

2026 Oklahoma 4-H Essay Contest
Sponsored by the Oklahoma Rural Water Association

The Oklahoma Rural Water Association is pleased to announce the 2026 Oklahoma 4-H Essay Contest.

Purpose:

1. Provide participants an opportunity to express themselves in regard to the impact of 4-H on their home state of Oklahoma and the influence of 4-H on them personally.
2. Encourage the development of excellent skills of written expression.

Eligibility:

The contest is open to all actively enrolled Oklahoma 4-H Members who are in the 8th-12th grade as of September 1, 2025.

Application:

- Entry Form (available in this document)- must include signatures of youth, parent and Extension Educator (electronic signatures accepted)
- All essays should be no less than 850 words and no more than 1,000 words, typed, and double-spaced, 12 pt. font and use the theme “**How can Oklahoma 4-H Change a Community?**”
- Headshot of youth entering the contest. A headshot is a photograph of the youth from the shoulders up. Please make sure this photo is scanned in color and is good quality.

Judging, Prizes & Deadline:

- The Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development Program will administer the Oklahoma 4-H Essay Contest. The awards committee will select 3 judges to review and evaluate the essays. The main selection criteria will be creativity and presentation of thoughts.
- Essays will be judged by a selection committee with separate cash prizes awarded to the winners. First place cash prize of \$750, \$500 for second place and \$250 for third place. Essay contest winners will be selected and recognized at Oklahoma 4-H Roundup Honors Night Assembly.
- Essays should be original and constructed by the 4-H member. Plagiarism, in any form, is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Copying from other sources: Copying parts of speeches, presentations, or any other work created by another individual.
 - Misuse of AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools: Using AI tools to generate entire sentences, paragraphs, or significant portions of the work.
 - Improper citation: Using text, phrases, photos, diagrams, or any other material from articles, videos, books, movies, or other published sources without proper attribution to the original author.
- Entries are due to the State 4-H Award Database on or before **April 27th, 2026**. All entries become the property the Oklahoma 4-H. **Date listed is when information is due to the State 4-H Office. Please check with your local Extension office as each county may establish a due date prior to the date posted. Forms that require an Extension Educator's signature will not be processed if signature is not present.*

Submissions:

All entries should be uploaded to the Awards Database program on or before **April 27th, 2026** by noon.

Oklahoma 4-H Essay Contest
Sponsored by the Oklahoma Rural Water Association
Entry Form 2026



Name:

County:

Club:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone:

Email:

Grade as of September 1, 2025:

I _____
and certify that it is my own work.

(print name) have personally prepared this essay

Signature of 4-H member:

I _____
member listed above hereby certify that the essay submitted is the work of said 4-H member.

(print name) the parent/guardian of the 4-H

Signature of parent/guardian:

I _____
member is an enrollment member in good standing in _____
County.

(print name) hereby certify the above 4-H

Signature of Extension Educator: