

41st Annual AACS Creative Writing Contest

2023–2024 Topics

Elementary

- Poetry—Write a poem about something that is your favorite (examples: your favorite pet, food, holiday, activity).
- Short Story—Write a story in which a pet changes in an unusual way (examples: small pet becomes huge, slow pet becomes fast, tame pet becomes wild).

Junior High

- Poetry—Write a poem about something you use every day (examples: toothbrush, spoon, cell phone, chair).
- Short Story—Write a story that involves changed plans.

Rules

1. Entries shall meet the specific length requirements listed below:

ELEMENTARY LEVEL (GRADES 4–6)

Poetry: maximum 200 words

Short Story: maximum 750 words

JUNIOR HIGH LEVEL (GRADES 7–8)

Poetry: maximum 300 words

Short Story: maximum 1000 words

2. A student may enter only one category—either short story or poetry.
3. Students should be told the topics at least one week prior to writing so they have time to think through what they wish to communicate.
4. Students must submit a typed (or handwritten) entry that has been written in the school and under school supervision, without adult or student assistance. After writing a draft and making corrections, the student should type or write a clean copy to submit for judging. **Entries to state and national competition must be free of written comments and corrections.**
5. No reference materials or notes except a King James Bible and a dictionary shall be permitted at the time of writing. Preparation may be done outside of class, but no notes may be used during the writing period. The time limit for the writing is two hours.
6. If entries are typed, final copy must be printed on one side of the paper. (If hand-written, students must use standard notebook paper. The final copy must be written in pencil or black ink using only one side of the paper.) Entries may be photocopied for school judging and will be photocopied for state and national judging. Leave a one-inch margin on all sides of the paper.
7. The following information must be listed at the top of the first page of the student's entry: Student's name and grade; school name, city, and state; category entered; title; **and number of words.**
 - A "fancy" cover page or title page is not allowed.
 - If the student uses more than one piece of paper, each additional paper should have the following information: page #, student's name, and name of school.
 - **Do not** staple the pages together. Stapling tears out the corners of the photocopies.
8. Review the judging sheets for judging criteria. The schools should have received copies of each judging sheet. If not, please contact your state office. Before submitting the entry, on the judging sheet fill in the level, name, school, city, state, grade, **title, number of words, and signed statement of originality.** Student will be penalized if the judging sheet is not correctly completed, including title, number of words, and signed statement of originality.
9. Original student entries must be submitted to the state association by **December 8, 2023.** (This date may vary by state. Please contact your state office for exact deadline for your state.) Each association will select one winner in each category on each level. These four winners will be sent to AACS for the national judging; these entries should be received by the National Office by **January 25, 2024.** National winners will be announced in April 2024.

Awards

State winners will be presented medals. National winners will be awarded plaques. All awards will be provided by AACS.