



# National PTA Reflections

## Visual Arts



**VISUAL ARTS** include many art forms that are visual in nature. The **artist** (student submitting entry) is a person who captures their own thoughts and ideas to create a visual piece of art.

### 2026-2027 theme – What My Culture Means to Me

**Accepted forms of visual art include:** 2D original print, drawing, painting, collage (cut and pasted materials such as clippings and photos), metal etching or punch work, fiber work or computer-generated artwork. Glued items should be well adhered to avoid losing integrity during shipping and handling. \*Note these guidelines are specific to Texas PTA. While other states have decided to incorporate additional 3D art mediums, Texas PTA has made the decision to accept only 2D Visual Arts entries.

**Originality:** Only new pieces of artwork inspired by the theme may be submitted. Reproductions or enlargements of another artwork are not accepted. Each entry must be the original work of one student only. Digital technology and/or software can be used to develop, enhance and/or present an entry but may not provide the primary design and/or concept. Entrants must provide a brief description of the tools and method used in the creation process. Use of generative elements (e.g., algorithmic techniques, artificial intelligence) is prohibited. Reproductions or enlargements of other artwork are not accepted.

**Copyright:** Plagiarized entries will be disqualified. Use of copyrighted material, including any copyrighted cartoon characters or likeness thereof, is not acceptable in any visual arts submission, with the following exceptions:

- Entries may include public places, well-known products, trademarks or certain other copyrighted material as long as that copyrighted material is incidental to the subject matter of the piece and/or is a smaller element of a whole. The resulting work cannot try to establish an association between the student and the trademark/business/material or influence the purchase/non-purchase of the trademarked good.
- Collages may include portions of existing copyrighted works, such as photographs, magazine clippings, internet images and type cut out of a newspaper, as long as those portions of copyrighted works are used to create a completely new and different work of art.

**Presentation:** Frames with glass and artwork containing loose materials are not accepted. Matting is accepted.

- Dimensions must not exceed 24x30 inches, including matting.
- Paper entries should be mounted on sturdy material.
- Include one high resolution digital image of artwork with your submission.

#### Packaging:

- Submitting Physical Entry: Label back of artwork with your Arts Category, Grade Division, Last & First Name
- Protecting the work with butcher paper is highly recommended. Tape the paper to the back/edge of the artwork on one side and fold the butcher paper over the front of the artwork to protect it during travel.
- Lamination is discouraged because it can permanently damage the surface of the artwork.
- Place the copy of the Student Entry Form in a sheet protector and secure it with masking tape to the back of the artwork so that it is still accessible for photocopying. Do not tape over the opening of the sheet protector.
- If submitting digitally, label image file and PDF of Student Entry Form with Arts Category & First & Last Name.

**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 demonstrates in the basic principles/ techniques of the arts area, whether with formal 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. 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 art form might also be a useful addition to the statement. Consider art form, use of color, texture, shape, proportion etc. to show a clear relation to the theme.

#### 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.

#### Return of Artwork:

- Entries that win at local levels will be forwarded to the next level of judging. If an entry is forwarded to the state level, it will not be returned until the end of the school year. Seniors should preserve a copy of their artwork to include in their portfolio. Final judging of winning entries occurs at the national level where all entries are received in an electronic format.

***All participants must also follow Official Rules for Participation.***