
RED RIBBON WEEK

WRITING COMPETITION • HIGH SCHOOL

Division: High School (Grades 9–12)

Theme: Define Your High. Own Your Future.

YOUR WRITING CHALLENGE

“In a world full of pressure and expectations, what does it mean to choose a life that reflects your values, protects your future, and brings you genuine fulfillment?”

Young adulthood brings important decisions, new responsibilities, and exposure to social pressures. Red Ribbon Week is an opportunity to reflect on how choices shape our identities, relationships, opportunities, and futures.

Through an original poem or essay, explore the meaning of a **natural high** in your life. Consider how passion, purpose, meaningful relationships, personal growth, service, or pursuing your ambitions can provide lasting fulfillment. Examine the role peer pressure, stress, or society’s expectations can play in decisions about substance use. What does it take to set boundaries, say no, and support others in making healthy choices?

Your challenge: Use your voice to communicate a compelling message about resilience, personal responsibility, and the power of choosing a drug-free future. Inspire your peers to define success on their own terms and pursue a life filled with purpose and possibility.

CHOOSE YOUR FORMAT

Write either an original poem or an essay in response to the prompt. Make your message clear, use your own ideas and words, and connect your work to the Red Ribbon Week theme.

SUGGESTED LENGTH

Poem: 16–40 lines • Essay: 400–700 words.

Remember: Your voice matters. Your choices matter. Your future matters. Find your natural high and choose a healthy, drug-free future!

Student name: _____ Grade: _____