

CREATIVE WRITING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONTEST DIRECTOR

The following guidelines are to be used to expand upon, but not replace, the information in the *Constitution and Contest Rules*, Section 1046. The rules may be found in the *A+ Handbook* and on the UIL web site.

BEFORE THE MEET

Open and check your contest packet...you should receive:

1. Writing prompts
2. Contest roster
3. Instructions to the Judges and Plot Elements
4. Evaluation sheets

Room.

Secure a room of adequate size with desks or tables and chairs of the proper height for the number of contestants.

Materials and Equipment.

1. The contest packet, which contains the prompts and other materials.
2. The contest roster should be filled out with contestants' names from entry forms prior to the contest.
3. Carefully review the rules for this contest, found in the *A+ Handbook*, on the UIL web site or in the current *Constitution and Contest Rules*.
4. An accurate clock or stopwatch.
5. Pencil sharpener or extra pencils for use by contestants.
6. Three blank sheets of paper for each contestant.
7. Contestants are to provide their own pens or pencils and erasers.

Personnel.

1. *Contest Director.* A contest director is needed and may be a coach.
2. *Assistant.* A person, who may be a coach, should be appointed to assist the contest director during the contest.
3. *Judges.* An odd number of properly trained and impartial judges (exclusive of elementary coaches whose students are represented in the contest to be judged) shall be selected by the contest director.

DURING THE CONTEST

1. *Contest Room and Seating.* The contest director shall arrange for a suitable contest room that provides enough space for comfortable writing. The contestants should be seated randomly throughout the testing area.
2. *Numbering Contestants.* The contest director should call roll using the contest roster and assign a number to each contestant, instructing the contestants to write their assigned number in the top right-hand corner of their blank paper. Coaches may be requested to assist in this process. (Contestant numbers may be written on blank paper beforehand and handed to students as roll is called.)
3. *Clearing the Room.* Contestants and coaches should be informed of the time and place of the verification period. Spectators and coaches not assigned a specific duty in administering the contest should be dismissed from the contest room before the contest begins.
4. *Starting the Contest.* The contest director shall place the writing prompts face down on the desk in front of each contestant. After providing each contestant with the writing prompt sheet, the director should read aloud the captions under each picture and the instructions for writing a

story. Contestants may use the instruction and prompt page for notes or ideas, but should be instructed to write their story on the page(s) they have numbered.

5. *Time*. The contestants will be given 30 minutes to create and write their stories.

6. *Test Collection*. When the testing time has elapsed and the stop signal has been given, the contest director shall ask all contestants to place their pencils on the desks and then collect all stories and writing prompts.

GRADING THE CONTEST PAPERS

1. *Briefing the Judges*. At some convenient time before the contest begins, the director shall discuss thoroughly with the judges the criteria for evaluating the stories, making sure that they all understand those criteria and the relative importance to be accorded each.

2. *Judging Instructions*. Each judge shall be given a copy of the standards for evaluation provided on the UIL ballot. Judges should see the prompt page given to contestants. It is important that judges write comments that are positive and supportive.

3. *Rating the Compositions*. Judges shall read all of the stories submitted and, without marking on the manuscripts, shall rank them in order of their excellence: 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. They shall then discuss those stories which have been ranked first through seventh or eighth place, any judge being permitted to alter his/her ranking as a result of the discussion. Judges are to reach a consensus on the papers ranked first through sixth. There can be no ties in this contest.

ANNOUNCING THE WINNERS

1. *Verification Period*. An optional period not to exceed 15 minutes may be arranged for coaches and contestants to review their own evaluations and stories before the official results are announced.

2. *Official Results*. Once the viewing period has elapsed and all contest papers are collected by the contest director, official results shall be announced. Official results, once announced, are final.

3. *Places and Points*. Places shall be determined and recognized and points awarded through sixth place. See the *A+ Handbook*, the UIL web site or the *Constitution and Contest Rules* (Section 1408) for points to be awarded.

AFTER THE CONTEST

1. Give the tabulation results sheet, a list of the winners and their schools, and the number of contestants participating to the district director immediately after the contest. Furnish the district director with any pertinent comments or suggestions for improving the contest.

2. The district director or district meet host must return contestants' tests, answer sheets, papers, etc. to participating schools. This material CANNOT be returned until the release date established in the current *Constitution and Contest Rules*. The meet director may need your assistance in putting the names of contestants and their schools on the papers to be returned, or in separating the contest materials to be returned to each school.