



Los Altos Historical Commission and Los Altos History Museum
37th Annual Margaret Thompson Historical Essay Contest
For 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Graders

2021 Theme – “Rise Up: Inspiring Women!”

Essay Prompt

Background:

One hundred years ago, the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, and women were finally granted the right to vote in the United States. However, the 19th Amendment in 1920 did not guarantee full voting rights for all women. The work needed to grant this right to women of color faced many obstacles in the coming years. Still, the law became the first in many steps along the United States' journey to full voting rights for all people.

Come to the Los Altos History Museum to celebrate the “100th birthday” of women's suffrage with an exhibition in our main gallery called “Rise-up, The Fight for Women’s Suffrage,” and a special outdoor exhibit displayed along the wrap-around porch of the J. Gilbert Smith House. We invite you to visit both of these exhibits to learn about the inspiring women of this era. The Museum is open Thursday- Sunday, 12:00-4:00 p.m. with masks required. The porch of the Gilbert Smith House is always open as it is one of several outdoor exhibits. (Both exhibits are on display until Feb. 21, 2021).

Our world survives on the accomplishments of both men and women and we are grateful to the women suffragists who fought for the women’s right to vote. For our essay contest this year, we would like you to reflect on inspiring women in your life. It could be someone who you know at school, church, at home or in your community. You might also recall women you have read about in different areas, such as science, medicine, space, social justice, government, the legal profession, literature, art or music. Select one inspiring woman and reflect on what this woman has achieved in her area of expertise. What obstacles did she face in achieving her goals?

Writing Prompt:

Talk with your family about some women – either from history or living today -- that you admire. Select ONE woman that you would like to write about. Think about the achievements and obstacles this woman encountered throughout her life. What are the qualities she demonstrated in her life and you would like to reflect upon and see in yourself? How has this woman inspired you, and how do you want to be more like her in the future?

Begin your essay by telling us about this woman and why you admire her. Write about her achievements and the obstacles she had to overcome to attain her goals. Tell us about some of the qualities of this inspiring woman and which qualities you already see or would like to see in yourself. In conclusion, tell us what impact learning more about this person will have on your future.

***Use interesting vocabulary and communicate your ideas in a creative manner

Win Prizes

1st Place - \$50 2nd Place - \$30 3rd Place - \$20
3 Winners Per Grade Level!