



**ACCESS TO INFORMATION UNIT
&
ACCESS TO INFORMATION ADVISORY STAKEHOLDERS COMMITTEE
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY COMPETITION**

- Topic:** “The Access to information Act (2002) is critical for enabling citizens to exercise their voice, to effectively monitor and hold government to account, and to enter into informed dialogue about decisions which affect their lives.” Discuss.
- Period:** September 24, 2013 – January 31, 2014
- Launch:** September 24, 2013
- When Due:** January 31, 2014
- Award of Prizes:** Winners will be announced in the month of February, 2014. Prizes will be awarded in March, 2014.
- Who:** Registered High school students between third form and sixth form.
- Purpose:** This contest is sponsored by the Access to Information Unit and the Access to Information Advisory Stakeholders Committee and is designed to give Jamaican youth the opportunity to become more aware of the Access to Information Act (2002).
- Essay Length:** 2500 words typed and double-spaced. (Title, footnotes and bibliography are not included in the final word count).

How to Enter: Entries must be sent to:
Access to Information Unit,
5-9 South Odeon Avenue, Kingston 10
Phone: 968-8282
Fax: 926-9491
Email: ati@cwjamaica.com

Prizes: The essay competition will award first, second and third place winners with \$50,000, \$30,000 and \$20,000 respectively. The winners will also be presented with ATI Unit Trophy, ATI Advisory Stakeholders Committee Trophy and ATI Association of Administrators Trophy.

Judges: A panel of at least three judges but no more than five judges will be selected. It will comprise representatives of the ATI Stakeholders Committee, Access to Information Association of Administrators, the ATI Unit and any other judge as decided by the ATI Unit.

Essay Contest Rules

1. General Rules

- 1.1 Each contestant may submit only one essay.
- 1.2 Each essay must reflect the contestant's own research, writing and original thinking.
- 1.3 Any quotations or copyrighted material used in the essay must be properly identified. Failure to identify non-original material will result in disqualification.
- 1.4 The Access to Information Unit will have the right to edit, publish or otherwise duplicate any essay entered into the contest without payment to or permission from the author.
- 1.5 Essays must be written in Standard English. Font size is to be 12 point in Times New Roman. Paper size should be either A4 or standard letter size.
- 1.6 Family members or persons within the same household of Access to Information Unit staff members are ineligible to participate.
- 1.7 All entrants must have a valid Taxpayer Registration Number (TRN) and winners will have to submit same to be awarded prizes.

2. Contest Rules

- 2.1 Failure to write on the official topic will result in disqualification.
- 2.2 Each entry must begin with a title page containing: topic, number of words, writer's name, address, telephone number, name of school.
- 2.3 Essays must be type-written and double-spaced.
- 2.4 Essays must contain 2500 words. Every word of the essay is counted. This does not include the title page, bibliography, or footnotes identifying non-original material.
- 2.5 Each page of the essay must be numbered starting with first page of the essay, not the title page. The numbers must be centered at the bottom of each page.

3. Acknowledgment of Rules

- 3.1 The submission of an essay constitutes full and complete acknowledgement and acceptance of these rules. The decision of the

Access to Information Unit and the Access to Information Advisory Stakeholders' Committee is final.

4. Judging

A double-blind scoring system will be used to judge essays submitted. This system is designed to make the process of judging as easy and impartial as possible.

- Each judge will receive copies of the essays from which the names and schools of the students have been removed.
- The panel of experts selecting the three winners will read and score each essay individually.
- The total points for each of the essays will be added together, and the essay with the highest cumulative points wins.
- Judges will at no time prior to the announcement of winners, discuss the essays or the process of scoring.

5. Point System

The following system will be used to judge the essays:

- **Comprehension** = 0 – 30 points
How well does the essay reflect a thorough comprehension of the issues involved in the essay topic?
- **Organization** = 0 – 25 points
Does the argument follow a logical and easily understood progression? Does corroborating evidence support the essay's main points?
- **Creativity** = 0 – 25 points
Use of diverse resources, including interviews. Creative angle on the issue.
- **Writing** = 0 – 10 points
Correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, concise language.
- **Adherence to contest rules** = 0 – 10 points
Compliance to format and length rules.

Total Points = 100 points

6. Other Terms and Conditions

- 6.1 Essays will not be returned. They become the property of the ATI Unit. The Unit may reprint essay in part or in full and use as it deems necessary. Credit will however be given to the author.
- 6.2 The administration of the contest including determining the eligibility of a participant or essay, standard of essays and awarding of prizes is within the absolute discretion of the ATI Unit.
- 6.3 The ATI Unit assumes no responsibility for loss, delayed or incomplete entries as a result of postal delays or technical malfunctions.

7. Awards

First-place:	ATI Trophy and \$50,000 cash
Second-place:	ATI Advisory Stakeholders Committee Trophy and \$30,000 cash
Third-place:	ATIAA Trophy and \$20,000 cash