

Below are some criteria to consider as you work on your submission for the Budding Writers Contest. This is not a strict rubric or a checklist that must be adhered to. Rather, these are some criteria that all judges will be conscious of as they read the submissions.

### **Fiction (i.e. short story) Judging Criteria**

- **Style & presentation:** punctuation, spelling, grammar, and syntax are standard except as required for literary effect.
- **Language:** vocabulary is appropriate to the subject, style, and characters. Word choice is precise and evocative.
- **Form & structure:** sentence length and paragraph breaks enhance the clarity, meaning, and movement of the writing. Plot structure (i.e. beginning, middle, end) is clear and thoughtful.
- **Theme:** the story effectively explores or relates to the theme of the contest.
- **Originality:** the idea, perspective, or presentation is unique and fresh.
- **Consideration of creative elements:** drama, voice, imagery, impact, character development

### **Non-Fiction (i.e. personal essay, critical essay) Judging Criteria**

- **Style & presentation:** punctuation, spelling, grammar, and syntax are standard.
- **Language:** vocabulary is appropriate to the subject and style. Word choice is precise and evocative.
- **Form & structure:** sentence length and paragraph breaks enhance the clarity, meaning, and movement of the writing.
- **Theme:** the essay effectively explores or relates to the theme of the contest.
- **Originality:** the idea, perspective, or presentation is unique and fresh.
- **Organization:** there is a clear development of ideas. The writer has shown a progression of thought in a clear and logical way.