

Topic Prompts. Please choose one of the following prompts below. In general, we expect you to address the core values of humanism as an applied philosophical worldview. Visit <https://www.portlandhumanists.org/>, to learn more. You may address a range of applications including, but not limited to: personal experiences, policy applications regarding local to global issues, current events and historical patterns. For 2026 we offer two topic prompts from which to choose.

Prompt #1. White Christian Nationalists are breaking down the wall of separation between Church and State, particularly in public schools. Church and State separation is an essential application of Humanism. The erosion of this principle has been witnessed in the following ways:

- Placing the Ten Commandments and other Christian symbols in schools (and the exclusion of symbols related to other belief systems).
- Advocating for Creationism as science curricula.
- Legislating vouchers for using public school funds for private, religious schools.
- Establishing the “Parents Rights” movement that is anti-LGBTQIA leading to the banning of symbols, the removal of library books, and implementation of strict dress codes that ban any LGBTQIA signs or symbols.
- Replacing school counselors with Christian chaplains.
- Mandatory prayer in classrooms, at school-wide assemblies and at co-curricular meetings such as pre-game team prayers before games.

Please, comment on any or all of these points, or on this threat to the Separation of Church and State in the K-12 public school system as seen from the perspective of Humanism.

Prompt #2. While it is clear that attempts to rapidly advance AI are challenging some of the 10 Commitments (like Environmentalism), are there likely to be continuing impacts to those Commitments if and when advanced AI is eventually realized? For example, while Humanism precludes trusting in supernatural support for solving human problems, how would this extend to trusting in a non-supernatural artificial intelligence to solving problems? We are already witnessing AI impeding human free thought, agency and creativity. With the potential of AI what will the role of the individual and society be as guided by Humanism? While clearly speculative, provide as much support for your reasoning as possible in connecting AI and Humanism. Please note that transhumanism is not the same as the philosophy of Humanism.

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Your signature below indicates agreement terms and requirements of this scholarship application. *Note: if you are under the age of 18 as of June 1, 2026, then a parent/guardian must also sign.*

I, _____ _____
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Student's Signature _____
Date

Dear parent/guardian, if the student is under 18 as of June 1, 2026, please sign below agreeing to the above terms.

I, _____ give permission for _____ _____
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