

An Invitation to participate in a Four-Way Test essay contest

For six decades Rotarians have been using The Four-Way Test as a practical yardstick in their business, community, and personal affairs. Thousands of Rotarians have used it and shared it with others. Millions of copies have been distributed to students and business associates. The Test has been the theme of countless essay contests and addresses.

History of The Four-Way Test

Herbert J. Taylor, a Chicago Rotarian and president of Rotary International conceived the Four-Way Test. In 1932, the creditors of the company assigned Taylor the task of rescuing an all-but bankrupt aluminum cookware company.

Looking at the situation of the company and its competitors, Taylor decided that the only avenue in which the company could compete with them was in the character, dependability, and service-mindedness of company personnel. He felt the company needed a simple measuring stick of ethics, which everyone in the company could use. In July, 1932, after careful consideration, Taylor penned, "The Four-Way Test of the things we think, say, or do" as follows:

- 1. Is it the Truth?***
- 2. Is it Fair to all concerned?***
- 3. Will it build Goodwill and Better Friendships?***
- 4. Will it be Beneficial to all concerned?***

After a long, faithful, constant effort to live up to The Four-Way Test, he decided to apply the test companywide. The employees of the company were asked to memorize the test and apply it in every facet of company operations, from advertising to dealing with its customers and creditors, to relations with its own employees. Before an employee of the company could proceed on any course of action, the honest answer to all four questions had to be, "yes."

The result is a legend of Rotary. Slowly but surely, the company began to succeed and, within twenty years had become very successful and profitable.

In January 1943, Rotary decided to make The Four-Way Test a part of the Vocational Service ideal and, in 1954, Taylor turned over all rights to the test to Rotary. Rotarians have always shown a deep interest in young people, the future of the world. Since 1952 there have been a number of Rotary programs to introduce The Four-Way Test to schoolchildren.

The Invitation

The Rotary Clubs of District 5610 invite the students of your school, sixth grade through eighth grade, to participate in a Four-Way Test Essay Contest. The theme of the essay is to be "How Can I Apply the Four-Way Test to My Life?" Essays are to be 250-300 words in length, typed, and double-spaced.

Winning essays will receive awards from the local Rotary club, with the nature of the awards determined by the individual club. The winning entries at the club level will be considered for district-wide awards. District winners will receive cash prizes as follows: first place - \$150, second place - \$100, third place \$50.

Rotarians feel that these essay contests are a valuable tool in the effort to stress ethical behavior in young people. As the twig is bent, so grows the tree.

Rotarians feel that your school's participation would be "Beneficial to all concerned."