LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® EDUCATION FUND

2026-2027 School Year Middle Grades

YVote Contest

CONTEST THEME: YVote? Convince Me It Matters.

DUE DATE FOR SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION, ENTRY, AND CONSENT FORM

Friday, January 22, 2027, 11:59 p.m.

WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED BY LATE MARCH 2027

PRIZES For Each Type of Entry for Each Grade:
First place (each grade, 3 prizes) - $200
Second place (each grade, 3 prizes) - $100
Third place (each grade, 3 prizes) - $50

_____

ENTRY TITLE

_____

CONTESTANT'S NAME **First** **Last**

PHONE NUMBER _____ **EMAIL (Please print legibly)**_____

SCHOOL _____ **GRADE**_____

*Only middle grade students in district public schools or public charter schools are eligible to enter.

How did you hear about the contest (Circle one)

Teacher School Social Media Newspaper Friend

(Leave blank. To be completed by LWVSRQ)

Essay, Artwork or Video Number Date

YVote Contest Rules

We hope you'll take part in our YVote Contest. The contest is open to all 6th-, 7th-, and 8th-grade students attending one of Sarasota County's district public schools or public charter schools. The next page contains the Consent Form for Minors that must be signed by your parent or legal guardian and submitted with your contest materials.

Entry Guidelines

- **Essays** over 500 words will not be accepted.
- **2D Artwork** can be: 24x36, 16x24 or 11x17, and should be submitted digitally (unframed). • **Videos** have a time limit of 1-3 minutes.
- Entries must be nonpartisan and they cannot support, demean, or defame any political party or person.
- All work must be original.
- Professional assistance is not allowed.
- Entries may be submitted if they have not previously won an award and are not currently being considered in another contest.
- At the time of entry, each contestant must submit a completed and signed Consent Form.
- All entries become the exclusive property of the LWVSRQ.
- If technical or other difficulties compromise the contest, the LWVSRQ may modify, postpone, or cancel the contest.

Submitting Your Entry

ESSAY submit to <nbauermorrison@gmail.com> with the subject heading YVOTE ESSAY
VIDEO submit to < bonnie@lwvsrq.org> with the subject heading YVOTE VIDEO **2D Artwork** submit to <DMetheny@comcast.net> with the subject heading YVOTE 2D ARTWORK

Scoring Your Entry

Several judges will review your entry and to make judging fair, they will not know your name or the school you attend until after decisions are made. The judging team for each type of entry includes LWVSRQ League members as well as community members who are skilled in either writing, art, or videography. They will use a scoring sheet (called a rubric) for judging your entry. Different rubrics are used for each type of entry. When your entry is received, it will be assigned a number. You will see a space for this on the rubric.

If you did not receive the rubric, please contact **education@lwvsrq.org** using the subject line **RUBRIC REQUEST.** Please tell us:

• what kind of entry you are submitting • which language you would like for the rubric - English, Spanish, or Russian).

If you have questions, please email us at: education@lwvsrq.org, using the subject line: YVote.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® EDUCATION FUND

Consent Form for Minors

(1) I agree to comply with these Contest Rules and the judging decisions of the League of Women Voters of Sarasota County (LWVSRQ).

(2) I affirm that my entry has not been copied, in whole or in part, from any other person, publication, website, artificial intelligence (AI) system, or other source without proper attribution.

(3) The League of Women Voters of Sarasota County has my permission to use my YVote Contest entry to promote the League's work and the importance of voting and **c**ivic engagement.

(4) I understand that my entry may be used in print publications, online publications, presentations, websites, and social media. I also understand that no royalty, fee, or other compensation shall be paid to me for such use.

_____

Parent/Guardian's Name

_____

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

_____

Contestant's Name

_____

Contestant's Signature Date

_____

Contestant's Phone Number

Before you submit your contest materials, please make sure you have included:

☐ Completed Entry Form
☐ Contest Entry (essay, artwork, or video)
☐ Signed Consent Form

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SARASOTA COUNTY

Essay Scoring Rubric

YVote? Convince Me It Matters.

To win, your essay must focus on one specific, current issue in Sarasota County, your neighborhood or school that would change if more people voted and include a quote from a local adult. **500-word maximum length**.

Essay Title_____ **Student Number**_____ **Grade**_____

Criteria	Target Metrics	Excellent 40	Good 30	Progressing 20	Unsatisfactory 10
Focus is local and current	• Anchors the argument in a highly specific, real-world local issue. • Explains exactly how voting currently impacts this specific issue.				
Includes personal Insights	• Includes a meaningful, original quote from a real interview. • The interview directly supports the essay's core point.				
Argument is original	• Personal • Creative viewpoints are rewarded.				
Writing is authentic	• Written in an engaging, natural middle-school voice. • Avoids robotic transitions and exhibits your unique personality.				
Organization	• Has a clear beginning (hook), middle and end. • Keeps paragraphs focused on one main idea. • Concludes with a strong final thought or message.				
TOTAL					

Score : _____/240 **Comments: _____**

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SARASOTA COUNTY

YVote? Convince Me It Matters.

2-DIMENSIONAL ART RUBRIC

Poster Title _____

Student # _____Grade_____

TOPIC: How would you convince someone that voting in elections is important?

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Progressing	Unsatisfactory
	40	**30**	**20**	**10**
Captures and holds the viewer's attention to convince viewers that voting in elections is important.				
Artistic elements such as color, font, placement, and alignment work together.				
Demonstrates an original way to convince the viewers of the message.				
Use creative techniques to move viewers to see the importance of voting.				
Convinces the viewer that voting in elections is important.				
TOTAL				

Score : _____/ 200 Comments: _____

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SARASOTA COUNTY

YVote? Convince Me It Matters.

VIDEO RUBRIC

(Time limit: 1–3 minutes)

Video Title _____

Student # _____Grade_____

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Progressing	Unsatisfactory
	40	**30**	**20**	**10**
The video captures and holds the viewer's attention within the time limit of 1–3 minutes.				
Image, sound, and motion work together to keep the viewer interested.				
Uses effective language and/or other means of communication throughout the video.				
Sound and image quality show technical competence and compatibility on any digital device.				
Demonstrates an original way of convincing the viewer that voting is important.				
Accomplishes the purpose of convincing the viewer of the message that voting is important.				
TOTAL				

Score : _____ / 240 Comments: _____