

Hey Kiddos!

I am putting out this extra bulletin because there has been some confusion regarding the Illustrating America part of Youth Activities. I hope this helps.

Illustrating America is its own contest. It does NOT include color pages or Patriotic Art. Patriotic art is part of the scholarship program and not Youth Activities.

Illustrating America does NOT get judged at the District level. While the paperwork says it is optional, the press release says it is NOT judged on the District level. Please don't shoot the messenger. All entries are turned in to the Department chairman for judging. If your District chooses to judge and give out prizes, that's up to you, but it is not final, and due to this, it is not recommended. If a District only sends in its winners to the Department but other Districts send in ALL of their entries, it deprives those children of the same opportunities as the rest to be judged properly on the Department level, so please, don't do it. The Department judges all entries. Please send ALL entries to the department chairman. The chairman will appoint a committee for the judging process to ensure a fair judgement process.. When working with anyone, especially children, you must be fair all the way around. You wouldn't want YOUR child to miss out. All entries will receive a card thanking them for their participation.

All entries MUST have the newest application, 2024-2025 affixed to the back of the artwork or neither the Department nor National will accept them. This avoids confusion when there are many entries and random paperwork comes in not attached to the individual pieces.

All entries MUST be handed into your Auxilliary by March 31st

All entries from participating auxiliaries MUST be sent to the Department Chairman by April 15th. This is imperative because the Department must have the winning artwork into National for judging by May 5th.

Please pass this on to your Aux Presidents, secretaries, and, Youth Activities Chairman.

I am attaching all information regarding this contest including the Department judging sheet.

All of this information was given to everyone at the Department School of Instruction, it is on our Department web page as well as the National web page.

I did not make up these rules, it is sent to us via National. We are trying to make it fair to all. We must act with the utmost integrity, especially with our youth.

10 Tips for Working with Youth

When working with youth, it is important to consider their safety and needs. We would like to offer these tips and resources so you can ensure that all youth you encounter have the best experience possible.

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1. Consider taking Youth Protection training. Many organizations working with youth provide and require training. One of the most comprehensive is by the Boy Scouts. You do not need to be a member or even involved with the program in order to take their free online training. Find it here: <http://www.scouting.org/Training/youthprotection.aspx>
2. Always respect the time commitments of youth. They are very busy. Be clear about when an event or project starts and when it ends. Parents also very much appreciate it when their child is finished at the stated time.
3. Parents should always be welcome to stay and take part in the activity.
4. No matter the project or event, make sure that proper safety measures are taken for everyone involved. Also, be sure that activities or projects are age appropriate.
5. Be extremely conscious of the location where you bring or meet the youths.
6. Do not smoke, drink or use drugs around them.
7. If you are taking youth somewhere other than the Post home or a school, consider asking parents to sign a permission slip and make sure parents understand that the children may be riding in personal vehicles.
8. Receive training from your local Child Abuse Prevention Council or Child Protective Center on the Mandated Suspected Child Abuse Reporting Laws in your state for those working with children.
9. Find out if you need to have individuals working with youth/children fingerprinted before events. There may be laws in your state that require background checks.
10. Maintain and model healthy boundaries with children - be a role model. Remember it is never appropriate to display acts of violence or abuse around or towards children.

Remember that it only takes a minute to make a difference in the life of a child. There are many small, positive things we can all do to help protect and nurture our children that only take a minute. A few words of praise and encouragement to a child, listening carefully to what a child has to say, showing a child you care, are all simple actions that have been shown to have a profound impact on a child's life. In these very real ways, we can all support children and strengthen families.

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS AUXILIARY
POST # [insert Post Number]

For more information, contact:

[Contact name]

[Contact email address]

[Contact phone number]

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VFW Auxiliary Announces Kick-Off of Annual Illustrating America Art Contest

VFW Auxiliary [insert Name/Post Number] is excited to announce the kick-off of the VFW Auxiliary's annual Illustrating America art contest. Local students in grades K-8 can share how they view our world through their drawings and paintings while competing for national awards. Students must submit an original two-dimensional piece of artwork. Coloring sheets, digital art and photography are not accepted. The entry must have been completed during the current school year and the application must include a parent or guardian signature.

Students begin by competing at the local VFW Auxiliary level. The first-place winner from each Auxiliary advances to the Department (state) competition. The contest consists of three grade divisions: K-2, 3-5 and 6-8. The Department (state) first-place winner in each grade division will be forwarded to the VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters. There are awards for first, second and third place in each grade division. All state winning entries are judged at National Headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri in July and will be displayed at the VFW Auxiliary National Convention scheduled to take place [insert date and location]. Winners will be notified via the email address provided on the winners' entry form.

The contest rewards the artistic abilities of elementary and middle/junior high school students. Student entries must be submitted to VFW Auxiliary [insert Name/Post Number] by March 31. Interested youth, parents/guardians and teachers should contact [insert contact name] at [phone number] or at [email address] for more information.

Visit <http://www.vfwauxiliary.org/what-we-do/youth-activities> for eligibility requirements, contest rules and an entry form.

About the VFW Auxiliary: The VFW Auxiliary is one of the nation's oldest veterans' service organizations and our members are the relatives of those who served in a location of foreign conflict. We have nearly 470,000 members representing all 50 states who volunteer millions of hours and give millions of dollars to support veterans, military service personnel and their families.

We are a voice for veterans on Capitol Hill and are instrumental in assisting the VFW pass or block legislation that impacts veterans and their families. We are one of the top 10 providers of volunteer hours in the VA medical system. Every year, members fundraise millions of dollars for charitable projects that benefit veterans and their families. We also provide hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships for our nation's youth. With more than 3,600 Auxiliaries, there is likely one in your area working to improve the lives of America's uncommon heroes. Learn more at www.vfwauxiliary.org.



VFW Auxiliary National Art Contest

Illustrating America Art Contest

Contest Entry Form

2024-2025

Please print or type
Incomplete and/or illegible entry forms will disqualify the entrant

Student Name: _____ Age: _____

School Name: _____ Grade: _____

Title of entry: _____ Date completed: _____

Media used: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

*Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

*I hereby grant permission for the artwork of the student listed above to be published in the VFW Auxiliary National Magazine, the VFW Auxiliary National website and social media and to be used for any and all promotional purposes by the VFW Auxiliary National organization.

VFW Auxiliary is not responsible for entries which are lost, late, illegible, damaged, incomplete, misdirected, stolen, or reproduced. All scores are final as received from the judges. All contestants must agree to abide by the contest rules. Falsifying information on the entry form or any violation of these rules shall cause immediate disqualification and forfeiture of scholarship.

Participating Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary contact information

Contact Name: _____ Contact Phone: _____

Contact email: _____

To avoid entrant disqualification

This section is to be filled out completely and correctly by VFW Auxiliary at each judging level. VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters only accepts **Department** level first-place winning entries.

Participating Sponsoring VFW Auxiliary Name & Number: _____ **Dept. of:** _____

March 31: Student entries due to participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary for judging.

VFW Auxiliary Youth Activities Chairman verification signature: _____ Date: _____

Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

April: Optional VFW Auxiliary District judging.

VFW Auxiliary District judging verification signature: _____ Date: _____

Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

April 15: First place winner from each grade division from participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary or **optional** VFW Auxiliary District judging due to the Department for judging.

VFW Auxiliary Youth Activities Chairman judging verification signature: _____ Date: _____

VFW Auxiliary Department Pres., Sec. and/or Treas. verification signature: _____ Date: _____

Artwork is the property of the student and must be returned immediately to the address listed above if not advancing to the next level.

May 5: Final Level Deadline First place winner from each grade division from VFW Auxiliary Department must be received at VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters for judging.

Attention: Program Awards Administrator.

July/August: All students will be notified of entry status via email provided on entry form. First through third place winning entries in each grade division will be announced on VFW Auxiliary National social media pages and may be shown at the VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

September: All art entries received at VFW Auxiliary National will be returned to students and awards mailed to the address provided on the entry form.

VFW Auxiliary National reserves the right to modify these rules and eligibility without notice.



VFW Auxiliary National Art Contest

Illustrating America Art Contest

2024-2025

VFW Auxiliary National is pleased to present this National art contest to introduce, encourage and recognize young artists with patriotism through art. Entries will be judged on patriotic theme and technique.

Contest Eligibility

- Student does not have to be related to a VFW or VFW Auxiliary member to participate
- Students in grades K-8 by March 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private, parochial or home school program in the United States, its territories and possessions, or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools.
- Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be lawful U.S. permanent residents or have applied for permanent resident (the application for which has not been denied) and intends to become a U.S. citizen.
- Foreign exchange students, students aged 15 or older are **not** eligible.
- Previous winners of VFW Auxiliary National Illustrating America Art Contests are **not** eligible for the same grade division of which they are a previous national winner. However, the students may enter the subsequent grade division.

Contest Rules

- Entry must be completed during the current school year.
- Entry must be two dimensional.
- Entry must be on canvas or paper.
- Canvas entries must be submitted on a stretcher frame or canvas board.
- Paper entries must be reinforced with heavy paper.
- Do **not** frame art with wood, metal, plastic or glass.
- Mats may be used, including mounted and floating mats.
- Entries may **not** be smaller than 8"x10" and **not** larger than 18"x24" **including** mat.
- Acrylic, chalk, crayon, ink, marker, pastel, pen, pencil, tempera, watercolor, glitter or other media may be used.
- If the American Flag is used, it does **not** need conform to the Federal Flag Code in relation to colors, numbers of stars and stripes and other pertinent rules of the code.
- Coloring sheets, digital art and photography are **not** accepted.
- Completed typed or printed legible entry form including parent and/or guardian signatures.
- Students name, age and grade level must be printed on back of art entry.

VFW Auxiliary National Illustrating America Art Contest Awards

Awards for Grades K-2

First place: \$100 gift card
Second place: \$50 gift card
Third place: \$25 gift card

Awards for Grades 3-5

First place: \$100 gift card
Second place: \$50 gift card
Third place: \$25 gift card

Awards for Grades 6-8

First place: \$100 gift card
Second place: \$50 gift card
Third place: \$25 gift card

VFW Auxiliary is not responsible for entries which are lost, late, illegible, damaged, incomplete, misdirected, stolen, or reproduced. All scores are final as received from the judges. All contestants must agree to abide by the contest rules. Falsifying information on the entry form or any violation of these rules shall cause immediate disqualification and forfeiture of award.

VFW Auxiliary judging dates and deadlines:

- **March 31:** Student entries must be submitted to a participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary for judging.
- **April 15:** First place winner from each grade division from participating sponsoring VFW Auxiliary or **optional** VFW Auxiliary District advances to the VFW Auxiliary Department (state) for judging.
- **May 5:** First place winner from grade division from each Department (state) due to VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters for judging.
- **July/August:** All students will be notified of entry status via email provided on entry form. First through third place winning entries in each grade division will be announced on VFW Auxiliary National social media pages and may be shown at the VFW Auxiliary National Convention.
- **September:** All art entries received at VFW Auxiliary National will be returned to students to the address provided on the entry form.

VFW Auxiliary National reserves the right to modify these rules and eligibility without notice.

Revised September 2024

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Judge's Scoring Sheet

Illustrating America

Criteria within the three categories can each receive up to 10 points, with 10 being the best.

Entrant:

Grade Division (circle one): **K-2** **3-5** **6-8**



Criteria

Patriotic Expression	
Total of 30 points possible	Points
1. Concept	
2. Presentation	
3. Patriotism Expressed	
Patriotic Expression Total	
Content	
Total of 30 points possible	Points
1. Clarity of idea	
2. Elicitation of emotion	
3. Can it stand on its own	
Content Total	
Design	
Total of 40 points possible	Points
1. Use of space	
2. Balance	
3. Creativity	
4. Total impact of work	
Design Total	
Total All Points	

Judge's Comments:

Judge's Signature:

Date: