

Imagining the Holocaust Writing Contest
Middle and High School Students
Sponsored by the Department of English
Jacksonville State University

CATEGORIES

Commemorative Poetry

Poetry to deepen our collective understanding of the past. As stated by Poet Jane Clarke in her comments on a commissioned poem for a film in the Strokestown poetry festival, “The stories of individual people in our history, held in their letters, diaries, and memoirs as well as in public documents, can capture the imagination and create an emotional response in both the writer and the reader. Commemorative poems help us to unpack historic events and to understand the humanity of the people involved.” Clarke further describes the role of the poet as an outsider, “a sensitive, observant, compassionate outsider ... drawing on their emotional, intellectual, and imaginative response to archival material to write poetry of and out of these lives.”

Creative Nonfiction

A genre of writing that uses elements of creative writing to present factual, true stories about real people and events in a vivid way. Literary techniques that are usually reserved for writing fiction can be used in creative nonfiction, such as the inclusion of dialogue, description of the setting, narration, imagery, and other literary elements. Creative nonfiction can be applied to many nonfiction genres, including, but not limited to, biography, memoir, literary journalism, travel writing, or personal essay.

Multimodal Composition

Writing that uses text, as traditional writing requires, in combination with other modes of communication, including digital and non-digital media. Examples of digital multimodal compositions include, but are not limited to, web pages, photo and video essays, memes, and podcasts. Examples of non-digital multimodal compositions include, but are not limited to, posters, collages, and comic books.

AWARDS

	Commemorative Poetry Prizes	Creative Nonfiction Prizes	Multimodal Composition Prizes
First Place Winner*	\$150	\$150	\$150
Second Place Winner	\$100	\$100	\$100
Third Place Winner	\$50	\$50	\$50
Classroom Grant*	\$150	\$150	\$150

*In addition to the prizes awarded to individual students in each category, the faculty sponsor of each 1st place winner will receive a \$150 Classroom Grant, which must be used in his or her classroom for materials, supplies, activities, or events to teach the Holocaust to students.

INSPIRATION for WRITING

Students may seek inspiration for their own original writing from books about the Holocaust, such as

- *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank
- *The Book Thief* by Marcus Zusak
- *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* by John Boyne
- *Mapping the Bones* by Jane Yolen
- *The Librarian of Auschwitz* by Antonio Iturbe
- And many others

Students may also seek inspiration for their own original writing from viewing one of the many archived video recordings of Holocaust survivors telling their stories or viewing archived photos, artwork, or exhibits:

- Alabama (Birmingham) Holocaust Education Center (AHEC/BHEC): [Homepage - Alabama Holocaust Education Center \(ahecinfo.org\)](http://ahecinfo.org)
- The 1939 Society: <https://www.the1939society.org/>
- USC Shoah Foundation: <https://www.youtube.com/user/USCShoahFoundation>
- Yad Vashem, The World Holocaust Remembrance Center: <https://www.yadvashem.org/holocaust/video-testimonies.html>
- Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin: <http://holocaustcentermilwaukee.org/video-archive/>
- United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: <https://collections.ushmm.org/search/?f%5B%5D=audiovisual%5D%5B%5D=testimony>
- Yale University Library Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies: <http://fortunoff.library.yale.edu/archive/search/>
- Florida Holocaust Museum: <https://www.flholocaustmuseum.org/explore-2/testimonies/>

GUIDELINES

General:

- Available to middle and high school students (Grades 6-8 & 9-12)
- One entry per student per category. Students may enter in more than one category.
- Deadline for receipt of entries: February 20 each year

Commemorative Poetry:

- Must be typed
- Must deal with the Holocaust of World War II
- One to three poems are considered one entry, one poem per page
- No restrictions with respect to form

Creative Nonfiction:

- Must be typed
- Must deal with the Holocaust of World War II
- Maximum: 750 words, double-spaced

Multimodal Composition:

- Must deal with the Holocaust of World War II
- Submit digital files for digital multimodal compositions; submit nondigital multimodal compositions through files or high-quality images.
- Limit videos to 5 minutes maximum; upload video to You Tube and include link as submission

HOW TO ENTER

- Submit entry form at the link provided at <https://www.jsu.edu/english/holocaust/>
- Email contest entry as an attachment to imagining@jsu.edu
- DO NOT include name on the contest entry
- Include the following on the subject line of the email: grade level (middle or high school), category of entry, and the title
- If submitting more than one poem, include all titles on the subject line
- If participating in more than one category, submit entries for each category in separate emails.
- If participating in more than one category, submit separate entry forms for each.

QUESTIONS

Contact April Mattox of the JSU English Department with general questions or leave a message for any committee member by calling Susan Hurst at 256-782-5411. For specific questions, contact the coordinators listed below.

Middle School Coordinators:

Katherine Johnson - kcjohnson@jsu.edu

Jeff Pruitt - pruitt@jsu.edu

High School Coordinators:

Susan Dean - sadean@jsu.edu

Tanya Sasser - tsasser@jsu.edu

Grant Coordinator:

April Mattox – admattox@jsu.edu

imagining@jsu.edu is for contest entries and grant proposals only.