

Richard Grand Legal Writing Competition Fall 2024

Throughout his five-decade-long career, Tucson attorney Richard Grand worked tirelessly to achieve justice for his clients, and he achieved remarkable results, winning his clients over \$1 million apiece in more than 100 cases. His success was partly predicated on his ability to lead jurors to the conclusion he wanted them to reach through persuasive storytelling and by painting “word pictures” that helped the jury see the facts from his client’s perspective. Mr. Grand was a self-described “merchant of words,” who shared his insights and experiences with others, both through founding legal societies for other personal injury attorneys and investing in law students’ lives. One of the ways that Mr. Grand invested in law students was by creating and sponsoring this writing competition in 2000. He also created the Richard Grand Damages Argument Competition.

When asked about his success as a trial attorney, Mr. Grand explained that you must be able to “strike a spark” in the jury's mind with your words. In your essay, please describe a memorable time in your life when someone’s words struck a spark in your mind or when your words struck a spark for someone else.

You have complete discretion as to what type of story you tell, with the following restrictions:

- Your story must relate to things you have personal knowledge or experience or something that impacted you directly. In other words, this is not a research project. It is a personal essay.
- A good portion of the essay should be written in the first person. This is a personal essay, so you will be writing about your personal thoughts, opinions, and experiences. Of course, some parts—maybe even significant parts—of the essay may be in the second or third person, but the essay should largely be written from your point of view.
- The essay must be your own original work prepared exclusively for the competition. You may not enter work that was written—in part or in full—before the beginning of this competition.

- The essay may not be a work of fiction. Please write about real events, real people, actual observations, and your point of view.

This is a writing competition. Feel free to use storytelling, metaphor, analogy, literary references, and other techniques to capture and persuade your audience. We encourage you to be interesting, to communicate a point of view, to educate your reader, to tell a compelling story, and to turn a phrase here and there. Moreover, we are not looking for one particular writing style. Your topic and perspective will inform how you approach writing this piece.

We anticipate that you will not cite any authorities or court opinions in your personal essay. If, for some reason, however, you do discuss a case or an authority of some sort, you need not use formal Bluebook or ALWD-style citations. It is perfectly acceptable to identify your case without any formal citation, i.e. “In 1966, nearly twenty years before I was born, the United States Supreme Court decided the landmark case of *Miranda v. Arizona*.” If you think that your reader might not be familiar with a particular court opinion, you may include the citation either in the text or in a footnote.

All entries must be submitted anonymously, using a competition number and not a name. To obtain your competition number, please send an email to martinds@email.arizona.edu. In your email, please state that you are participating in the Richard Grand Legal Writing Competition and would like a competition number. Include your name, phone number, and whether you are a 1L, 2L, 3L, MLS, LLM, or SJD student. You will receive your competition number by email. Please place this number on every page of your entry. We recommend that you obtain your number on the first day or two of the competition. That way, if we need to send an e-mail with clarification or corrections, we will be able to reach you.

If you cannot obtain a competition number before the submission deadline, just email your entry on time. In your email, ask for a competition number. One will be assigned to you, and that number will be added to every page of your entry. The staff will ensure that your entry is transmitted to the judges anonymously, with no trace of your identity on the entry.

All entries must be typed and double-spaced, in 13-point font or larger. Block quotes may be single-spaced. Margins must be one inch or larger on all four sides. Please number the pages at the bottom. The maximum length of the paper is 2000 words, including any headings or footnotes. But please don't feel compelled to meet the maximum word limit. Write as many words as necessary to craft an interesting essay.

Examples of personal essays abound. You can find them on the web, in newspapers, magazines, books, etc. Below are a few links to some personal essays posted on the web.

- <http://thisibelieve.org/essay/7698/>
- https://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/26/magazine/my-life-as-an-undocumented-immigrant.html?_r=0
- <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/09/opinion/sunday/i-went-back-to-the-land-to-feed-my-family.html>
- <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/09/opinion/sunday/brain-injury-and-building-a-new-life-afterwards.html>

Please carefully read the competition Rules and Frequently Asked Questions on the competition website.¹ All essays are due by email to Debbie Martin, martinds@email.arizona.edu, no later than 8:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 3, 2024.

¹ <https://law.arizona.edu/richard-grand-legal-writing-competition>.