



African American History Month Observance Essay Contest



Sponsored by the United States Army War College
African American/Black History Month Observance

Recommended format: Entries limited to 500 words or less in essay format.

Overview: The United States Army War College (USAWC) is sponsoring an essay writing contest open to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students from local public and private schools. Each essay should focus on the contributions and history of African Americans as they apply to the 2021 theme **"The Black Family"** (see page 2).

Each participating school is invited to conduct an internal competition to decide on the best essay from each grade (6th, 7th, and 8th) or a total of 3 contest winners per school. We ask that each school complete their essay contest and determine their winners by Friday, January 22, 2021. Please email the names of the essay contest winners along with a digital copy of the winning essays to the USAWC Event Coordinator, Lieutenant Colonel Paul Rigby via email at paul.h.rigby.mil@mail.mil. He can also be contacted by phone at 717.245.4238.

The winner from each grade at participating schools will be recognized publicly at an observance on Carlisle Barracks, scheduled for Friday, February 19th 2021, from 12 noon to 1:30 PM. **This of course could be impacted by state COVID-19 pandemic mandates, resulting in a "Virtual Online Observance"**. Posters of the winning essays will be displayed in the foyer outside the auditorium, and can be taken home by the students following the event. Two school officials and the parents or legal guardian of each child are also invited to attend. School District Superintendents are also welcome. For travel directions to Carlisle Barracks and any other questions regarding this event, please contact Lieutenant Colonel Paul Rigby.

Timeline:

January 22, 2021: All contest winners finalized. Names of winners, along with essays, emailed to USAWC Event Coordinator, Lieutenant Colonel Paul Rigby.

February 19, 2021

- 11:30AM - Arrival at Bliss Hall, Carlisle Barracks.
- 11:40-11:55 - Orientation of participants for the event.
 - Move to seating
 - Discuss sequence and walk thru as needed.
- 12:00-12:50 - National Anthem / Invocation
 - Opening Remarks by Event Host
 - Guest Speakers (The Black Family)
 - Essay Recognition Ceremony
 - Recognition of each participating school and their essay contest winners
- 12:50-1:00 - Ceremony ends and group picture with all essay winners and Event Host
- 1:00-1:30 - Cultural food sampling, photos, and follow-on discussion in Bliss Hall Foyer.



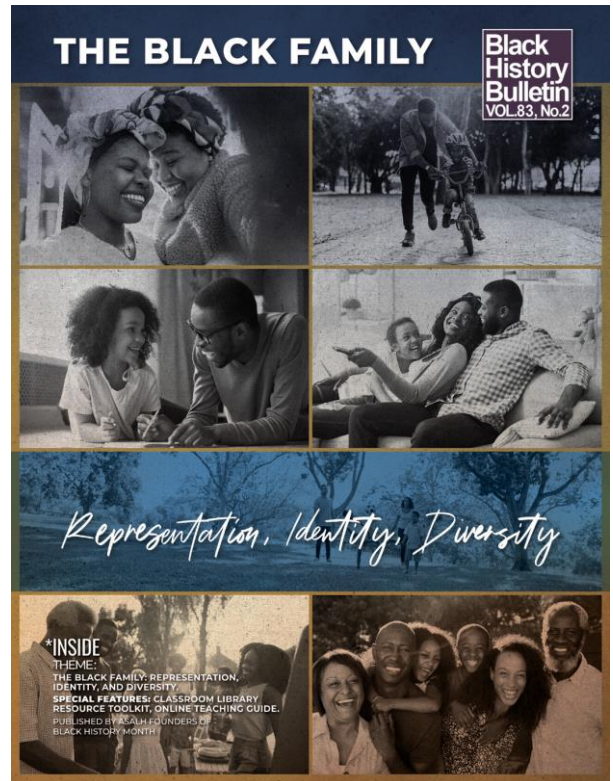
2021 African American History Month Theme:

THE BLACK FAMILY: Representation, Identity, and Diversity



The black family has been a topic of study in many disciplines - history, literature, the visual arts and film studies, sociology, anthropology, and social policy. Its representation, identity, and diversity have been revered, stereotyped, and vilified from the days of slavery to our own time.

The black family knows no single location, since family reunions and genetic-ancestry searches testify to the spread of family members across states, nations, and continents. Not only are individual black families diasporic, but Africa and the diaspora itself have been long portrayed as the black family at large.



While the role of the black family has been described by some as a microcosm of the entire race, its complexity as the “foundation” of African American life and history can be seen in numerous debates over how to represent its meaning and typicality from a historical perspective - as slave or free, as patriarchal or matriarchal, as a single-headed or dual-headed household, as nuclear or extended, as close friends or blood lineage, as legal or common law, and as black or interracial, etc. Variation appears, as well, in discussions on the nature and impact of parenting, childhood, marriage, gender norms, sexuality, and incarceration. The family offers a rich tapestry of images for exploring the African American past and present.

*** ESSAY CONTEST:** Students may base their essays on any of the above examples the theme speaks of, including personal history, identity, diversity, and current day social perspectives.

THE BLACK FAMILY

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Representation, Identity, Diversity

*INSIDE THEME:

THE BLACK FAMILY: REPRESENTATION,
IDENTITY, AND DIVERSITY.

SPECIAL FEATURES: CLASSROOM LIBRARY
RESOURCE TOOLKIT, ONLINE TEACHING GUIDE.

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

