



in the footsteps ...

NELSON MANDELA MUSEUM

Bunga Building, Owen Street, Mthatha, South Africa | P O Box 52808, Mthatha, 5100, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0) 47 501 9500 | Facsimile: +27 (0) 047 532 3345
Email: Info@nelsonmandelamuseum.org.za | www.mandelamuseum.org.za

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Department of Arts and Culture

HUMAN RIGHTS ESSAY COMPETITION – MARCH 2026

ESSAY TOPIC

- In 3 - 4 pages of well researched and argued essay, “evaluate the government’s progress in fulfilling one of South Africa’s socio-economic rights. Define and detail the biggest barrier in achieving this right for all citizens?”.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- ✓ All public & private high school learners enrolled in Grade 10 & 11 in 2026 are eligible to enter the competition
- ✓ The school may field as many students as they wish
- ✓ Learners from disadvantaged schools/communities are particularly encouraged to participate
- ✓ Students/participants who made it to the top ten (10) of the essay competition in 2025, are not eligible to participate or enter the 2026 Human Rights Essay Competition.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DoE & DISTRICTS

- ✓ Provinces and districts to make sure that deserving disadvantaged learners & schools do participate in the competition
- ✓ Ensure that the information is disseminated to schools accordingly

CLOSING DATE

- ✓ Completed essays must be submitted to the Nelson Mandela Museum on or before the 20th of February 2026 at 17h00 to the following email address:

solomzi@nelsonmandelamuseum.org.za For any enquiries kindly contact the following numbers: 047 501 9525 or 076 393 6476

- ✓ The name and surname of the learner, grade, province, school, contact numbers of the educator in charge, must accompany the essay and appear on the cover page.
- ✓ Learners must write legible and preferably use a black pen if the essay is not typed

PRIZES FOR THE COMPETITION

- ✓ 10 best essay writers will be selected for oral presentation on the 12th of March 2026 at the Nelson Mandela Museum in the Eastern Cape Province, Mthatha
- ✓ 3 participants who best presented orally their essays, will win themselves smartphones with data
- ✓ Other 7 participants will get themselves medals
- ✓ All the 10 presenters will also be presented with certificates of participation
- ✓ Where possible the Nelson Mandela Museum will incur the cost of travel for those who make it to the top ten
- ✓ **NB:** Where a learner from your school manages to make it to the top 10, an arrangement and provision must be made by the school or district for a chaperone to accompany the learner to the Nelson Mandela Museum.

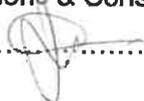
ADJUDICATION/EVALUATION TEAM

Three professional adjudicators independent of the Nelson Mandela Museum, will be utilised to adjudicate the essays and the oral presentations.

Ms. L. Tyali

Manager: Collections & Conservation

Signature:



Date: 16/11/2025

Mr. B. I. Mahlangu
Senior Manager: Heritage & Conservation

Signature: 

Date: 24/11/2025