

# THE LBJ PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY CONTEST | CIVIL RIGHTS TODAY

**"A MAN WITHOUT A VOTE IS MAN WITHOUT PROTECTION."** - PRESIDENT LYNDON JOHNSON



PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON SIGNS THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT AS MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AND OTHER CIVIL RIGHTS LEADERS LOOK ON. [LBJ LIBRARY PHOTO BY YOICHI OKAMOTO #A1030-BA]

The focus of this year's essay and documentary contest is "Voting Rights Today." The Voting Rights Act was passed as a result of the widespread disenfranchisement of countless Americans who were denied the right to vote based on their race, gender, or class. This act enforced the right to vote nationwide guaranteed by the fifteenth and nineteenth amendments.

The Voting Rights Act contains several specific prohibitions that may interfere with a person's ability to cast their vote. For example, section two prohibits any jurisdiction from requiring citizens to comply with any "test or device" in order to vote (which specifically banned the use of literacy tests that were used throughout the south to keep African Americans from registering to vote). Additionally, section 5 requires certain jurisdictions with a history of enacting voter qualifications to receive federal approval, or "preclearance", before changing election laws. As a result of this momentous act, there have been several US Supreme Court cases that has both strengthened and weakened the Voting Rights Act since its initial passage. There are multiple ways to examine the impact and importance of the Voting Rights Act.

**DEADLINE: 1/26/2015**

Contest details at [www.lbjlibrary.org](http://www.lbjlibrary.org)

## PRIZES:

**\$2,500** first place award, plus travel for the winner and his/her parent to attend the award ceremony in April 2015

**\$1,000** second place award

**\$1,000** award to first place student's sponsoring teacher, plus travel to attend award ceremony

# ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

## TOPIC

The topic is twofold: (1) how voting rights remains an enduring issue in society, and (2) one aspect of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that impacts the student's life today. The two product options provide an opportunity for students to express their personal experiences while providing historical context in a way they best express themselves.

## ELIGIBILITY

The contest is open to 12th grade students attending Texas public, private, charter, parochial, or home schools. A sponsoring teacher must review and approve the student's work, which will be verified through the registration form.

## REQUIREMENTS

All products must be the student's original work, and must have a title that is clearly visible on any submitted materials. Students must present a bibliography citing all sources they referenced in researching and composing their submission, including quotes and specific ideas. Bibliographies must follow either APA Style, MLA Handbook, or Chicago style guides.

### ESSAY:

Essays may contain no more than 1000 words. Bibliography is not included in word count.

File name must be: Year\_StudentLastName\_HighSchool.doc [ex: 2015\_Vickery\_DeSoto.doc]

### DOCUMENTARY:

Documentaries may be no longer than 8 minutes and may not exceed 500MB in size. Time begins with the first image or sound and concludes with the last visual or sound, including credits. The title should appear at the beginning of the presentation, but do not include the student name until the end credits [No school name in credits please]. Credits should list, in brief form, all sources used in creation of the documentary and should be readable by viewers. Documentary must be student-produced and not violate copyright laws. **[provide link to copyright laws/how to cite photographs/video, etc]**

File may be a .mov or .mpeg2. File name must be: Year\_StudentLastName\_HighSchool.mov [ex: 2015\_Vickery\_DeSoto.mov] The bibliography associated with the documentary must have the following name: Year\_StudentLastName\_HighSchool\_Bib.doc [ex: 2015\_Vickery\_DeSoto\_Bib.doc]

## SUBMISSION

Students must complete the registration form and submit their product through the portal by January 26, 2015. Instructions on how to use the portal can be found on our website, [www.lbjlibrary.org/education/civil-rights-educational-resources-for-teachers/voting-rights-today-contest](http://www.lbjlibrary.org/education/civil-rights-educational-resources-for-teachers/voting-rights-today-contest)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website at [www.lbjlibrary.org](http://www.lbjlibrary.org) or email [CivilRightsToday@lbfoundation.org](mailto:CivilRightsToday@lbfoundation.org).