

Judges' Guidance – Letters – Non-Research

For all entries: If you are not familiar with this type of art/science, can the entrant explain clearly the information you seek, based on their knowledge and research, in a verbal format?

Documentation:

- Did documentation include:
 - Time period & cultural origins of the pre 1600 model(s);
 - (for metrical pieces) a discussion of the characteristics & limitations of the form/style novel entered (including structure, language, meter and rhyme schemes, use of literary devices, themes, characterizations, subject matter, symbolism, etc.; and, any applicable contemporary social context as appropriate);
 - (for non-metrical writing) a discussion of characteristics, style, intended audience, purpose of the writing, subject matter of the entry and limitations of the type of work entered (including content, structure, language & vocabulary, use of literary elements, themes, characterizations, subject matter, symbolism, etc.)?
- Did the entrant provide appropriate pre-1600 examples?
- Did the entrant mention (and justify) any deviation from the norms &/or conventions of the model(s)?
- If in a foreign language, was a modern English translation provided?
- Were citations &/or references included?
- Was the documentation well-organized, structured, and legible?

Complexity:

- How difficult was the scope (i.e., size of work with respect to complexity) of the entry?
- For metrical pieces, was the type/ form/style attempted complex in nature (for metrical writing: structure, meter, rhyme scheme, etc.)?
- For non-metrical writing, was the type/form/style attempted complex in structure, intricacy of subject matter or plot, etc.?
- To what degree did the type/form/style of the entry contain unusual &/or complex literary elements (symbolism, allusion, allegory, extended metaphor, etc.)?
- Were correct linguistic elements (grammar, vocabulary, alliteration, double entendre, idioms, etc.) difficult to re-create?
- Did the entrant use a foreign or less-commonly known [to the entrant] language or language variation (e.g., middle French, Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Middle English)?
- For non-metrical writing, how much added research was needed to obtain correct &/or authenticate content?
- Were additional elements (drawings, diagrams, illustrations, examples, etc.) required for audience interest or clarity?

Creativity:

- To what degree did the entrant incorporate new subject matter, themes, &/or nuances in a manner consistent with the stated time period & cultural origin of the work?
- Was the choice of story or subject matter presented fairly common or different?

- Did the entrant present characterizations and ideas encountered within a modern setting in a pre-1600 century fashion by means of the entry?
- Overall, did the entrant produce an original work that would have been acceptable within a pre-1600 context?

Authenticity:

- To what degree did the entrant use a form/style consistent with their stated time period and cultural origins?
- How closely did any linguistic &/or literary elements, language, themes, subject matter, symbolism, &/or sentiments reflect the conventions of the stated pre-1600 time frame and cultural origins?
- Overall, to what degree could the entry be mistaken for a fine pre-1600 work?

Aesthetic qualities:

- Did the entry flow well and make sense?
- Were appropriate writing styles used to reflect the subject matter chosen?
- Did the entry display good clarity, logic, and balance?
- Was the subject matter or plot/story line presented in a flowing and/or clear, easy-to-understand manner?
- Did the entrant's use of language, theme, rhythm, rhyme, design &/or layout, and any other appropriate literary &/or linguistic elements, result in a well-written piece?
- Overall was the work appealing, entertaining (if appropriate), compelling, and well-presented?
- Did it perform the purpose for which it was written and would it hold the interest of the intended audience?

Workmanship:

- For metrical writing, how well did the entry adhere to the pre 1600 form/style conventions of the model(s) with respect to overall structure, meter, rhyme scheme, design &/or layout, etc.)?
- For non-metrical writing, how well did the entry adhere to the pre 1600 form/style conventions of the model(s) with respect to type of work, overall structure, purpose, flow, depth, layout &/or design, etc.)?
- How well did the entrant incorporate appropriate literary (symbolism, allusion, allegory, extended metaphor, etc.) and linguistic (language, and grammar, vocabulary, alliteration, double entendre, idioms etc.) elements into the work?
- Was any imagery used appropriate, and did this enhance the work &/or make the work more interesting, understandable, or usable?
- If a play, how appropriately did the entrant handle characterization?
- If fiction, how appropriately did the entrant handle plot development &/or characterization?
- If a story, was there good development of subject, plot, character, dialogue, etc., reaching a reasonable conclusion?
- If included, were references/citations, notes, &/or appendices clear and useful to the intended audience?
- Overall, how well did the entrant handle the pre-1600 design challenges encountered while creating this entry?