

## #testimonial

I first learned about ACTT's Essay Competition from my English Language teacher, Ms Spencer, at my school, St. Mary's College. She encouraged my classmates and me to enter the essay competition. I decided to participate because I concluded that it could be a good experience and would introduce me to a new type of writing. I also thought it would be an interesting project to involve myself in, especially since the prizes offered by ACTT for placing first, second or even third were very good.



My preparation for writing this essay was no easy task. It involved many hours of research and formulating a way to put together the essay in an impactful way. The focus of the essay was to write about improvement techniques for higher education systems in Trinidad and Tobago. The essay was particularly lengthy for me (the word limit was about 1200 words!). It took a couple of nights to write but I was able to finish and submit it just in time for the deadline.

After all the essays were submitted, my other classmates and I waited eagerly for the results of the competition. I received an email about the holding of the Prize-giving ceremony for the competition about one week later. One of my other classmates also received an invitation email but my other classmate who had also entered the competition did not receive an email. We found this strange as we thought that this was a group ceremony and that everyone who had taken part would be invited. On the day of the ceremony we went to the venue and were very surprised. My classmate and I had placed second and first place, respectively. I was pleasantly surprised to see that the awards ceremony was only for winners, so the fact that we had gotten invited meant that we had each won something. The prizes were iPads! My classmate and I were overjoyed.

This essay competition was a very unique experience and very rewarding in the end as well. I benefitted both mentally and materialistically from it. I would encourage anyone at this educational level who is fairly good at writing to enter this competition in 2017. It is a very interesting initiative and if I could win the prize, I'm sure anyone who puts their mind to it can as well.

I'd like to thank my mother for the time she spent proof-reading the essay and helping me improve it many ways. I would also like to thank my English teacher as well who looked through the essay and made sure it was acceptable.