Judges' Guidance – Letters – 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 - Take this into some consideration for scoring, but please suggest ways they might include that information in a written form for future competitions for a better score in the future. Also consider if what they document is actually the format used in their written piece.
- Was there a cover sheet or abstract giving a brief general description of the subject and purpose of the paper?
- Did the entrant cite examples throughout the work (whether parenthetical or footnotes or side notes), list sources, include a bibliography?
- If primary sources were available, were they relied upon?
- Were examples such as photos, excerpts, diagrams that aid in understanding the research included?
- Was the documentation organized, legible, and well- structured?

Complexity:

- What was the complexity of the subject in conjunction to the length?
- What was the difficulty of logical presentation of the subject in length allowed for the paper?
- Did the documentation clearly show what research was done?
- Was the subject a common subject (i.e., is material readily available) or did entrant have to do a lot of research to find the information?
- What was the skill level of the entrant?
    - Was this their first attempt or their twentieth?
        - If it was their first and they were struggling, provide suggestions to help them with future documentation as it seems to be one of the hardest skills to learn.

Creativity:

- Was this original research that supports a unique stated thesis or was this a scholarly look at existing research?
- Did the entrant reach new conclusions from the existing research that have not previously been explored?

Authenticity:

- Did it give the appearance and impression of period work?
- Was the research sound based on pre-1600 sources and scholarly works?

Aesthetic qualities:

- Was it clear and easy to read?
- Could you understand what the author was saying and follow his/her train of thought on how s/he produced or wrote this project?
- Was the writing style smooth and logical?

- Was the progress of information logical?
- Was it readable, informative, and stimulating?
- Was it clear what the entrant attempted to do in this project?

Workmanship:

- Were basic technical writing skills demonstrated?
- Did the entrant take the time to proofread the piece for grammatical and punctuation errors?
- Were the rules of grammar and spelling observed?
- Were necessary drawings or pictures included and are they clear?
- If period language was used, did documentation support that?
- Did the documentation proceed in a logical and useable order?
- Was the subject adequately covered in the length allowed?
- Was the subject clearly discussed?
- Overall, was it well-organized and easy to read?