



# Anti-Defamation League - Mountain States Region

The Leslie and Norman  
Davis Student Essay

Contact



**A Tribute  
to Moral  
Courage:**  
Standing Up  
Against Injustice

*"Last, but by no means least, courage - moral courage, the courage of one's convictions, the courage to see things through. The world is in a constant conspiracy against the brave. It's the age-old struggle - the roar of the crowd on one side and the voice of your conscience on the other."*

**Douglas MacArthur**

**The Essay Topic: Write about an individual or group that showed moral courage.**

During the Holocaust, it is estimated that eleven million people were killed by the Nazis and their

collaborators. Fortunately there were many who survived. Many survivors were rescued by “ordinary” people who took extraordinary risks to become an ally.

**Moral courage** is the ability to take a strong stand on a specific issue based on one’s personal beliefs or convictions and to defend it regardless of danger or threats to personal safety. Rescuers during the Holocaust, such as Miep Gies, Carl Lutz, Vladka Mead, Oskar Schindler, Chiune Sugihara, and Raoul Wallenberg, exemplify both courage and moral courage. They displayed courage in their ability to face difficulty, danger, and/or pain without fear; they exhibited moral courage when they acted on their own values and beliefs to spare the lives of others at the risk of jeopardizing their own. Their actions serve as a model of personal triumph over adversity and inspire others to act accordingly.

**Step 1:** Educational Overview: learn more about the history of the Holocaust, and *investigate at least two of the stories of the rescuers mentioned above to **inspire** you to research and write your own essay on moral courage.* The following are helpful websites to visit:

- [Mapping the Holocaust](#) (Animated Map) -  
[www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/focus/maps/](http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/focus/maps/)
- [The History of the Holocaust](#) -  
[www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/index.php?lang=en&ModuleId=10005143](http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/index.php?lang=en&ModuleId=10005143)
- [The Righteous Among the Nations](#) - Yad Vashem Museum -  
[http://www1.yadvashem.org/righteous\\_new/index.html](http://www1.yadvashem.org/righteous_new/index.html)

**Step 2:** Complete the Reflection Sheet.

**Step 3:** Choose and research a person that demonstrates moral courage either from the Holocaust or during another time, contemporary or historic. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Lech Walesa, and Ida B. Wells are a few examples, but there are many more. Be sure to discuss your selection with your teacher. Here are some other topics you can research to find other examples of moral courage:

- Rescuers of the Holocaust
- U.S. Civil Rights Movement
- A literary subject dealing with moral courage
- A local community leader
- The Rwandan, Bosnian and Cambodian genocides
- Current examples of genocide or human rights crises, including Darfur, Sudan, Kenya, the Congo, Zimbabwe and Chechnya

**Step 4:** Write a personal reflective essay which addresses the following:

- How the person demonstrated moral courage
- How his or her actions have impacted the world, and
- **Most importantly**, share a personal experience or describe how this act of moral courage influences your actions today.

---

---

## **Guidelines:**

1. Participants must be in grades 7-12.
2. Respond to the question in 750-1000 words: ***Describe a person who acted with moral courage. What can be learned from his or her actions and how do the lessons relate to you?***
3. Title your essay.
4. Typed, double-spaced.

5. Submit a bibliography of citations from a minimum of two sources. Only one may be from the Internet. Internet sites are copyrighted and must be cited. *Wikipedia* will not be accepted as a source.
6. Complete the Application Form.
7. Include a completed Reflection Sheet.

### **Disqualifiers:**

- Incomplete Application Form
- Reflection Sheet not submitted
- Essay does not meet the minimum/maximum word requirement
- No bibliography
- Both sources in bibliography are Internet sites (the maximum is one)
- Using *Wikipedia* as a source
- Multiple entries per student
- Plagiarism

### **Awards:**

Awards will be presented to the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners in each division.

**Division 1: Grades 7-9**

**Division 2: Grades 10-12**

**First Place: \$500.00**

**Second Place: \$250.00**

**Third Place: \$100.00**

### **Submission:**

1. Staple Application Form, **two copies** of your Essay, **two copies** of your Bibliography, and **two copies** of your reflection sheet.
2. Your name should appear ***only*** on the application form. Neither student name nor school should appear on the essay.

### **Please send your completed submission to:**

Attn: The Leslie and Norman Davis Essay Contest  
A Tribute to Moral Courage: Standing Up Against Injustice  
Anti-Defamation League  
Mountain States Region  
1120 Lincoln Street, Suite 1301  
Denver, CO 80203

### **Deadline:**

**Friday, March 13, 2009**

### **Notification:**

**Winners will be notified in early April 2009**

**Presentation of Awards:**

**April 21, 2009 – Governor’s Holocaust Remembrance Program  
Denver, Colorado**

For more detailed information and additional resources,  
go to: [www.adl.org/mountain-states](http://www.adl.org/mountain-states) or call 303.830.7177



Leslie and Norman Davis had a lifelong commitment to social justice and civic service. Whenever they experienced or witnessed injustice, they acted to address it. Each served as the Chair of ADL’s Mountain States Regional Board and received ADL’s Distinguished Community Service Award. Leslie was a founder of the Denver’s Women’s Bank and Georgetown University’s Program for Jewish Civilization, and was Board Chair of Children’s Hospital. Norman was Board Chair of National Jewish Hospital and both were involved in numerous philanthropic activities for people of all faiths and backgrounds. This essay contest is dedicated to their memory.



Mission Statement since 1913:  
“...to stop the defamation of the Jewish people...  
to secure justice and fair treatment to all...”