more about how digital media can support more powerful and engaged ways of learning. They want to know more about how digital media are affecting the lives of today's youth, from their own perspective.

Process

When the essay contest begins on February 6th, you will be supplied with a variety of material for you to use. Some are for you to understand the contest. Some are for your students to fill-out or learn more about the process. Finally, the workshops will provide you with material to assist the youth to better understand their relationships with and thoughts about the issues.

We strongly encourage you to use the workshop with your youth. It is your job to explain the contest to your students, answer any of their questions, and guide them through the process.

Ultimately, you are responsible for sending us their material - both the print material by snail mail and the essays by email.

Documentation

At the official site for the contest, <www.globalkids.org/olp/dmec>, you will find:

- An introductory flyer you might want to share with your students
- A student entry form
- Student instructions
- This teacher guide
- Three workshops with supporting material

Each document should be self-explanatory. If not, please let us know. The workshops contain three lesson plans, but the third one is simply an alternate version of the second.

Timeline

Feb 6th - Essay contest begins

Feb 26th - 1st submission deadline

Feb 27th - Submissions only accepted if contest has not yet reach submission limit

Mar 3rd - Final submission deadline

Mar 23rd - Announcement and Global Kids Award Ceremony

April - Awards and stipends will be mailed

Awards

Each essay properly submitted by February 26th by a high school student working with a designed educator will bring its writer a \$10 gift certificate and the chance to shape the next generation of funding by the Foundation. Essays delivered between Feb 27th and March 3rd will only be considered if the essay limit of 200 has not yet been met or extended. In addition, three essays will emerge as grand prize winners (\$200 each) and another eight will receive honorable mention (\$100).

Recognition

The best essays will appear on a web site, be shared with the press, and be read by many individuals supported by the MacArthur Foundation. In fact, the essays may be quoted for public reports written about the state of digital media and learning. Awards and honors will be distributed at an a ceremony at the annual Global Kids Conference, in New York City (for those who live in the region - sorry, no free trips!).

Educator Stipends

All educators approved to participate in the essay contest will receive \$75 if they submit at least ten essays by February 26th. Educators located within a Global Kids school receive a different amount.

Help

If you need help, please contact Rafi Santo at rafi@globalkids.org. He will be the educator liaison. Please note in the student instructions that they have a separate liaison.

Second Life

There is a smaller component of the essay contest being run online within the virtual world Second Life. If any of your students are into online games, feel free to tell them about it. Second Life requires a credit card but is free. They can download it from teen.secondlife.com and, once they log in, should look for Global Kids Island. Tell them they will recognize it by the talking iguana and the flaming volcano.

