



## Tome Society Theme Essay Competition Instructions

Individual Spring Competition

One Entry Per Chapter Level  
(Grades 6-12 Only)

**Objective:** Write an essay inspired by the current Tome Society Annual Theme.

**12th Grade Students:** Consider entering your essay in the Dale Pratt Memorial Scholarship competition. Tau Omicron Mu Epsilon Honor Society membership & other guidelines apply.

<http://www.tomesociety.org/dale-pratt-memorial-scholarship.html>

### Learning Targets:

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing.

### Final Product Guidelines:

- Must be a Google Doc or PDF typed document.
- **Must clearly be the student's own original work - NO AI ALLOWED.**
- Should be excellently written in proper language (no texting-style abbreviations) with excellent grammar, spelling, & mechanics.
- Should use school appropriate language (no profanity, etc).
- Should be a personal reflection on the Tome Society Annual Theme.
- Should be organized & concise.
- Should be 500-750 words.
- Essay should include:
  - A creative title
  - A clear tie-in throughout the essay to the Tome Society Annual Theme.
    - Check the website site for this year's theme.
  - At least 3 quotes or references to books on the current Tome Book Award List for your grade level to support the theme. Quotes or references must include the book title and author. For example:
    - In the book *Heroes*, by Alan Gratz...
    - Alan Gratz made this clear in *Heroes* by...
    - The characters in *Heroes*, by Alan Gratz, showed this by...
    - I found many examples of this in *Heroes* (Gratz).
  - Personal anecdotes and connections to the theme

Questions to consider when planning and composing your essay (responses to all questions do not have to be included in the final essay):

- What does the theme mean to me personally?
- How have I experienced or witnessed this theme in my life?
- How do the characters in the books I've read embody or challenge this theme?
- Are there specific moments or decisions that highlight the theme?
- What lessons can I draw from my experiences related to this theme?
- How have these lessons influenced my perspective or actions?
- In what ways have the settings or contexts in the books enhanced my understanding of the theme?
- How do the settings shape the characters' journeys related to the theme?
- What are the common threads or contrasting viewpoints on this theme among the books I've read?
- How do different authors approach the theme in unique ways?
- How can I connect my personal story to the narratives in these books?
- Are there parallels between my experiences and those of the characters?
- What inspirational message do I want to convey through my essay?
- How can I articulate this message clearly and compellingly?
- What specific examples or anecdotes from my life can I use to illustrate my connection to the theme?
- How do these examples resonate with the characters or events in the books?
- How can I incorporate quotes or references from the books to strengthen my essay?
- Which quotes resonate with my experiences or reflections on the theme?
- What emotions do I want my readers to feel while reading my essay?
- How can I evoke those emotions through my writing style and content?

# Tome Society Theme Essay Scoring Rubric

*Student should self-assess their work using the following scoring rubric before submission.*

*Failure to meet all rubric requirements will result in loss of points.*

Document is submitted as a Google Doc or PDF format. 5 pts		Document is not submitted as a Google Doc or PDF format. 0 pts	
Document is clearly the student's original work. 20 pts		Evidence suggests the work was created using AI or is not fully the student's original work. 0 pts	
Excellent grammar, spelling, & mechanics 20 pts	Good grammar, spelling, & mechanics 15 pts	Fair grammar, spelling, & mechanics 10 pts	Poor grammar, spelling, & mechanics 5 pts
Essay is between 500-750 words. 5 pts		Essay is less than 500 words or more than 750 words. 0 pts	
Essay includes a creative title. 3 pts		Essay does not include a creative title. 0 pts	
Essay effectively weaves a cohesive connection to the theme, demonstrating its significance and relevance throughout the narrative. 20 pts	Essay establishes a clear connection to the theme, illustrating its relevance in several key areas, though some parts may lack depth or clarity. 10 pts	Essay struggles to connect with the theme, resulting in vague references that do not effectively convey its significance or impact on the narrative. 0 pts	
Essay includes at least 3 quotes or references from current Tome Book Award books for the student's grade level. Quotes include the book title and author name. 10 pts	Essay includes 1-2 quotes or references from current Tome Book Award books for the student's grade level. Or student included 3 quotes or references but did not clearly state the book title and author for each. 5 pts	Essay does not include clear quotes or references from current Tome Book Award books. 0 pts	
Essay effectively connects quotes and references from the books to the theme, providing profound insights that enhance the overall understanding of the topic and its relevance. 20 pts	Essay includes relevant quotes and references that relate to the theme, offering some insights, though the connections may not be fully developed or explored. 10 pts	Essay includes few or no meaningful quotes or references that connect to the theme, resulting in weak or unclear relationships that fail to support the narrative effectively. 0 pts	
Essay provides profound and insightful connections between the theme and the student's personal experiences, illustrating how these experiences have shaped their understanding and perspective. 20 pts	Essay makes clear connections between the theme and the student's life, offering relevant examples, though some connections may lack depth or clarity. 10 pts	Essay fails to establish meaningful connections between the theme and the student's life, resulting in vague or unrelated examples that do not effectively support the narrative. 0 pts	
Excellently written 20 pts	Well written 15 pts	Fairly well written 10 pts	Poorly written 5 pts

Total Points Awarded: \_\_\_\_\_/143 pts