



National PTA Reflections Literature



LITERATURE is the art of writing. The **author** (student submitting entry) is a person who expresses their own thoughts and ideas through the use of words. Authors submit a single literary work, handwritten or typed, using grade-appropriate grammar, punctuation and spelling.

2026-2027 theme – What My Culture Means to Me

Consider the following literary styles to portray your original work of fiction or nonfiction: Prose, poetry, drama (screen play and play script), reflective essay, narrative, or short story. Collections of literary work are not accepted (poems, short stories).

Originality: Only new pieces of artwork inspired by the theme may be submitted. Each entry must be the work of one student only. Use of generative elements (algorithmic techniques, artificial intelligence) is prohibited.

Copyright: Use of copyrighted material is prohibited. Plagiarized entries will be disqualified.

Presentation: Entry may be handwritten or typed. Writing must not exceed 2,000 words.

Acceptable Use of Type, Dictation and Translation and Illustration

- Be typed by another person as long as the original work or a copy of the original work is attached.
- Be dictated to another person and printed or typed in exact words as spoken by the student if the student is unable.
- Students for whom English is not their first language may submit literature entries in their own language. **An interpretive translation in English must accompany the entry.**
- Translators should make every attempt to retain the same level of language and accuracy that is reflected in the student's original work.
- Illustrated entries, including books, drawn by the author are acceptable; however, only literary content is judged.

Judging: Entries will be judged on mastery of the medium (worth 8 points), artistic merit (worth 12 points), and interpretation of the theme (worth 20 points). Mastery of the medium in the context of the national Reflections Program pertains to the level of skill the student displays, whether it's a formal writing technique or a simple approach. However, a well-developed concept is more important than technique. Entries will be judged primarily on how well the student uses his or her artistic vision to portray the theme. **Consider plot and characterization, setting and imagery, style, symbolism, etc. to show a clear relation to the theme.**

Many times, the artist statement will make a huge difference during judging because this is where the artist can explain in their own words, their thoughts and feelings for their piece. An explanation of the storyline and/or the significance of the literature style might be a useful addition to the statement. Spoken word audio recordings and illustrated entries including books with pictures drawn by the student author are acceptable; however, only literary content is judged.

Packaging:

- Print Format: The entry can be handwritten or typed on any type of paper not exceeding 8.5 X 11 (one sided only). Include a page number, the student's name on the back of each page. Do not mount entries.
- Include the original literature piece in a **manila file folder**.
- Staple the Student Entry Form to the back of the folder.
- If submitting digitally, label literature file and PDF of Student Entry Form with Arts Category & First & Last Name.

Submission Requirements:

- The student or at least one person from their primary household must be a current member of the Local PTA/PTSA where the student is participating. Each Local PTA/PTSA may determine a date by which the member must join.

All participants must also follow Official Rules for Participation.