

The Community Page



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Students write essays about the American Dream

Every year the Goodland Elks Lodge has an essay contest for fifth and sixth graders and seventh and eighth graders in the area. Winners are picked by local judges. The top three essays go on to northwest district competition of Goodland, Hoxie, Hill City, Russell, Salina and Abilene.

There were 32 essays entered in Division I which is fifth and sixth grade and 133 in Division II which is seventh and eighth grade.

Lodge Secretary Zona Price said she thought that this was the most entries that they had ever had.

Division I
My American Dream (What is it?)
McKenna Hale

Do you have an American dream? I do. Mine is to have a family that love me always, enough money to start a family, have a career, food, water, a house and clothing. I want enough money to get by in life, but not so much that I take life for granted.

Another dream I have as an American is to have equal rights. Everyone should be equal whether you're black, white or hispanic. No matter what your color, race or where you're from should prevent you from living a full and happy life. You should be happy from the day that you're born till the day that you die.

Another one of my dreams is to have freedom. I want freedom so I can do what I want most of the time but still have input from other people so I don't make big mistakes in life, yet have enough to learn from them. I also want freedom so I can go to college and pursue whatever career I wish to pursue and still be able to do whatever job I want, even if it takes place in some isolated area or in the middle of the dessert.

I also want to have peace in the world so not one has to lose another family member in war or a fight that brakes out in a small town.

That is what my American dream is.

Hale is 12 and is in the sixth grade at Weskan Elementary. Her dad is Dave Hale of Weskan. She got a \$50 savings bond and certificate for her first place efforts.

The American Dream What is it?
Kaitlyn Daise

The American Dream is freedom, opportunities and rights. It is why people come to the United States of America.

The first concept I want to talk about is freedom. We have religious freedom so you can go to the church you want to and you don't have to go to church if you don't want to. Also, freedom is about getting to go to school because in some countries kids work all day. People come because they want the

freedom to worship, live and believe what they want.

Opportunities also make up the American Dream. Now, girls, like boys, have the opportunities to go to school. Girls can also own property in America. In some countries, girls can't leave their house without a man. You also have the opportunity of having any job you want.

The American Dream is also about wealth because people want to have a home and good food. Some countries have people who can't afford food. They also come to escape war because they are afraid of dying in their own country.

Now for my favorite rights that we have. We can remove the president after four years if we don't like him. In some countries, you have to put up with them until they die. You also get to vote for the president.

The American Dream is pretty great. We have opportunities, rights and freedoms to make our lives what we want them to be.

Daise is 10 and is in the fifth grade at North Elementary School. Her parents are Rhea and Tony Daise of Goodland. Her essay was second and she won a \$25 savings bond and certificate.

In third place was the essay by Elexi Vasquez. She is 10 and is in the fifth grade at North Elementary. Her parents are Sandy Vasquez and Jeremy Cull of Goodland. She placed third and won a \$10 gift certificate and certificate.

Division II
The American Dream: What Is It?
Amber Perdw

When hearing the phrase "American Dream," I would expect that you think of a suburban home with a green lawn encased in a white picket fence. Perhaps a dog playing with your estimated 2.4 children. This may be the most common perception of the American Dream, though the idea of one lonely American Dream is inaccurate. Over the years, the American Dream has changed in many ways.

Before the 21st Century I believe that the people were more humble, as were their American Dreams. Immigrants and others longing for a better life have often come to the U.S. to obtain an opportunity for a good future. Before coming to the United States they most likely had an American Dream. Included in their dream was probably happiness and safety for their family.

Today the common American Dream is fake and unreachable for the average citizen; fame, fortune and beauty. Those are among the wishes many Americans consider when contemplating their dreams. What about health and Happiness? Family

and success? These options are frequently overlooked due to greed and vanity, both of which are controlling many Americans, blurring their vision and preventing them from seeing what really matters.

What the future will bring is uncertain; we can't predict a future American Dream. We can expect it to be different from today's. Whatever it may be, our dreams will reflect the sign of the times.

People are always changing, as is the American Dream. The American Dream will forever continue to change.

Perdw is 14 and is in the eighth grade at Grant Junior High. Her mother is Joanie Brighton. She won a \$50 saving bond and certificate for winning first.

"The American Dream, What Is It?"
Erik Hart

So what is an American's dream? It may be becoming famous. It might be to become a millionaire. It might be to play professional sports. It might even be to become president someday. No matter the different dreams we have, every single one is unique. It defines you as a person. However we need to realize what dreaming these dreams would not be possible without freedom.

Freedom: it's what defines us as a democracy and not a monarchy. Freedom is what can make our dreams a reality. With freedom, we can dream about making a difference in people's lives. Freedom means we have rights as individuals and also rights as a country. Freedom holds our nation together. We need to have freedom continue on in our country.

I think the American dream is to have our nation prosper. As individuals, everyone wants to make a difference in their own lives, in the lives of other people and also to make a difference for our whole country. Every American also realizes the need for freedom and liberty.

In conclusion, every American has their own dreams and their own views, but everyone wants the same outcome — to have our nation prosper through freedom. So what is your American dream?

Hart is 13 and is in the eighth grade at St. Francis Junior High School. His parents are Ken and Karen Hart of St. Francis. For second place he won a \$25 savings bond and a certificate.

In third place was the essay by Ace Arteaga. He is 14 and in the eighth grade at Grant Junior High. His parents are Travis and Angie Jones of Goodland. He won a \$10 gift certificate and certificate for third place in this division.

Retired teachers Jan Wilson and Virginia Palmgren judged the essays.



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