

FACCS Regional Festival and State Competition Creative Writing Manual

FACCS is delighted to offer competitions for FACCS Member Elementary, Middle School, and High School and Homeschool Group students and individual homeschoolers. These competitions are designed for the purpose of allowing students to gain valuable experiences through the process of competition and evaluation. We want your young people to develop their talents and have a platform for their God-given abilities. Thank you for your help and support in achieving this goal.

Registration & Fees

- FACCS competitions are only open to students who are enrolled in a FACCS or IACCS Member School or Homeschool Group and individual homeschoolers.
- For Member Schools/Homeschool Groups, it is the school's/group's responsibility to register students for competition. Any registration received from a participant separate from the school registration will be declined.
- For individual homeschoolers, it is a parent's responsibility to register homeschoolers for competition. Any registration received from a homeschooler separate from a parent registration will be declined.
- Please follow all registration and entry deadlines. Due to scheduling and judging constraints, late registration entries may not be accepted.
- Fee structure will be determined by competition and membership status. Information regarding fees will be available at the time of registration.
- ALL fees must be paid before participants will be permitted to compete.

Competition Manuals

- Participants are to follow all of the guidelines as stated in this manual.
- There will be revisions from time to time in procedures and expectations. All schools, parent educators, coordinators, officials, and judges will be made aware of the manual version (see top of page) that will be used for each competition.
- Manuals for all FACCS competitions are available separately at www.faccs.org

Competition Rulings

- All FACCS competition coordinators, officials, and judges are aware of competition rules and regulations and are empowered to make decisions as needed.
- Any/all rulings or decisions made by coordinators, officials, or judges are final.

Location and Date of Event

After your school registers for this event, the Regional Event Coordinator for your region will send specific information regarding location to which entries should be sent and date the entries are due.

Questions

If you have any questions about the competition, please contact the individuals below for answers. Following this order will help you get the answers you need in a timely manner.

1. Your School Competition Coordinator - *call your school*
2. FACCS Event Coordinator - *call your school for the contact information*
3. FACCS Office of Program Services - *visit www.faccs.org for contact information*

Regional Creative Writing Festival

Purpose

- To provide students the opportunity to improve written communication skills.
- To provide students an opportunity to express themselves creatively.
- To provide students the opportunity to have their written work evaluated.

Description of Event

- Writing guidelines:
 - The topic/theme of each entry in all categories may be decided on between the student and a teacher at school or parent educator (for homeschoolers). Some acceptable topics include, but are not limited to: biblical themes (God, the Bible, Jesus, church, etc.), Creation and nature, America and patriotism, school-life, holidays, social and civic responsibility, character traits, positive emotions, personal challenges, athletics, etc. (Except Haiku that is required to be a topic from the realm of nature).
 - The following topics/themes are not permitted in any category: immorality or sinfulness, drugs or alcohol, physical / sexual / emotional abuse, mental illness or depression, homicide or suicide, anti/non-biblical social trends, or secular media references (music, movies, television, etc.). Inclusion of any of these topics/themes will result in disqualification from judging.
 - Entries may be written at school or at home. All entries must be the student's own work.
 - Participants may only use a dictionary, a thesaurus, and a King James Version or New King James Version of the Bible when writing their pieces.
 - All entries must be typed on plain, white paper by a school official, teacher, or parent educator EXACTLY as written by the participant with no corrections of misspellings or grammatical errors. (See Typing Procedures for more information)
 - Any entry that does not follow all of the above writing guidelines and individual category guidelines listed in this manual will have a 5 point deduction assessed for each infraction for not following the stated guidelines.
 - Schools are asked to judge each entry and submit their best two (2) entries from each grade and category to the Regional Creative Writing Festival.
- Each school/homeschool group is permitted to enter up to two (2) pieces per grade/division, per category.
- Each individual school/homeschool group, or homeschooled participant may submit up to two (2) total pieces of writing, but they must be in different categories.
- Students do not attend this contest. Their pieces are uploaded into the FACCS Portal to be evaluated by judges at the Regional level. Participants are not competing against each other but

will receive a numerical evaluation of their work based on the standards outlined on the score sheet.

Eligibility of Contestants

- This competition is designed for students in grades 1 – 12 who are enrolled in a FACCS or IACCS Member School or Homeschool Group and for individual pre-registered homeschoolers.
- Member School / Homeschool Groups
 - Each Member School/Homeschool group is permitted to enter up to two (2) pieces per grade/division, per category in the Regional Festival.
 - Participants must compete on the grade level in which they are enrolled in school.
- Homeschoolers
 - For the purpose of FACCS competitions, a homeschooler is one:
 - who is not enrolled full-time in any type of school (Christian, private, charter, public, online, or distance learning) for academic purposes,
 - whose parent or guardian has registered with the local school district home school education office, and
 - who is not enrolled in a FACCS Member School or Homeschool Group.
 - Homeschoolers are required to enroll at least 8 weeks prior to the event, follow the registration and payment procedures, conduct code, dress code, supervision requirements, and eligibility for multiple-entry guidelines for each competition.
 - The following age-based chart will be used to determine into which grade/level a homeschooler may enter in the Creative Writing Festival. An active school year runs from September 1st – July 1st.
 - 1st grade: student is six (6) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - 2nd grade: student is seven (7) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - 3rd grade: student is eight (8) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - 4th grade: student is nine (9) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - 5th grade: student is ten (10) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - 6th grade: student is eleven (11) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - 7th grade: student is twelve (12) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - 8th grade: student is thirteen (13) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - 9th grade: student is fourteen (14) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - 10th grade: student is fourteen (15) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - 11th grade: student is fourteen (16) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - 12th grade: student is fourteen (17) years old on Sept. 1 of the active school year.
 - Each individual homeschooler participant is permitted to enter one (1) piece per grade/division, with a maximum of two (2) total entries. Entries will be accepted on a first come, first served basis.
 - A maximum of two (2) TOTAL individual homeschool entries per grade/division will be permitted to enter in each Regional Festival (2 per grade, per region) and are registered on a first come, first served basis.

Awards

- Each participant whose piece is entered into the Regional Festival will receive a participation certificate that may be printed by the school.
- The following ribbons will be awarded to students based on the judges' evaluation score:
 - Blue Ribbon – Superior rating (90-100% of total possible points)
 - Red Ribbon – Excellent rating (75-89% of total possible points)
 - White Ribbon – Good rating (60-74% of total possible points)
- The entry with the highest rating score in each grade level and category which receives at least an “Excellent” rating at the Regional Festival will be sent automatically to the FACCS Creative Writing State Competition for judging.

Category Descriptions

- **Two Word Poem** (Grades 1, 2, & 3)
 - Entries may be written at school or at home. All entries must be the student's own work.
 - The simplicity of two-word poem helps children to be descriptive in their poetic writing.
 - Each line contains only two words; the first two words are actually the title.
 - My father
 - Strong arms
 - Thin face
 - Definite opinions
 - Hard worker
 - Family man
 - The poem can be any length as long as quality is maintained.
 - The poem does not rhyme.
 - The poem is not one long sentence divided into two-word units.
 - A drawn, pasted, or printed illustration may be included but is not required.
 - For specific typing requirements, see *Typing Procedures*.

▪ **Sense Poem** (Grades 1, 2, & 3)

- Entries may be written at school or at home. All entries must be the student's own work.
- Choose a **one-word topic**, think about it, and experience it with all five senses.
- Write a line that tells what color it is (only one color may appear in the first line).
- Then write other lines to describe it using just one of the senses.
- Structure:

(Topic) is _____ (*color*)

It tastes like _____ (*taste*)

It smells like _____ (*smell*)

And reminds me of _____ (*sight*)

It sounds like _____ (*sound*)

(Topic) makes me feel like _____ (*feel*)

- Each poem must follow the exact structure and wording listed above.
- Do not include the above italicized words in parentheses on the final product.
- No punctuation appears at the end of each line.
- Sample:

Joy is bright green.

It tastes like orange juice.

It smells like sunshine.

And reminds me of fireworks.

It sounds like a crackling fire.

Joy makes me feel like giggling.

- A drawn, pasted, or printed illustration may be included but is not required.
- For specific typing requirements, see *Typing Procedures*.

▪ **Short Story** (Grades 1-12)

- Entries may be written at school or at home. All entries must be the student's own work.
- The story may be true to life or purely fictional. It may deal with a spiritual or historical topic and may also include personal experience, fantasy, mystery, comedy, or any of the recommended topics listed on page 2. However it must also follow the restrictions listed on page 2 of this manual to be accepted for judging.
- For 1st and 2nd grade students, length must be between 100 and 1000 words.
- For 3rd and 4th grade students, length must be between 300 and 2000 words.
- For 5th-8th grade students, length must be between 500 and 3000 words.
- For 9th-12th grade students, length must be between 1000 and 4000 words.
- Short story entries must include a word count at the end of the piece.
- A drawn, pasted, or printed illustration may be included but is not required.
- Short Story entry may not be mounted or framed.
- For specific typing requirements, see *Typing Procedures*.

▪ **Haiku** (Grades 3, 4, & 5)

- Entries may be written at school or at home. All entries must be the student's own work.
- The Japanese have written Haiku poetry for many hundreds of years. A Haiku is very delicate, like a single violet blossom in your hand or a baby chick just born. Many times, Haiku are written with a particular season of the year in mind -- spring, summer, autumn, or winter.
- Haiku must be written about something in the realm of nature, primarily a natural phenomenon.
- Haiku are only three lines long. Each line has a specified number of syllables, which total seventeen syllables.

Line 1.....5 syllables

Line 2.....7 syllables

Line 3.....5 syllables

- None of the lines rhyme in Japanese or English.
- No punctuation is used.
- Sample:

Snowy ice fingers *(5 syllables)*

Reaching to the winter sky *(7 syllables)*

In search of springtime *(5 syllables)*

- Do not include the italicized words in parentheses in the final product.
- An illustration pertaining to nature always accompanies the Haiku. This picture may be drawn by the student, cut and pasted from a book or magazine, or printed on the page from an electronic file and neatly presented onto the final piece.
- For specific typing requirements, see *Typing Procedures*.

▪ **Poetry** (Grades 4-12)

- Entries may be written at school or at home. All entries must be the student's own work.
- The participant may use any "one" of the poetic forms to write this poem except those that fall into the following categories:
 - Haiku
 - Cinquain
 - Scripture Poem
- For 4th and 5th grade students, length must be between 75 and 200 words.
- For 6th-12th grade students, length must be between 150 and 400 words.
- The main judging criteria will be the content, originality and communication of the piece.
- Mechanics, such as spelling, punctuation, paragraph structure, poetic form, neatness, etc., are secondary criteria.
- Poetry entries must include a word count at the end of the piece.
- Illustrations may not be included with this poem.
- For specific typing requirements, see *Typing Procedures*.

▪ **Essay** (Grades 4-12)

- Entries may be written at school or at home. All entries must be the student's own work.
- The essay must be written in first or third person (not second person).
- The participant should first write a "rough draft" copy and make corrections himself. Then he may proceed to write a final copy.
- For 4th and 5th grade students, length must be between 100 and 1500 words.
- For 6th-8th grade students, length must be between 250 and 2000 words.
- For 9th-12th grade students, length must be between 500 and 3000 words.
- The title and body of the essay should appear on the first page. A cover or title page is not permitted.
- For specific typing requirements, see *Typing Procedures*.
- If the participant uses more than one piece of paper, each additional page should have the page number at the top right corner.
- Essay entries must include a word count at the end of the piece.
- The main judging criteria will be the content, originality and communication of the piece.
- Mechanics, such as spelling, punctuation, paragraph structure, poetic form, neatness, etc., are secondary criteria.
- Illustrations may not be included with this essay.

▪ **Cinquain** (Grades 6, 7, & 8)

- Entries may be written at school or at home. All entries must be the student's own work.
- The Cinquain is an American syllabic verse based on Japanese Haiku and Tanka. It has a required number of syllables per line.
- Cinquains are only five lines long. Each line has a specified number of syllables, which total twenty-two syllables. None of the lines rhyme.

Line 1.....2 syllables

Line 2.....4 syllables

Line 3.....6 syllables

Line 4.....8 syllables

Line 5.....2 syllables

- **Sample:** (Retrieved from <http://www.cinquain.org/cinquain.html>)
 - Listen... (2 syllables)
 - With faint dry sound, (4 syllables)
 - Like steps of passing ghosts, (6 syllables)
 - The leaves, frost-crisp'd, break from the trees (8 syllables)
 - And fall. (2 syllables)
- Do not include the italicized words in parentheses in the final product.
- For specific typing requirements, see *Typing Procedures*.

▪ **Scripture Poem** (Grades 6-12)

- Entries may be written at school or at home. All entries must be the student's own work.
- A Scripture Poem is written about the truth presented in one particular verse of Scripture, not a passage.
- The beginning letter of each line of the poem must be the same as that of the corresponding letters from the name of the book of the Bible that is listed vertically.
- In the number section of the reference, syllables must match. If the reference begins with a I, II, or III (ex. I Timothy or III John) , that line may be left empty or the student may use the corresponding number of syllables.
- The verse must be typed at the bottom of the page (KJV or NKJV ONLY)
- Sample: *The reference is typed vertically:*

R	Raging conflict within us	
O	only leads to death.	
M	Mercy abounding, the Messiah	
A	atones.	
N	New hope for	
S	sinner.	
6:	God's unspeakable gift	(6 syllables)
2	New life	(2 syllables)
3	Eternal	(3 syllables)

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

- Do not include above italicized words in parentheses in final product.
- A drawn, pasted, or printed illustration may be included but is not required.
- For specific typing requirements, see *Typing Procedures*.

Procedures

- **Typing Procedures** - *applicable to ALL entries in ALL categories and grades*
 - Entries may be written at school or at home. All entries must be the student's own work.
 - Entries may be judged on the school level without being typed.
 - Pieces selected to be submitted to FACCS MUST be typed by a school official, teacher, or parent educator and presented for judging.
 - No grammatical or spelling errors may be corrected by the typist. If a word processing program is being used, automatic grammar and spelling correction should be turned off before re-typing the participant's entry.
 - Entries must follow these formatting rules:
 - typed in standard, white (non-lined), 8.5" x 11" format in portrait orientation
 - ~~no lines or colored paper may be used~~
 - minimum of a one (1) inch margin on all four sides
 - colored text may be used, but colors should not vary excessively
 - approved fonts:
 - Arial
 - Tahoma
 - Verdana
 - Times New Roman
 - Courier New
 - font sizes:
 - Essay and Short Story - 12 point font size (no smaller or larger)
 - All other categories - font size may vary for effect
 - do not use bold or italics
 - Essay and Short Story entries must be justified left
 - all other categories may be justified center, but is not required
 - line spacing must be double-spaced for Essay and Short Story
 - line spacing may vary for all other categories
 - All entries must include the author's first and last name and grade level at the end of each piece.
 - Essay, Poetry, and Short Story entries must also include a word count at the end of the piece. A word count is not required for Haiku, Two-Word Poems, Cinquain, Scripture Poems, and Sense Poems.
 - If time permits, entries that do not follow ALL of the guidelines stated in this manual will be returned to the school or parent educator for correction. If time does not permit entries to be returned for correction, the entry will be judged and rated; however, there will be a 5 point deduction assessed for each infraction for not following the stated guidelines.

FACCS Creative Writing State Competition

Description of Event

- The FACCS Creative Writing State Competition is for participants who were rated the highest in their grade and category in the FACCS Regional Creative Writing Festival.
- The highest rated entry that followed all guidelines properly will be sent automatically to the State competition by the Regional Event Coordinator.
- All rules, guidelines, and procedures from the Regional Festival will be followed in the FACCS Creative Writing State Competition.

Eligibility of Contestants

- The entry with the highest rating score in each grade level and category which receives at least a “Excellent” rating at the Regional Creative Writing Festival will automatically be sent to the FACCS Creative Writing State Competition for judging.

Awards

- All participants will receive a participation certificate that may be printed by the school.
- Ribbons will be awarded to those who place first, second, and third in each grade and category.
- All winning entries will be published on the FACCS web site.



Creative Writing Short Story Judging Sheet

Student Name _____ Grade _____

School Name and Address _____

Title of Piece _____ Word Count _____

- 1. Originality and Communication:**
- a. Does the piece have a creative approach to a topic? (15 points) _____
 - b. Do vocabulary and word usage enhance the piece? (10 points) _____
 - c. Is the reader left with a "finished" feeling? (10 points) _____
- Possible: 35 points Total: _____

Comments:

- 2. Style:**
- a. Is the plot/theme introduced and developed effectively throughout the story? (20 points) _____
 - b. Is there logical paragraphing? (10 points) _____
 - c. Is the point of view consistent throughout? (5 points) _____
- Possible: 35 points Total: _____

Comments:

- 3. Writing Mechanics:**
- a. Are the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation correct? (15 points) _____
 - b. Is the sentence structure and grammatical usage accurate? (15 points) _____
- Possible: 30 points Total: _____

Comments:

Rule Infractions: _____ (-5 points each) _____

Total Points Scored (100 possible) _____

Rating: Superior (90-100) Excellent (75-89) Good (60-74)

Judge's Signature: _____



Creative Writing Specific Poetry Judging Sheet

Two-Word Poem *Sense Poem* *Haiku* *Scripture Poem* *Cinquain*
Check the appropriate category

Student Name _____ Grade _____

School Name and Address _____

Title of Piece _____ Word Count _____

1. Originality and Communication:

- | | | | |
|----|----------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|
| a. | Does the poem have a creative approach to a topic? | (10 points) | _____ |
| b. | Are the themes of the poem structured effectively? | (10 points) | _____ |
| c. | Rate the overall impact of this piece. | (20 points) | _____ |

Possible: 40 points Total: _____

Comments:

2. Style:

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|
| a. | Is the piece true to the rules that govern this particular style of writing? | (20 points) | _____ |
| b. | Are the elements unique to this style of writing used in an effective manner? | (20 points) | _____ |

Possible: 40 points Total: _____

Comments:

3. Writing Mechanics:

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|
| a. | Are the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation correct? | (10 points) | _____ |
| b. | Is word choice used effectively? | (5 points) | _____ |
| c. | Is the piece neat? | (5 points) | _____ |

Possible: 20 points Total: _____

Comments:

Rule Infractions: _____ (-5 points each) _____

Total Points Scored (100 possible) _____

Rating: Superior (90-100) Excellent (75-89) Good (60-74)

Judge's Signature: _____



Creative Writing Elementary and Middle School Poetry Judging Sheet

Elementary Poetry Middle School Poetry
Check the appropriate category

Student Name _____ Grade _____

School Name and Address _____

Title of Piece _____ Word Count _____

1. Originality and Communication:

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|
| a. | Does the poem have a creative approach to a topic? | (20 points) | _____ |
| b. | Does the versification offer coherence with the theme? | (20 points) | _____ |
| c. | Is the reader left with a "finished" feeling? | (5 points) | _____ |
| d. | Level of work | (10 points) | _____ |

Possible: 55 points Total: _____

Comments:

2. Poetry Mechanics:

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------|
| a. | If the poem is in rhyme, is the rhyme structure correct? If the poem is not in rhyme, are poetic devices appropriately used? | (5 points) | _____ |
| b. | Is the meter consistent throughout and appropriate for the subject/mood? If there is no meter, does the poem flow? | (5 points) | _____ |
| c. | Does the poet have a feeling for sound devices other than rhythm and rhyme (such as alliteration, assonance, consonance, refrain, etc.)? | (5 points) | _____ |
| d. | Does the poet use imagery (including figures of speech), and is it used effectively? | (5 points) | _____ |
| e. | Is the versification structure correct? | (5 points) | _____ |

Possible: 25 points Total: _____

Comments:

3. Writing Mechanics:

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|
| a. | Are the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation correct? | (10 points) | _____ |
| b. | Is the poem consistent in tense? | (5 points) | _____ |
| c. | Is the point of view consistent throughout? | (5 points) | _____ |

Possible: 20 points Total: _____

Comments:

Rule Infractions: _____ (-5 points each) _____

Total Points Scored (100 possible) _____

Rating: Superior (90-100) Excellent (75-89) Good (60-74)

Judge's Signature: _____



Creative Writing Essay Judging Sheet

Elementary Essay Middle School Essay
Check the appropriate category

Student Name _____ Grade _____

School Name and Address _____

Title of Piece _____ Word Count _____

1. Originality and Communication:

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|
| a. | Does the essay have a creative approach to a topic? | (30 points) | _____ |
| b. | Do vocabulary and word usage enhance the piece? | (5 points) | _____ |
| c. | Is the reader left with a "finished" feeling? | (5 points) | _____ |

Possible: 40 points Total: _____

Comments:

2. Content:

- | | | | |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|
| a. | Is there effective paragraphing, including strong introduction/conclusion? | (10 points) | _____ |
| b. | Is the main idea (thesis) developed effectively throughout the essay? | (15 points) | _____ |
| c. | Is the point of view consistent throughout the essay? | (5 points) | _____ |

Possible: 30 points Total: _____

Comments:

3. Writing Mechanics:

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------|
| a. | Are the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation correct? | (15 points) | _____ |
| b. | Is paragraphing appropriate and correct? | (5 points) | _____ |
| c. | Is sentence structure correct? | (5 points) | _____ |
| d. | Is the essay consistent in tense? | (5 points) | _____ |

Possible: 30 points Total: _____

Comments:

Rule Infractions: _____ (-5 points each) _____

Total Points Scored (100 possible) _____

Rating: Superior (90-100) Excellent (75-89) Good (60-74)

Judge's Signature: _____