



**Los Altos Historical Commission and Los Altos History Museum
32nd Annual Margaret Thompson Historical Essay Contest
3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Graders**

2016 Theme – Traditions and Stories that Celebrate Your Ancestry

Background:

The Los Altos History Museum's current exhibit, "Spirits Return: Cultural Traditions Keeping Memories Alive," highlights how human beings all over the world follow traditions by which they honor and celebrate their ancestors. While the exhibit focuses on loved ones who have passed on, we all tell stories about our family members, whether they are living or deceased, so that we can feel connected to our heritage. Traditions and stories help us stay connected and cultivate a sense of identity and nurture values of family loyalty and pride.

Every family has traditions and stories that they like to tell each other. How do you honor and celebrate your family members and/or ancestors? What stories have been shared in your family? Sharing our traditions and stories stimulates an awareness that we are more alike than different.

Writing Prompt:

Think about a *tradition* that is special to your family. Think about *stories* that are specific to members of your family or ancestors. Interview or talk to a family member about these stories or traditions. Write an essay that tells others about your family tradition or ancestral story. As you write, develop an essay with an organized flow of ideas, use interesting vocabulary, and communicate your story or tradition in a creative manner.

Win Cash Prizes

**1st Place - \$50 2nd Place - \$30 3rd Place - \$20
3 Winners Per Grade Level!**