



Contest 2018: A Problem Statement

Open to all high school students in Kittitas County

Sponsored by

Our Environment of Kittitas County (*OEOFKC*) &
IOOF Lodge 20 (*IOOF20*)

2018 Topic

The first step in logically approaching a solution to many problems is the creation of a **problem statement**. This year we would like you to write a problem statement for a local sustainability issue of your choice. Sustainability issues may be interpreted broadly. By local, we would love to see you focus on Kittitas County but any appropriate issue in the state of Washington is acceptable.

About the contest

OEOFKC and *IOOF20* want to increase high school students' knowledge about and understanding of current and continuing sustainability issues. In this year's contest, we are looking for a problem statement. For contest purposes, this problem statement should include a brief statement of the sustainability issue being covered (this is the "statement of your problem") plus a background or overview of the issues affecting the problem, and one or more proposed solutions and how it/they will improve the situation. Winners of this problem statement contest receive cash awards and recognition. Students can find helpful information on writing a problem statement at *WikiHow* [<https://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Problem-Statement>].

Basics

All students enrolled in grades 9-12 in public, private and home schools within the Kittitas County, WA are eligible. Students must submit original work. The should be about 300-500 words. Entries must be typed and double-spaced. Contestants must submit their problem statement via email to OEOFKC@gmail.com as a Word attachment. Contestants should review the official rules (below) for additional important information. This set rules can be found at <http://ioof-wa20.org/essay-contest.pdf>.

Deadline

Submissions accepted beginning October 15, 2018. Submission deadline is midnight December 10, 2018.

Award recognition

First place: **\$250** cash award, public reading and publication online

Second place: **\$150** cash award, public reading and publication online

Third place: **\$100** cash award, public reading and publication online

Honorable Mention (four awards): **\$25** cash award, public reading and publication online.

Finalists will be notified via email and winners will be notified via phone. Due to the volume of submissions, non-finalists will not be notified.

Official rules

Section I – General Rules

1. Contestants must submit their problem statement via email to OEOFKC@gmail.com by midnight December 10, 2018.
2. Problem statements must be submitted as a Word document.
3. Contestants must create an original problem statement with limited guidance from others.
4. *OEOFKC* and *IOOF20* will have the right to publish, or otherwise duplicate any problem statement entered into the contest without payment to the author.
5. Winners must agree to share a personal photo and to participate in an interview. This will allow *OEOFKC* and *IOOF20* to create a bio of the winners for use on our website and with the media.

Section II – Qualifications of Contestants

1. The contest is open to all students in grades 9-12 in public, private and home schools within Kittitas County, WA.
2. Contestants may submit only one problem statement entry.
3. Any student related to any member of *OEOFKC*'s or *IOOF20*'s staff or Board is not eligible.

Section III – Contest Rules

1. Participants must write on the official topic.
2. Each entry must include the following biographical information at the beginning of the problem statement document: name, age, grade, school, city, state, email, and phone number.
3. Problem statements must be typed and double-spaced. Problem statements must include a short title.
4. Problem statements should have three components: (a) a description of the **local** problem being considered, (b) a background or overview of the issues affecting the problem, and (c) one or more proposed solutions and how it/they will improve the situation.
5. Problem statements should contain about 300 to 500 words. This does not include the title, biographical information, or any footnotes (if applicable).
6. Any quotations or copyrighted material used in the problem statement must be identified properly. Failure to identify non-original material will result in disqualification.
7. If the problem statement incorporates facts or other verifiable details, the information should be footnoted. Wikipedia is not an acceptable source.
8. Any protest in the conduct of the contest must be made immediately. The contest director will decide all protests in conformity with the contest rules. The decision of the contest director is final, and no higher appeals will be recognized.

Section IV – Judging and Timing

1. Any problem statement not complying with the rules will be immediately disqualified from any further review. A problem statement will also be disqualified at any point in the process if facts presented prove to be false or unsupported (e.g., if numbers are presented as facts they must be based on defensible evidence as determined by contest staff and/or the judges).
2. All compliant problem statements will be reviewed by an initial group of judges, staff, and volunteers using the scoring criteria described in Section V.
3. The top 10 problem statements from the review in #2 will make up the Finalist Group. Judging of the Finalist Group will be completed by a panel of judges drawn from the original group of judges.
4. Judges will not discuss or compare problem statements being judged until all problem statements have been scored.
5. Judging of the Finalist Group will be conducted using the scoring criteria described in Section V. In the case of a tie, the problem statement scoring higher in category (3) of Section V below will be chosen.

Section V – Scoring of Contest

Scoring criteria at all levels of the contest will be identical:

1. A clear, well-stated presentation of the local problem being considered: 20 points
2. A paragraph or two providing an overview of the issues affecting the problem: 20 points
3. A paragraph or two describing at least one or more proposed solutions and further describing how it/they will improve the situation: 30 points
4. Organization and structure (including a logical interpretation of the subject, adherence to the topic): 10 points
5. Grammar, punctuation, spelling: 10 points
6. Vocabulary and style: 10 points