

# WOMEN<sup>®</sup>

## Writing the West

### THE WWW HIGH SCHOOL WRITING CONTEST RUBRIC (The WILLA Youth Award - The LAURA Youth Award - The DOWNING Youth Award)

\* WWW defines “the West” as anywhere on the North American continent west of the Mississippi River, including Alaska and Hawaii, Canada west of Ontario, and Mexico.

\*\* Depiction of a character’s biases or stereotypical views, presented in context, may be appropriate.

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|                                   | Ineligible                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 4 -7 points                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 8 - 10 points                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| 1 -<br>Women of the<br>West Theme | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Male main character(s)</li><li>• Story not set in the West*</li><li>• Does not portray authentic western experience</li><li>• Western landscape (natural or human-made) nonexistent or irrelevant*</li><li>• Theme and content do not reflect WWW’s mission &amp; goals (writing that <b>does not</b> acknowledge and document the recognition of women and girls and their contribution to the history, culture and growth of the American West)</li><li>• No relevant theme in story, article, poems/haiku, lyrics</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Female main character(s) relevant to story, article, poems/haiku, lyrics</li><li>• Story set in the West but could have happened anywhere; or partly set in the West*</li><li>• Western landscape (natural or human-made) somewhat important*</li><li>• Generally portrays authentic western experience</li><li>• Theme &amp; contest of story, article, poem/haiku, lyrics generally reflect WWW’s mission &amp; goals (writing that acknowledges and documents the recognition of women and girls and their contribution to the history, culture and growth of the American West)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Female main character(s)</li><li>• Western setting primary &amp; essential*</li><li>• Consistently portrays authentic western experience</li><li>• Theme &amp; content excellent reflections of WWW’s mission &amp; goals (writing that acknowledges and documents the recognition of women and girls and their contribution to the history, culture and growth of the American West)</li><li>• Theme and content of story, article, poems/haiku, lyrics consistently portray authentic western experience</li></ul> |

|                                                 | <b>Ineligible</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>4 -7 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>8 - 10 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| 2 -<br>Characterization                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Character(s) not developed</li> <li>• Stereotypical character(s)** evident in works</li> <li>• Dialogue not convincing</li> <li>• Characters generic, not interesting</li> <li>• Reader does not sympathize with main character</li> <li>• Didactic, preachy</li> </ul>                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main character somewhat developed</li> <li>• Generally no inappropriate gender, ethnic, racial or other stereotypes**</li> <li>• Dialogue at times sounds unnatural</li> <li>• Character(s) interesting</li> <li>• Reader sympathizes somewhat with main character</li> <li>• Character's "lesson" generally presented</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main character well developed &amp; believable</li> <li>• No inappropriate gender, ethnic, racial, or other stereotypes included**</li> <li>• Dialogue sounds natural</li> <li>• Character(s) original and unique</li> <li>• Reader sympathized with main character</li> <li>• Any "lesson" subtle and organic</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                 | <b>Ineligible</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>4 -7 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>8 - 10 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 3 -<br>Setting                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting not important to the story, article, poem/haiku, lyrics</li> <li>• Setting not described</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting of moderate importance in story, article, poem/haiku, lyrics</li> <li>• Setting described in conventional terms</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strong sense of place is inherent in story, article, poem/haiku, lyrics</li> <li>• Setting vividly described, using most of the senses</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                 | <b>Ineligible</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>4 -7 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>8 - 10 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 4 -<br>Plot, Content,<br>Ideas,<br>Organization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main character has no goal or problem to solve, or this is unclear</li> <li>• Story fails to hook reader; ending not satisfying</li> <li>• Implausible</li> <li>• Plot predictable</li> <li>• Story, article, poem/haiku, lyrics inadequately depict an idea, experience, or emotion</li> <li>• Little evidence of logical or effective order or sequence</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main character has goal or problem of marginal importance; emotionally engaging for readers</li> <li>• Slow beginning leads to more action; or conclusion leaves some questions unanswered; or conclusion not satisfying</li> <li>• Adequate focus on overall theme or topic</li> <li>• Story, article, poem/haiku, lyrics depict an idea, experience, or emotion; some poems stronger than others</li> <li>• Logical or effective order or sequence recognizable</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main character has difficulty achieving important goal or solving important problem; emotionally engaging for readers</li> <li>• Excellent, cohesive focus on overall theme or topic</li> <li>• Opening draws reader in; conclusion satisfying</li> <li>• Suspension of disbelief consistent</li> <li>• Plot or article original, fresh</li> <li>• Poem/haiku, lyrics depicts an idea, experience, emotion</li> <li>• Use of logical or effective order or sequence satisfying to reader</li> </ul> |

|                              | Ineligible                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 4 -7 points                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 8 - 10 points                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| 5 -<br>Voice                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrative voice lacking, confusing, distances reader from the story</li> <li>• Point of view confusing</li> <li>• Little or no sense of storyteller's, poet's, songwriter's individual style</li> <li>• Word choice rarely reflects or evokes storyteller's, poems/haiku or lyrical themes, sounds, or emotions; difficult to read aloud</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrative voice dependable</li> <li>• Point of view wavers or occasionally jumps</li> <li>• Storyteller's, songwriter's, poet's individual style sometimes apparent</li> <li>• Word choice sometimes reflects or evokes poems'/haikus' or lyrical themes, sounds or emotions</li> <li>• Rhythm of storytelling, poem/haiku, lyrics creates adequate "read-aloud" quality; some lapses</li> </ul>                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrative voice engaging, fresh, distinct</li> <li>• Point of view clear, consistent; or POV shifts clear and intentional</li> <li>• Storyteller's, songwriter's, poet's individual style clearly apparent</li> <li>• Word choice often reflects or evokes storyteller, poem/haiku, lyrical themes, sounds, or emotions</li> <li>• Inherent rhythm creates excellent "read-aloud" quality</li> </ul>                                                                         |
|                              | Ineligible                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 4 -7 points                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 8 - 10 points                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 6 -<br>Literary<br>Qualities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor or inappropriate command of language (<b>contains inappropriate slang, foul language, violence, hate speech, erotic content, inappropriate word choice, figurative language</b>)</li> <li>• Imagery confusing or nonexistent, abstract, clichéd</li> <li>• Premise conventional, simplistic, expected</li> <li>• Not enjoyable or thought-provoking</li> <li>• <b>Title</b> ordinary, uninspired</li> <li>• Rhyme (if used) forced or incomplete</li> <li>• Little or no demonstrated grasp of poetic, lyrical conventions and devices</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate command of language (<b>contains no inappropriate slang, no foul language, violence, hate speech, no erotic content, inappropriate word choice, figurative language</b>)</li> <li>• Imagery clear</li> <li>• Premise not new, but well-explored</li> <li>• A pleasant read</li> <li>• <b>Title</b> fitting, appropriate</li> <li>• Rhyme in poem/haiku, if used, generally good</li> <li>• Adequate grasp of poetic, lyrical conventions &amp; devices</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently strong command of language (<b>no use of inappropriate slang, no foul language, violence, hate speech, no erotic content, word choice, figurative language</b>)</li> <li>• Imagery vivid, fresh</li> <li>• Premise breaks new ground</li> <li>• Thought-provoking</li> <li>• <b>Title</b> intriguing or resonates with meaning</li> <li>• Rhyme, if used, consistently excellent</li> <li>• Clear grasp of poetic, lyrical conventions &amp; devices</li> </ul> |

|                                          | <b>Ineligible</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>4 -7 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>8 - 10 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| <b>7 -<br/>Technical<br/>Conventions</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent problems with grammar, punctuation, spelling</li> <li>• Sloppy, wordy, repetitious writing</li> <li>• Poor balance between dialogue and narrative</li> <li>• <b>Ineligible:</b> Story does not have a beginning, middle and end</li> <li>• Line breaks in lyrics', poems'/haikus' shapes confusing</li> <li>• Journalistic article, lyrics <b>ineligible</b> if already "published" online, in newsletters and/or blogs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occasional lapses of grammar, punctuation, spelling</li> <li>• Clear writing</li> <li>• Adequate balance between dialogue and narrative</li> <li>• Line breaks in lyrics', poems'/haikus' shapes adequate</li> <li>• Journalistic article, lyrics are fresh</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling; or reader trusts that conventions purposefully set aside</li> <li>• Tight writing</li> <li>• Good balance between dialogue and narrative</li> <li>• Lyrics, poem/haiku unique constructions clearly intentional &amp; effective</li> <li>• Line breaks in lyrics', poems'/haikus' shapes carefully considered</li> <li>• Journalistic article, lyrics fresh and ready to be published</li> </ul> |
|                                          | <b>Ineligible</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>4 -7 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>8 - 10 points</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>8 -<br/>Presentation</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Font and typesetting difficult to read</li> <li>• Non-use of general manuscript submission requirements (Times Roman, 12 pt font, 1" margins all around)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Font and typesetting used adequately</li> <li>• Partial use of general manuscript submission requirements (Times Roman, 12 pt font, 1" margins all around)</li> </ul>                                                                                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Font and typesetting used effectively</li> <li>• Manuscript submission requirements followed (Times Roman, 12 pt font, 1" margins all around)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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