

• **ENTRIES.** As many as THREE students from EACH GRADE LEVEL (grades 1 and 2) OR ages 6 and 7 by Sept. 1 of the current school year, if in an ungraded school, may be entered in the Creative Writing District Contest from each school. Each grade level is judged separately in contest, but only one student from each grade level advances to State.

• **ADVANCING TO STATE.** 4 students from each grade level must compete for the top winner from each grade level to advance to State. (See page 8 for complete rules.)

• **NATURE OF THE CONTEST.** Contestants are given a writing prompt page with five captioned pictures. The students select from the captioned images and create an original story based on their selections. The stories must talk about at least one of the pictured items, but it is not required that all items on the prompt page be included. **Contestants should make up titles for their stories, but not writing a title is not a cause for disqualification.** A sample prompt is provided on the page that follows these instructions in the *PSIA Academic Handbook*.

• **WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CONTEST.** The contest director will announce the time and place that contestants and one adult should report for viewing

of the stories and evaluations before awards are presented. Contestants are then given five or six sheets of lined contest writing paper. (The paper master sheet is included in the District Director materials, to be reproduced as needed.) **Contestants MUST provide their own pencils.** The director and assistant(s) will assist students in writing their grade levels and student ID numbers on every page of their writing in the spaces provided. The contest director will then distribute prompts. The director will read aloud the titles of each of the prompts and the instructions on the prompt page to contestants. No other discussion about the prompts will be permitted. Contestants have 30 minutes to write their stories. The director may give a 10-minute warning and a 5-minute warning before time is expired and all papers are collected.



• **PREPARATION FOR CONTEST.** Read and follow all instructions provided in the “Information Pertaining to All Contests” section of the *PSIA Academic Handbook*. Observe and practice with students all rules and procedures delineated in the “Instructions to the Contestant” and in the “Checklist for Contest Directors” and the “Checklist for Graders.” Preparation for the Creative Writing Contest may include review of the material in the current edition of the *Ready Writing and Creative Writing Handbook*, in which sample prompts and state winning stories are published. In addition, this resource provides information about appropriate, constructive comments to write to students on their evaluation forms. Some of these include:

Very creative. Excellent use of dialogue.  
Makes me smile. You might make your story longer by adding more detail about...

Any writing program that is used in the classroom will help prepare students for Creative Writing. Training students to

effectively use the writing time will be helpful. For example, they may want to plan a beginning, middle, and end for their stories before they begin to write. The contest has no minimum word length, and the emphasis in evaluation will be on creativity and interest. A sample of the creative writing individual evaluation sheet is included in this handbook.

• **RATING THE COMPOSITIONS.** Judges of this contest will be judging on the basis of Interest and Creativity (60%); Organization (30%); and Correctness of Style (10%). Without marking on the papers, a panel of **3 judges** should attach the evaluation sheet to the front of the contestant’s story and each make comments while taking turns reading it. It is recommended that a skimming and elimination process be used first if more than 16 stories are to be evaluated. ALL stories must receive an evaluation. The top 10 stories should be ranked and rankings indicated on the Contest Roster. Judges are to reach a consensus on the papers ranked first through tenth. There can be no ties in this contest.