

LCTE ENGLISH EXPO



A Louisiana High School Competition of the Language Arts

GUIDEBOOK

Presented by
The Louisiana Council of Teachers of English
Co-Sponsored by Louisiana Scholastic Press Association and
the Baton Rouge Advocate

For registration information go to:
www.nicholls.edu/lcte

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GENERAL INFORMATION

What is English Expo?

English Expo is a program designed to encourage excellence in language arts skills among Louisiana students in grades 9-12. A total of 17 different contests are offered in competition. Sponsored by the Louisiana Council of Teachers of English, the Louisiana Scholastic Press Association, and the Baton Rouge Advocate, it's fun for students and teachers alike.

What is the location of English Expo?

English Expo is held each year at LSU. Contestants should report to Lockett Hall located on Fieldhouse Dr. near the football stadium, on LSU's beautiful campus. For a map of the campus log on to www.lsu.edu/campus/maps/LCKT02 (LCKT in caps and number 02)

What are the contests like, and how are they judged?

Contests are designed to last 45-55 minutes and to test specific skills of students. Each registered student must participate in two contests during the day. Teacher advisers will participate as proctors and judges. Judging takes place on-site, with results announced at the awards assembly at the end of the day. Teachers, professors, college students, and others in the academic community will collaborate to critique each student's work. English Expo is a learning experience as well as a competitive one. Complete details about the 17 contests and their specific rules are included in this guidebook.

How many contests should I enter?

Each student should register for two contests. Students should also list an alternate contest they would like to enter if either of their first choices is filled. (If a contest does not have enough participants, it may be cancelled).

How do I register a group from my school?

Teachers wishing to bring a group of students from their school should obtain a registration form from the website www.nicholls.edu/lcte. The completed form should be returned with registration fees by the deadline listed on the web page. Once the registration has been received, a confirmation packet will be mailed to the adviser. Only 400 students can participate in English Expo, so get your registration in early. Mail registration forms to: Melissa Bush, Expo Co-chair, 2538 Ave. C, Alexandria, LA 71301.

What materials should students bring for Expo contests?

Students should bring pens and pencils for their contests. For those contests with an objective test (literature, listening, vocabulary, proofreading, A.P. stylebook Quiz), student must have a pencil for the Scantron sheet used in scoring. Paper is provided for the contest. For composition contests (Business Letter, Poetry, Prose, Technical Writing, News Writing, Editorial Writing, Lead Writing, Writing Attributions for News and Feature Articles, and Short Story), a dictionary and/or a thesaurus may be used but students must bring these.

What will the agenda be on the day of English Expo?

Students will meet in the auditorium in Lockett Hall for the opening ceremony. Advisers will check in, then, give each student his or her name tag and room assignment. The two contest sessions will be held back to back, then, students will be dismissed to the Student Union for lunch. After lunch students will return to the auditorium in Lockett Hall for afternoon entertainment and the awards ceremony.

ENGLISH EXPO CONTESTS

- A. Posters
- B. Book Cover
- C. Literature
- D. Business Letter
- E. Poetry
- F. Prose
- G. Personal Narrative
- H. Technical Writing
- I. Audio Comprehension
- J. Proofreading
- K. Vocabulary
- L. Traditional Storytelling
- M. Original Storytelling
- N. Informative Speaking
- O. News Writing
- P. Opinion Writing
- Q. Short Story

A. POSTER CONTEST

Students prepare a poster ahead of time on any topic that promotes some aspect of English language arts. The poster size can be no larger than 3' X 4'. Three-dimensional posters cannot extend further than 1" from the surface of the poster.

During the contest, students will give an oral presentation no longer than 2-3 minutes, which is part of the final score. The entrant must be present to explain the poster. All work must be that of the individual student.

Judging is based on the criteria listed below. Holistic scoring is used by the judges, with discussion involved in making the final selections of winners.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

Reminder: The subject matter of the poster may be anything having to do with any aspect of the English language arts.

Rate each criterion from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

- _____ 1. Student's oral explanation is clear and well-expressed.
- _____ 2. Student has a good verbal understanding of the main idea of his/her poster.
- _____ 3. The meaning of the poster is fairly obvious to the viewer.
- _____ 4. Poster shows good use of one medium or a compatible combination of several media.
- _____ 5. Overall appearance is aesthetically pleasing.
- _____ 6. Work shows creativity and originality.
- _____ 7. Poster makes a definite appeal to the viewer, i.e., amusing, inspiring, etc.

_____ **TOTAL (35 possible points)**

B. BOOK COVER CONTEST

Students prepare the book covers ahead of time on any book listed on this year's reading list. (See the webpage, www.nicholls.edu/lcte, for this year's booklist)

The book cover can be no larger than 8.5" X 14" in size. Only the front part of the actual book cover will be judged. Students will give oral presentations no longer than 2-4 minutes.

Judging is based on the criteria below. Holistic scoring is used by the judges, with discussion involved in making the final selection of winners.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

Reminder: The subject matter of the book cover must be one of the books from this year's booklist found on the webpage, www.nicholls.edu/lcte.

Rate each criterion from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

- _____ 1. Student's oral explanation is clear and well-expressed.
- _____ 2. Student has a good verbal understanding of the book read.
- _____ 3. Cover clearly depicts a theme of the book or a scene explained in the oral presentation.
- _____ 4. Cover displays the title and author in a clear, well-planned, well-lettered manner.
- _____ 5. Overall appearance is aesthetically pleasing.
- _____ 6. Work shows creativity and originality.
- _____ 7. Cover makes the book enticing to read

_____ **TOTAL (35 possible points)**

C. LITERATURE CONTEST

Students will take a 100-questions, multiple-choice test graded with a Scantron machine. Generally, there will be ten questions per book. Certain questions will be designated as “tie-breakers”. See the webpage www.nicholls.edu/lcte for this year’s booklist.

SAMPLE QUESTION

1. In *Killing Mr. Griffin*, the protagonist of the book, Susan, was involved in the kidnapping of Mr. Griffin because she
 - a. resented the low grade that he gave her.
 - b. wanted to be popular.
 - c. loved practical jokes.
 - d. wanted to get even with her family.

D. BUSINESS LETTER CONTEST

Students will write a business letter that responds to a prompt given. The letter will be scored by the criteria below.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

Rate each criterion from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

_____ 1. The necessary parts of the letter are correctly placed—the return address, the date, the inside address, the salutation, the body, the closing, and the signature.

_____ 2. The letter addresses the scenario given in the prompt.

_____ 3. All thoughts are expressed clearly or completely.

_____ 4. Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation are correct.

_____ 5. Letter shows originality and personal expression.

_____ **TOTAL (25 possible points)**

E. POETRY CONTEST

Students will create at least eight lines of verse from the given stimuli, such as artwork, music, videotape, etc. The verse may be one poem or two as long as the minimum of eight lines is written. Students may write more than eight lines if they wish.

When helping students prepare for this contest, it is suggested that the students review and use literary techniques that make their poetry more powerful: imagery, metaphor, simile, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, alliteration, assonance, symbolism, rhyme, meter, and personification.

Judging is based on criteria at the bottom of this page. Discussion is usually involved in making the final selections of winners.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

Rate each criterion from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

- _____ 1. Keen observation and reflection
- _____ 2. Imaginative insight
- _____ 3. Effective use of figurative language
- _____ 4. Overall effect is perceptible to reader
- _____ 5. Powerful use of literary techniques
- _____ **TOTAL (25 possible points)**

F. PROSE CONTEST

Writing for this contest will cover the wide range of nonfiction. Students may be asked to write a descriptive passage, a persuasive essay, a comparison-contrast essay, short biographical sketch, etc. They will write the paper from information given at the beginning of the contest.

When helping students prepare for this contest, it is suggested that the students review the various types of nonfiction writing, their structures, and literary devices, all of which can lead to better writing. Judging is based on the criteria below:

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

The criteria below will be a guideline used to score each student's writing from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)

An excellent piece shows concern for expressiveness as well as communication with an apt choice of words. It also shows sensitivity to the nuances of the meanings, uses unambiguous sentences and is written in fluent, readable prose. An appropriate use of metaphor, simile, analogy, parallelism, and other rhetorical devices should also be found in this writing. The writer appeals to at least three senses and shows an occasional willingness to be daring in thought and word. The total effect is one of showing rather than telling. The writing is grammatically accurate, shows the ability to punctuate for clarity and effect, and uses correct spelling and capitalization.

G. PERSONAL NARRATIVE CONTEST

Students will be given topics that are related to personal life experiences. Topics will be broad enough so that students should be able to share some part of their lives. Stories must be told from the first person narrator.

With the exception of dialogue, which students may recreate—as well as memory permits—the essence of the story should be real and factual. This is not a fiction-writing contest. Although judges will not be able to verify authenticity of stories, students are encouraged to tell their own authentic stories.

When helping students prepare for this contest, it is suggested that they review the various elements of good narrative: a logical chronology, details, dialogue, imagery, and other devices, which can lead to effective writing.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

Rate each criterion from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

_____ 1. Ideas – This paper is clear and focused. It holds the reader’s attention. Relevant anecdotes and details enrich the central theme.

_____ 2. Organization – An inviting introduction draws the reader in; a satisfying conclusion leaves the reader with a sense of closure and resolution, thoughtful transitions clearly show how ideas connect, sequencing is logical and effective.

_____ 3. Voice – The reader feels a strong interaction with the writer. The tone and voice give flavor and texture to the message and are appropriate for the purpose and audience.

_____ 4. Word Choice – Words convey the intended message in a precise, interesting, and natural way. The words are powerful and engaging.

_____ 5. Sentence Fluency – The writing has an easy flow, rhythm and cadence. Sentences are well built, with strong and varied structure that invites expressive oral reading.

_____ 6. Conventions – The writer demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuations, capitalization, grammar, usage, paragraphing).

_____ TOTAL (30 possible points)

H. TECHNICAL WRITING CONTEST

This contest attempts to encourage students to develop their skills in clear, precise writing in a nonfiction mode. These “technical” skills of clear, factual description are important in many different career fields today. Students will be asked to complete a technical writing assignment in a clear, precise style in a nonfiction mode. Examples of assigned tasks are:

1. Clearly describe how something works, how to make something, or how to follow directions for a specific activity.
2. Study a simple machine demonstrated in the contest room. Describe how it works in clear, precise language.
3. From a set of scientific data and experimental reports, create a summary of the lesson learned, the hypothesis proven, or the results of the study.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

Rate each criterion from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)

_____ 1. The main idea of the assignment has been summarized clearly and concisely.

_____ 2. All important details have been included in the description; the description is complete.

_____ 3. The language is appropriate to the situation and audience.

_____ 4. Sentences are written in clear, readable prose that reflects fluency and demonstrates a competent use of language.

_____ 5. The paper is free of grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling errors.

_____ **TOTAL (25 possible points)**

I. AUDIO COMPREHENSION CONTEST

Students will take a 50 to 100 question, multiple-choice test scored on Scantron. Questions will be asked over various oral selections to which the students will listen prior to taking the test. These selections may include such types as a newscast, storytelling, poetry, verbal instructions, etc. The selections are taped to insure consistency between contest sessions.

Certain questions will be designated as tie-breakers.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The questions below were given after students listened to a newscast program.

1. In the newscast, who wants to change the way votes are collected in St. Tammany Parish?
 - a. the mayor
 - b. the city council
 - c. the voters
 - d. the parish clerk

2. In the newscast, Dick Brown is planning to travel around the world by:
 - a. flying
 - b. sailing
 - c. running
 - d. biking

3. From the Mazda commercial heard, customers would receive a cash back of:
 - a. \$500
 - b. \$1,000
 - c. \$1,500
 - d. \$5,000

J. PROOFREADING CONTEST

Students will take a 75-100 question, multiple-choice test scored on Scantron. Questions will be asked over various rules of grammar, punctuation, parts of speech, usage, agreement, spelling, capitalization, sentence structure, editing, etc. To review, students should study any standard handbook. Certain questions will be designated as tie-breakers.

Below are sample questions:

1. Choose the letter that correctly identifies the underlined word.

Arthur's sword was called Excalibur.

- a. an adjective modifying sword.
- b. an adjective modifying was
- c. an adjective modifying called
- d. an adjective modifying Excalibur

2. Choose the correct form of the adjective to complete the sentence.

The ____ possession Julia has is her grandmother's ring.

- a. valuablest
- b. more valuable
- c. valuabler
- d. most valuable

K. VOCABULARY CONTEST

Students will take a 75-100 question, multiple-choice test scored on Scantron. Questions will be asked on vocabulary words in context and in isolation. The test may include analogies, synonyms, antonyms, and other techniques for demonstrating knowledge of word meaning. Certain questions will be designated as tie-breakers.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. Because the presentation of awards took longer than expected, I was asked to **curtail** my closing remarks.

- a. time
- b. begin
- c. extend
- d. cut short

2. The children were delighted by the birthday cake and _____ when a clown arrived to cut it.

- a. dismayed
- b. enchanted
- c. introduced
- d. puzzled

4. A **ruffian** means

- a. child; innocent one
- b. soldier; officer
- c. acrobat; entertainer
- d. bully; hoodlum

Answers: 1. d, 2.b, 3.d

M. ORIGINAL STORYTELLING CONTEST

Storytelling is the art of recreating oral stories that carry the listener to the time and place of the telling. The stories should “weave entertainment out of nothing but words” (*Teacher*, February 1990 p. 30).

An **original story** is entirely the work of the storyteller. It is imaginative and creative and unrecognizable as the “work” of another. It may include stories based on family history or community history as well as works purely from the imagination.

Stories may be narrative or contain dialogue, but the contestant is still a storyteller and not an actor. No props or costumes may be used. The stories should contain a beginning, middle, and an end and should not be mere joke recitations or imitations of another.

The story must be told, not read. No note cards, manuscripts, or books may be used.

The time limit is five minutes. Any student who exceeds this time limit will be disqualified.

ORIGINAL STORYTELLING CRITERIA

Rate each criterion from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

Content....

- _____ 1. Introduction captures attention and sets mood
- _____ 2. Story organization; develops logically and builds to climax.
- _____ 3. Story resolves easily in the time limits

Delivery....

- _____ 4. Voice quality
- _____ 5. Expressive facial gestures and body movement
- _____ 6. Eye contact and audience connection

Audience Reaction....

- _____ 7. Does the storyteller evoke images and feelings in the listener?

The Story Itself....

- _____ 8. The storyteller has developed a story that sparkles with spontaneity and freshness?

_____ **TOTAL (40 possible points)**

L. TRADITIONAL STORYTELLING CONTEST

Storytelling is the art of recreating oral stories that carry the listener to the time and place of the telling. The stories should “weave entertainment out of nothing but words” (*Teacher*, February 1990 p. 30).

The **traditional story** may include children’s stories, fairy tales, ghost stories, etc. The audience will generally recognize the story. Parodies of traditional stories fit in this category as well.

Stories may be narrative or contain dialogue, but the contestant is still a storyteller and not an actor. No props or costumes may be used. The stories should contain a beginning, middle, and an end and should not be mere joke recitations or imitations of another.

The story must be told, not read. No note cards, manuscripts, or books may be used.

The time limit is five minutes. Any student who exceeds this time limit will be disqualified.

TRADITIONAL STORYTELLING CRITERIA

Rate each criterion from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

Content.....

- _____ 1. Introduction captures attention and sets mood
- _____ 2. Story organization; develops logically and builds to climax.
- _____ 3. Story resolves easily in the time limits

Delivery.....

- _____ 4. Voice quality
- _____ 5. Expressive facial gestures and body movement
- _____ 6. Eye contact and audience connection

Audience Reaction.....

- _____ 7. Does the storyteller evoke images and feelings in the listener?

The Story Itself.....

- _____ 8. The storyteller has breathed life into a familiar tale.

_____ **TOTAL (40 possible points)**

N. INFORMATIVE SPEAKING CONTEST

An informative speech is a speech whose purpose is to provide useful or interesting, factual information to an audience. The goal is to explain a subject so clearly that the listeners understand and remember the topic and its details.

The informative speech should contain an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The introduction may use any of the common methods for starting a speech—quotations, humor, story (narrative or personal experience), rhetorical questions. The body may be organized according to chronology, topic, spatial arrangement, cause-effect, comparison-contrast, or any other means of logical organization. The conclusion should strengthen main points and bring closure to the speech.

Visual aids are to be incorporated within the speech. These aids are used and referred to during the speech. They don't just stand beside the speaker since their purpose is to clarify or add to the verbal presentation. Good visual aids will be able to be read by the audience, contain no misspelled words, and are objects large enough for the audience to see well. Care and effort should go into the choice of the visual aid(s). The visual aid might be an object, a diagram, a chart or graph, a flow chart, an informational chart, pictures, etc. No a-v equipment will be available at Expo. All objects used must be nonliving.

Students should practice their speeches several times before Expo so they can use only one 3 x 5 card for notes, can set up and handle their visual materials effectively, and can speak to their listening audience as fluently as possible. Contestants will remain in the room and participate as audience members before and after their speech.

INFORMATIVE SPEAKING CRITERIA

Rate each criterion from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest)

Content....

- _____ 1. The introduction captures attention and informs the audience of the subject.
- _____ 2. The speech is organized.
- _____ 3. The topic is fresh and interesting.
- _____ 4. The conclusion summarizes and brings closure.

Delivery.....

- _____ 5. Eye contact is maintained with the listeners.
- _____ 6. The speaking rate is used to best advantage, and the speaker is loud enough to be heard.
- _____ 7. The speaker uses expressive facial expressions and body gestures.

Use of Visual Aids.....

- _____ 8. The visual aids are easy to see and understand.
- _____ 9. The visual aids add to the overall content of the speech.

_____ **TOTAL (45 possible points)**

O. NEWSWRITING CONTEST

This contest challenges a student's ability to organize information into a news story. The information will be a short transcription of a news conference in which the details of a tragic event are given.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

The story will be evaluated by the judges on the following criteria:

1. Effective lead—Does the first paragraph capture the impact of the event?
2. Story organization—Is the story ordered in a way to facilitate the reader's easily obtaining the most pertinent information?
3. Evaluation of news—Does the reporter present the information in declining order of importance.
4. Quotes—Does the reporter select the most impactful information for quotes?
5. Paraphrase—Is the reporter effective in using indirect quotes to make the story more readable?
6. Grammar and Associated Press style—Is the reporter proficient in the use of AP style and standard English?
7. Attribution—Are the sources properly attributed, and is the information properly credited?

P. OPINION WRITING CONTEST

This contest tests a student's ability to use information on a topic and form it into statements for or against the issue. For example, the students could be given articles about former President Bill Clinton's endorsement for the Democratic presidential nomination. A student would use the information to defend a point of view on whether the endorsement is beneficial or detrimental.

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

1. Logic of argument—Does the writer effectively use the provided information to support his or her contention?
2. Organization—Does the writing flow in a logical manner?
3. Attribution—Does the writer effectively attribute the information used to support his or her opinion?
4. Grammar and Associated Press style—Is the writer proficient in the use of AP style and standard English?

Q. SHORT STORY CONTEST

Students will be given scenarios that provide a conflict and a subject. Students will choose one scenario and develop it into a short story. Stories may be told with either a first or third person narrator.

Scenario conflicts may include person against nature, person against himself or herself, person against person, and person against group.

An example of a subject is: “Someone close to the protagonist is changing.....for the worse.”

SHORT STORY CRITERIA

**Each paper will be rated from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).
The following criteria will be used as a guideline.**

An excellent story has a beginning, middle, and an end. The hook is interesting, there is a climax, and the resolution is satisfactory (although a happy ending is not necessary). The characterization is strong. The dialogue is realistic. The story is written in a fluent, readable manner. The writer demonstrates knowledge of such rhetorical devices as simile, metaphor, analogy, etc. There is good sentence variety in the narration. Grammatical usage is correct with few, if any errors in spelling and punctuation.

Tips to Organize a Group for Expo

1. Determine how many students you can bring. This should be based on the number of chaperones you have available and your transportation arrangements. We ask that at least one adviser and one chaperone accompany every 10 students.
2. Recruit parents to help you with chaperone jobs. We will provide their lunch as well when they get to Expo.
3. When collecting student fees, tell the students that fees are **nonrefundable** and that categories **cannot be changed** once they have registered. This will help you get a full commitment with your students and have the “no-changes” rule up front.
4. Use the Expo Guidebook to help your students prepare. Copy out pages for their particular contests. Encourage them to write possible questions or scenarios and quiz each other.
5. For the book cover and poster contests, enlist the help of your art teacher. Why not plan joint projects?
6. For those schools traveling from outside the Baton Rouge area, consider asking local businesses, newspapers, and professional groups to help sponsor your group. Even a small donation would help pay for the bus. Point out that academics need the same support as athletics!
7. Send a letter home to parents of students participating with information and logistics about Expo.
8. After the event, you will receive publicity for any of your local winners. This includes a letter to the school principal, a letter to the adviser, and a press release written to your local newspaper. Encourage even more coverage by asking your school newspaper to cover the event’s results, or put it in a parent newsletter. The more publicity Expo gets, the easier it will be to form a team in future years and to get financial support.
9. Let chaperones know they’ll eat lunch early, then escort students to the LSU Student Union for lunch while advisers are judging contests.
10. English Expo is primarily sponsored by the Louisiana Council of Teachers of English. If you want to show your support for this program, please consider joining LCTE if you are not already a member.

Questions, Ideas, Problems... Please feel free to contact one of our Expo Committee members online at www.nicholls.edu/lcte. We cannot improve if we don’t know our problems and strengths.