

## 2021 Technology Awareness Day Essay Contest Rules

### Contest Rules:

The essay must be:

- Based on the prompt listed below
- An original, unpublished work. Essays deemed not original work will be disqualified.
- Include a cover page with: student's name, school, program, and grade
- Word Count for 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> graders: At least 350 words
- Word Count for 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> graders: At least 500 words
- Double-spaced, 12-point font
- Bibliography is **not** included in the word count
- Contestants should proofread entries for spelling and grammar errors.

Regarding sources:

- It is recommended that you support your arguments with qualified sources.
- Use direct quotes when taking a source word for word. Use MLA style in-text citations and bibliography entries.
- Don't focus on strict adherence to MLA – the important thing is that we know which parts of your essay are from an outside source, and where we can find that source.

Contestants will be competing in one of two groups: 9/10<sup>th</sup> graders and 11/12<sup>th</sup> graders. The top three contestants from each group will be recognized and awarded prizes virtually on Day 4 of Technology Awareness Week on **February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021**. Prizes have not been confirmed but typically include laptops and tablets.

### Living in a Virtual World

In 2020, the world was struck with a global pandemic. Many schools and businesses including BNSF have had to adapt. In-person gatherings have been largely replaced by virtual meetings. Students and workers alike have been challenged to do work and study independently without the close supervision of teachers and managers. The pandemic has had profound effects on the way people work, learn, and socialize. On one hand, it has revolutionized and normalized new ways of connecting to one another. Paradoxically, a lack of in-person interaction may leave some people feeling socially isolated and even more disconnected than ever.

What are some of the positive and negatives of living in an increasingly virtual world? Do you believe that it is overall a net positive?

**Submission Details:**

C.T.E. and Upward Bound coordinators: please send the contest entries to the Financial Aid Committee Chair at BNSF Railway, Bryan Frank, via email: [bryan.frank@bnsf.com](mailto:bryan.frank@bnsf.com). Use subject line: "2021 TAD Contest Entry". You should receive a confirmation within 2 business days that your essay has been received.

Deadline: Entries must be received no later than **January 20<sup>nd</sup>, 2021**.

For questions contact Bryan Frank at [bryan.frank@bnsf.com](mailto:bryan.frank@bnsf.com).