



Schoharie Jr./Sr. High School ***Spring Writing Contest***

“The moment one gives close attention to anything, even a blade of grass, it becomes a mysterious, awesome, indescribably magnificent world in itself”

-Henry Miller

We live in such a gorgeous little nook of the world. Schoharie Valley is nestled in the foothills of the Catskill mountains surrounded by the beauty of the natural world, from the creek bed to the hilltops.

Write an essay that is inspired by Henry Miller’s quote, sharing an up-close look at something that represents Schoharie Valley, either the beauty of one feature of our natural environment *or* an aspect, artifact or feature of the history or culture here. Then, show how this connects to something greater. You must make at least one reference to *Schoharie* or *Schoharie Valley*, in your essay.

Section I - General Rules

- Contestants must enter by sharing their original Google Doc with Mrs. Ringuette via this email address: aringuette@schoharieschools.org (Google Doc titles should include “Schoharie Spring Writing Contest” and the student’s name.)
- Contestants must write an original essay with limited guidance from others.
- Schoharie Schools will have the right to edit (with the author’s permission), publish or otherwise duplicate any essay entered into the contest without payment to the author.
- All entries must be submitted by **3:24 p.m. Friday, June 2, 2023.**
- The essay review committee will consist of parents, faculty, administrators and community members.
- The authors’ names will be withheld from the review committee during the evaluation process.
- Essays will be judged in three categories: originality, technical skill and the emergence of a personal voice. (Rubric follows)
- Winner(s) will be contacted with the results by Friday, June 9th and will have their essays shared on our school website and possibly other sites and sources.
- Prizes will be provided by local businesses.
- There is no entry fee for this contest.

Section II - Qualifications for Contestants

The competition is open to all Schoharie School students in grades 6-12. Contestants may submit only one essay entry for this competition.

Section III - Contest Rules

Essays must address the official contest prompt and meet the criteria of the prompt.

Essays must be typed and double-spaced.

Essays must be between 500 and 700 words.

Any quotations or copyrighted material used in the essay must be properly cited using the format detailed in the MLA 9th Edition. Failure to identify non-original material will result in disqualification.

| Score | Originality | Technical Skill | Emergence of a Personal Voice |
|-------|---|--|--|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content is unoriginal, too complicated for the student to manage, or too involved to be managed within the boundaries of the piece. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanical and usage errors. Little control over structure and word choice. Piece is not organized. Ideas are not fully developed. Critical information may be missing. Contains irrelevant details. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language lacks tone or style. No evidence that the student is manipulating language to convey feeling, meaning, or tone. |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idea is unoriginal, or may be original but too complicated for the student to manage within the boundaries of the piece. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language and mechanics may be proficient, but word choice is elementary. Piece may be organized, but the style may not fit with the content. Little variation of sentence structure. Ideas are not fully developed. Includes irrelevant details. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little evidence that the student is manipulating language to convey feeling, meaning, or tone. While the author may convey the intended meaning, the piece lacks interest. May feel like a response to a class assignment. |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idea may be unoriginal, but the student is handling the subject matter in such a way that the piece becomes the student's own. Or, the idea is original, but the student needs to focus it in order to develop it fully within the constraints of the style they are using | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language and mechanics are proficient. Word choice seems deliberate. Sentence structure is varied. Rhythm of the language throughout the piece may be inconsistent. Ideas may not be fully developed, but the piece has direction. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student is beginning to experiment with language and tone or is taking risks. First signs of personal voice: reader gets a sense of the author or the author's intention. |
| 6 | | | |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The idea is original or expresses an unoriginal idea in a new way. The subject is well suited to the style and genre in which the student is writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language and mechanics are very good. Effective organization. Sentence structure is varied, and language is consistent throughout the piece. Ideas are fully developed, and details are chosen carefully. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student takes risks and demonstrates an understanding of the mechanics of language. The author is manipulating the structure and wording of the piece to create feeling or meaning. |
| 8 | | | |
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The idea is original and handled deftly in a genre and style suited to the subject matter. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent language and mechanics. Effective, subtle, or innovative organization. Word choice is deliberate and effective. Sentence structure is varied, and language and rhythm are consistent. The ideas are well developed. Piece holds the reader's attention. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phrasing and language are memorable. The tone or voice is original, and the student seems confident in their own voice/style. Student manipulates all of the mechanics of good writing to convey feeling and meaning throughout the piece. |
| 10 | | | |

Judging Rubric from [Scholastic Awards](#)



**CALLING ALL
CREATIVE
WRITERS IN
GRADES 6-12!**

Schoharie Central School

Spring Writing Contest

Write an essay inspired by Henry Miller's quote below.



*"The moment one gives close attention to anything,
even a blade of grass, it becomes a mysterious,
awesome, indescribably magnificent world in itself"*

-Henry Miller

*See Mrs. Ringuette in room 201 for details.

All entries must be submitted by 3:24 p.m., Friday, June 2, 2023.