

## Evaluation Criteria for Awarding the Sonlight Curriculum Foundation Scholarships

We seek to award scholarships to candidates who are performing well academically **AND** who demonstrate character in their life.

This year, the Sonlight Curriculum Foundation is sponsoring competition for thirteen scholarships: one \$5,000 (\$20,000 total), four \$2,500 (\$10,000 total, each), and eight \$1,000 (\$4,000 total, each) annual four-year scholarships for students who intend to begin college in the Fall of 2012.

We are offering these scholarships based upon two different sets of criteria (one called Green and the other, Blue). You may apply to either set, but not both.

1. **Green Criteria:** We will give four scholarships in which creativity, mission mindedness, acts of kindness, and other factors count more highly than academics. Two \$2,500 (\$10,000 total) and two \$1,000 (\$4,000 total, each) annual four-year scholarships will be awarded in this category based upon the following weighted criteria, in order of the greater weight to the lesser weight:

- creativity, mission mindedness, or acts of kindness
- spiritual mindedness
- leadership
- academic performance
- heart for learning
- activities and interests

2. **Blue Criteria:** We will give nine scholarships in which academics are the greatest weight in our selection. *For at least two of these scholarships, we will give added weight to applications from applicants with math or science backgrounds.* We will give one \$5,000 (\$20,000 total), two \$2,500 (\$10,000 total, each), and six \$1,000 (\$4,000 total, each) annual four-year scholarships based upon the following weighted criteria, in order of the greater weight to the lesser weight:

- academic performance
- spiritual mindedness
- leadership
- creativity, mission mindedness, or acts of kindness
- heart for learning
- activities and interests

As for your submission itself, we are also looking at your overall presentation. In this regard, we review and evaluate:

- Your spelling
- Your grammar

- Your vigor of expression and your passion for your topic
- Your neatness

## We evaluate your submission fully in all of these areas.

**1. Criteria:** We will evaluate your scholarship submission based on **one set** of the criteria noted above, and the specific inputs you offer as described below. Therefore, **you must indicate in your application which scholarship criteria (Blue or Green—see the first page) you are seeking to meet.** Then, complete the Scholarship Application which will include the following points. (NOTE: The following are NOT listed in order of importance or weight for evaluation.)

**a. Academic Achievement/Performance:** Submit your standardized test scores from the SAT, ACT, or **other standardized test or other measures of your academic performance.** We are particularly interested in your overall academic performance, however best measured.

**b. Contribution to the Kingdom:**

**(1) Submit a list of your Extracurricular Activities.** We are not looking for the number of activities, but the variety, balance, depth, and overall significance of these activities.

**(2) Submit at MOST three (3) reference letters** with at MOST 2 pages, single-spaced, 12 point type (may be less, such as double-spaced, etc.) from parents (who better know homeschool students!), pastors, leaders in programs you've been involved in [AWANA, Boy Scouts, 4-H, FFA, YFC], etc. that confirm your involvement in the activities you've listed and that, to the extent possible, attest to your unique contributions in these areas. These letters should further attest to your creativeness, mission mindedness, or acts of kindness.

NOTES:

These letters ought not to be mere "character reference" letters. They should attest to specific contributions you have made, specific activities you have engaged in, specific achievements that have benefited—or that show some promise in the future of benefiting—the Kingdom. In other words, these letters are primarily for the sake of acquiring outside confirmation that you have really done or achieved what you claim to have done or achieved in your scholarship application.

We only need one letter attesting to your contributions in any one activity. In other words, for example, if you're going to send us letters from two pastors in your church, make sure they speak about different aspects of your participation.

The best letter will describe specific contributions you have made and/or specific observations that your reference has seen that demonstrate the contributions to which s/he is referring.

**c. Future Plans: Submit a personal essay** with at MOST 2 pages, single-spaced, 12 point type (may be less, such as double-spaced, etc.) along these lines:

What I want to do with my life  
Why I want to go to college  
Why I want to go to *this* college

## COMMENTS:

Our mission emanates from this desire: “to ‘seek God’s Kingdom’ (Mt. 6:33) by producing and distributing educational materials that will prepare future generations to effectively assert the crown rights of King Jesus among ‘every tribe, language, people and nation’ (Rev. 5:9) and in every area of human endeavor.” Therefore, we want to promote and encourage students who are personally dedicated to a similar goal.

If your essay is to win, we expect it will probably include at least REFERENCES to matters like:

- (a) Seeking God’s Kingdom (what does that mean to you? what does that look like?);
- (b) Asserting the crown rights of King Jesus (extending His Kingdom); and
- (c) How you think your future plans or purposes will help extend His Kingdom either (or both) among “every tribe, language, people and nation” and/or in your unique area of interest.

Another way to look at this: we expect you will discuss how you see your future plans and aspirations fitting in with, or pursuing, the purposes of God.

Note that we won’t automatically DOWNGRADE your essay for using words and phrases like “God’s Kingdom,” or “crown rights,” “King Jesus,” etc. However, we won’t automatically UPGRADE you, either, just because you use those words or phrases. The truth is, we don’t want you to try to say only what you think we want to hear! Put another way: if we get the impression that you’re trying to “buy our affection,” we WILL downgrade you. We want you to speak with YOUR words, in YOUR way, about YOUR convictions. When we expressed ourselves about our desires, we used words and phrases that we wanted to use. Hopefully they mean something to you; but we certainly don’t expect you to express yourself in the same, or even a similar, manner.

**d. Clear Expression or Contribution:** Regardless of whether you choose the Green or Blue criteria, you must choose to submit either a project or a second essay [do NOT submit both] as follows:

- (1) Submit a copy of your best project** in the form of a review, digest, portfolio, etc. that consists of at MOST 3 pages, single-spaced, 12 point type (may be less, such as double-spaced, etc.) concerning any math, science, performing or visual arts related discipline of interest or concern to you. We are interested in seeing how well you can share your interest and passion from a previous effort, uninfluenced by the pressure of this scholarship competition and in a context that is less dependent on a written essay. [NOTE: You are free to share specific results or a summary of results of experiments, proofs, applications, tests, observations, trials, performances, and/or exhibits related to the physical sciences, math, or the arts.] A copy of any awards, recognition and prizes are welcome. We can only accept two-dimensional submissions (such as photographs of the actual work, reports, written descriptions, etc.) or audio/video recordings (such as CD/DVD or audio cassette). Total submissions for this project(s) should not exceed 3 pages if written or at most 10 minutes if presented via audio/video. NOTHING CAN BE RETURNED, so please do not send any original works, awards, etc.

**OR**

**(2) Submit a copy of your best argumentative essay** to date with at MOST 3 pages, single-spaced, 12 point type (may be less, such as double-spaced, etc.) concerning any subject of interest or concern to you. We are interested in seeing how well you can express yourself in a “normal” context, uninfluenced by the pressure of possibly “winning” or “losing” a scholarship. [NOTE: If you do not have a pre-existing essay of the length we are seeking, then please *edit* one as necessary to meet our length requirements. Your essay should include a bibliography, endnotes, etc., of course, but these scholarly devices do not count toward the page limit. The page limit applies to the body of the essay only.]

## **2. Prerequisites:**

a. **Purchases:** You **MUST** have *used* a minimum of five full Sonlight Curriculum Core programs *purchased from Sonlight Curriculum, Ltd., all purchased in 2000 or later. We must be able to validate your purchase from our records and/or your proof of purchase.* (NOTE: Core programs have gone by different names over the years. They include Basic, Core, Core Ultra™, Core Plus™, Newcomer, First Time Curriculum Packages, and Multi-Subject Packages.). All such programs included a Core (or "Basic") Instructor's Guide, plus Readers/Literature, Read-Alouds, and History programs for the same year or level. Many packages also included Bible programs.) For the purposes of this scholarship competition, Core purchases may be made either as a single package, or in pieces over time. However, if such purchases are made in pieces over time, the entire program must have been purchased in a period of no more than 12 months. If you purchased only pieces of a program and not the whole, or if you purchased the equivalent of a whole, but over a period of more than 12 months, such purchases will NOT count toward qualification for the scholarship competition.

**NOTE:** While we are pleased to accept and evaluate applications for those using any five Core programs, we **will give significantly added weight** to those applicants that have used our curriculum *most recently and at the higher levels.*

b. **Scholarship Photograph:** Submit a photograph with your application. Your photograph will not be given to the application review board and, therefore, will not be used in the application review process for selecting scholarship winners. However, photographs of the scholarship winners only will be used to announce the winners after they have been selected.

c. **Assignment of Rights & Consent to Publish Scholarship Information:** Sign and submit the Assignment of Rights and Consent to Publish Scholarship Information form included with the application. By signing this form, you give us the right to publish your photograph(s) and basic information regarding your past accomplishments and future plans in the event you are a scholarship winner or we chose to use some of your additional photographs.

**3. Deadline:** For scholarships for the school year beginning in 2012, **all submissions listed above must be postmarked and/or emailed NO LATER THAN December 7, 2011.** We will announce winners by February 15, 2012.

**4. Questions:** If you have any questions regarding your submission or criteria, please email [scholarship@sonlight.com](mailto:scholarship@sonlight.com) or call 303/730-6292 and ask for the scholarship coordinator.