

Judging Techniques for Reflections

These are the judging methods we use at the Texas PTA. We use these methods because they are quick and fair. We use one method for Visual Arts and Photography and a different method for Literature, Music Composition, Film and Dance. Your top 20% of entries will be considered your "Award of Excellence" and will advance to the next level of judging. See "Award Levels" on page 3 for details.

Visual Arts and Photography

- Recruit 3 judges for each arts area.
- Hide the personal information part of the entry form on each entry. (Either fold the entry form or tape a piece of paper over it. Don't cover the artist's statement.
- Spread all the entries out in the judging area so that each entry is easy to see.
- Explain to the judges the three judging criteria (interpretation of theme, creativity, artistic merit). Emphasize that interpretation of theme is the **most** important criterion. (We even have a big poster with the theme on it in the room)
- Give judges *Post-It* flags in a different color for each judge.
- Tell the judges to put a flag on every piece that they think answers all the criteria. They may read the artist's statement if they wish.
- When all the judges have finished, gather up all of the entries that have three different colored flags on them. If there are more of these than you are allowed to advance, then ask the judges to narrow down their choices to the allowable numbers. These are the Awards of Excellence.
- The Awards of Merit are all the entries that have only 2 flags (or were picked from the three flag category not to advance).
- The Honorable Mentions are the entries with one flag on them.
- The entries with no flags should receive the Participation recognition.

Literature, Music Composition, Film/Video, and Dance Choreography

- Recruit 3 judges for each arts area.

Technique #1

- Make copies of each entry for each judge.
- Identify each entry by a number or other piece of identification. (If your judges know none of the students who have entered, you may even use their names.)
- Give the judges the packet of entries and a judging form for each entry.
- Explain that the interpretation of theme section is the most important criterion.
- Judges may read or listen to the entries at home.
- Allow the judges plenty of time to read/listen to the entries (about two weeks)
- The judges fill out the forms and total the score on each form.

- Get the forms back from the judges. Judges keep the entries in case they are needed later to decide an award level.

Technique #2

- Gather the judges all in one place
- Give each judge a pile of judging forms
- Allow judges to watch, read, or listen o the entries all at the same time
- Judges may discuss entries as they hear/watch/read the entries
- Each judge will fill out a judging form for each entry
- Collect the entry forms after judges have finished
- With this judging style, judges may pick their Award winners without the forms if they wish

Then you will:

- Add up the score for each entry
- See “Awards Levels” for suggestions about how to assign awards.
- If there are questions or ties, you may ask to judges to read, watch or listen again to certain entries to make a decision as to the one they prefer.
- Make sure that everyone knows that the decision of the judges is final.
- Securely dispose of judging forms (shred?)

Reflections Program Judging Form

Entry Identification _____

Circle one number in each section

Interpretation of Reflections Theme

1 2 3 4 5

Creativity

1 2 3 4 5

Artistic Merit

1 2 3 4 5

Total score = (Ax2) + B + C

Reflections Program Award Levels

Reflections is a recognition program, not a competition, and emphasis should be put on participating, not “winning.” Because of this, the Texas PTA does not endorse the practice of using 1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place, etc. We use a version of the National PTA recognition system and request all Locals, Councils and Areas use it. This system does not “rank,” but allows the students to submit their work and have it judged on its quality.

The award levels are:

Award of Excellence – these entries are excellent interpretations of the recognitions theme, exceptionally creative and executed extremely well. These are the entries chosen to be sent to the next judging level. If your committee is using the suggested guidelines, these will be the top 20% of the entries for advancement.

Award of Merit – these entries are very good interpretations of the Reflections theme, very creative and executed very well.

Honorable Mention – these entries interpret the theme, are creative and executed nicely.

Participation Award – every student’s entries should be recognized for having thought about the theme and trying their best to create an entry that interprets that particular theme.