

Category-Creative Composition

Essay

Poetry

Short Story

General Information:

Entries must be the sole work of the student - plagiarism of any kind will not be accepted.

Entries must stay between the word/line limits (see limits under each category).

All entries must be double-spaced and must be typed or written by the student - if a written entry is not legible, the composition will be disqualified.

Names must be clearly visible on each copy of the entry.

No binders, folders, or plastic covers.

To enter the Creative Composition category three copies of the composition need to be mailed prior to the actual event for judging (see Dates/Deadlines for current year's mailing date).

Helps to consider:

Judges will look for organization and persuasiveness in essays. A strong thesis clearly stated in the first paragraph and a logical and smooth follow through should support the strong thesis. Use your own ideas and avoid clichés or generalizations that don't support the thesis. Have a strong ending, and avoid typing, spelling, grammar and punctuation errors.

Judges look for poems that transmit, in words, a complete thought while conveying emotions. Choose the theme carefully, and pay attention to the form of the work. The message of the poem must be consistent and the form of the poem should work appropriately to convey the message. Read the poem out loud to check for unity of purpose and a lyric quality.

Judges look for stories that are original and imaginative, yet still believable. A short story contains a balance of the elements of narrative fiction: plot, setting, characterization, conflict, and resolution. Develop each facet of the story carefully and thoughtfully. Use effective words, not colorless, bland words. Bring the story to a logical and clear conclusion, checking carefully for errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Essay

Essay - a literary composition, analytical or interpretative, dealing with its subject from a more or less limited or personal viewpoint, a persuasive composition

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A good essay will use supportable facts, arguments, examples and illustrations that allow the reader to follow a particular line of thought toward the truth of what he is reading.

The word limits are as follows:

- 8 - 10 year old = minimum 100/maximum 1000
- 11 - 14 year old = minimum 250/maximum 1500
- 15 - 18 year old = minimum 400/maximum 2000

Judging Criteria

Originality:

- unusual topic or unique approach to a topic
- plagiarism of any kind is not permitted

Organization:

- thesis clearly stated in first paragraph
- strong closing/conclusion in last paragraph
- smooth transitions

Content:

- thesis well developed
- thesis logically supported by main points and subpoints
- effective in message
- appropriate selection of topic/material

Word Usage/Grammar:

- careful choice of quotes
- words used economically
- uses proper grammar, spelling, punctuation

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**Poetry**

**Poetry - the art or work of poets; the embodiment in appropriate language or beautiful or high thought, imagination, or emotion; the language being rhythmical, usually metrical, and adapted to arouse the feelings and imagination; verse.**

**Rules:**

There are many styles of poetry - a good poem will stay true to the form of the style.

Use a minimum of 8 lines - a maximum of 40 lines.

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To enter the Creative Composition category three copies of the composition need to be mailed prior to the actual event for judging (see Dates/Deadlines for current year's mailing date).

## **Judging Criteria**

### **Originality:**

- based on real experience; purely imaginative or fiction
- unusual topic or unique approach to a topic
- plagiarism of any kind is not permitted

### **Organization:**

- maintains structural integrity
- lyric quality

### **Content:**

- appropriate selection of topic/material
- maintaining one primary idea throughout composition

### **Word Usage/Grammar:**

- careful choice of words; precise vocabulary
- uses proper grammar, spelling, punctuation

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## **Short Story**

**Short Story - a composition presenting a sense of time and place, well-developed characters and a consistent pace moving the reader through to the resolution.**

### **Rules:**

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Entries must stay between the word/line limits (see limits under each category).

All entries must be double-spaced and must be typed or written by the student - if a written entry is not legible, the composition will be disqualified.

Names must be clearly visible on each copy of the entry. No binders, folders, or plastic covers.

To enter the Creative Composition category three copies of the composition need to be mailed prior to the actual event for judging (see Dates/Deadlines for current year's mailing date).

### **The word limits for a short story are as follows:**

- 8-10 year old - minimum 100/maximum 1000
- 11-14 year old - minimum 250/maximum 1500
- 15-18 year old - minimum 400/maximum 2000

## **Judging Criteria**

### **Originality:**

- imaginative characters
- based on real experience; purely imaginative or fiction
- plagiarism of any kind is not permitted

**Organization:**

- appropriate selection of topic
- contains balance of plot, setting, characterizations, conflict, and resolution
- avoids overemphasis of any one element to the detriment of any other

**Content:**

- development of topic and characters
- maintains one primary idea consistently throughout composition

**Word Usage/Grammar:**

- careful choice of words
- words used economically; precise vocabulary
- use of colorful, imaginative words
- uses proper grammar, spelling, punctuation