

# Wisconsin FPS Scenario Writing Component 2009-2010

**Postmark Date January 27, 2010**

**Welcome:** The Future Problem Solving Program helps students think critically, creatively, and futuristically. One of the ways for students to think futuristically is to create images of what the future may be like. The Scenario Writing component of the FPS Program strives to help students enlarge, enrich, and make more accurate those images of the future. Scenario writing personalizes the ever-growing perspective a student has on the future. We are pleased to invite you to register for the Scenario Writing Program.

**Eligibility:** For students who participate in the regular, curricular, or community components of Future Problem Solving, Scenario Writing can serve as an excellent complement to their work on any of the topics used during the year. Scenario writing is also an excellent offering for students who do not participate in other components of FPS; the creative writing involved may appeal to students who are not drawn to the team orientation of the other components. Scenario Writing can be used as a stand-alone activity by an FPS coach, an English teacher, or any other instructor who is interested in creative writing. Please share topic bibliographies and Future Scenes with your writers. If you need copies of the bibliographies and first two scenes for the year, please contact Wisconsin FPS at [wispfs@charter.net](mailto:wispfs@charter.net).

**Divisions:** Students may participate in the Scenario Writing Program in three divisions: junior (grades 4-6), middle (grades 7-9), and senior (grades 10-12). A participant may submit one scenario per academic year for competition. **A check or purchase order for the entry fee of \$20 must accompany each submitted scenario. Please review the submission guidelines with each scenario writer. The author's name must appear ONLY on the entry sheet.** All participants will receive evaluation feedback on their scenario entries.

**Resources:** Check the FPS Catalog Company for materials useful for the Scenario Writing Component. The **Scenario Writing Guide** is designed to assist teachers to be more effective in helping students write scenarios. Included are explanations of the techniques of scenario writing, information about scoring FPSP scenarios, suggested classroom activities, and samples of students' work. The **Scenario Writing Winners** contains fifteen international winners from the International Conference. Copies of Wisconsin winners from the past couple years are available for \$5 per booklet.

**State and International:** The top THREE scenario writers in each division will be invited to attend the opening activities on Thursday evening at State Bowl, where they will be asked to read their scenarios at a division session. Their work will be published in an anthology. The top TWO entries will also be forwarded to International for consideration in their competition. First place scenario winners are eligible to attend the International Conference whether or not their story wins an International award. Participants are responsible for their own registration and accommodation expenses at State Bowl and the International Conference.

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY THE GUIDELINES FOR WRITING SCENARIOS  
ALL ENTRY FORMS CAN ALSO BE DOWNLOADED  
FROM OUR WEBSITE AT [www.wisfps.org](http://www.wisfps.org).  
HAPPY WRITING!**

# Scenario Writing Submission Guidelines

Please distribute to students who are preparing scenarios for competition.

- 1. At least 20 years in the future.** A scenario is a story that might take place as a logical outgrowth of actions or events that took place earlier. It is a prediction of the future and must be written *as though the future were the present*.
- 2. Related to one of the FPSP topics for the year.** In your story, one possible outcome of the future, *as related to one of the topics for the year*, is developed through character(s) and plot. It should be obvious which topic you are using when reading the story. You can find this year's topics on the Wisconsin FPS website ([www.wisfps.org](http://www.wisfps.org)) or the FPS International website ([www.fpspi.org](http://www.fpspi.org)).
- 3. Develop a character.** We should really get to know at least one character – thoughts, feelings, actions. One or two main characters are enough, with perhaps one or two additional minor characters at most. There is not enough length to develop multiple characters.
- 4. Show, don't tell.** Telling: He got out of bed and sat at his desk to start the day. Showing: Gradually, he rubbed the sleep from his eyes and shuffled out of bed, pulling on a worn corduroy robe before settling at his desk to start the day.
- 5. Maximum of 1500 words.** Use a computer count of words.
- 6. Adult proofing.** An adult should proofread your work and assist you to correct errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. The adult should not change your word choices.
- 7. Double-spaced.** Double check this! It must be double-spaced, not space-and-a-half! Set your word-processing program correctly.
- 8. 12 point font with 1" margins.** The font must be Arial or Times New Roman. DO NOT type in all caps, as this is very difficult to read. The size must be 12 point. Margins must be one inch. It is a good idea to number the pages of your story.
- 9. Author name on entry sheet ONLY.** Stories must be written by ONE author. DO NOT put your name on the Story Information sheet nor on ANY page of the story itself. Stories must be anonymous when the evaluators read them.
- 10. Title on entry sheet, story information sheet, and FIRST PAGE (or all pages) of story.** Titles must be in all 3 places in order to match up the various sheets.
- 11. E-mail electronic copy.** An electronic copy of the story must be e-mailed to [wisfps@charter.net](mailto:wisfps@charter.net) as an attached Word document. (Most other word processors can save the document as a Word file before you send it.) Name the DOCUMENT, NOT the subject line, with division, last name, and first initial: Middle Jones R, Junior Smith A, Senior Anderson J, etc. DO NOT ADD ANY PUNCTUATION TO THE DOCUMENT TITLE
- 12. Send required copies.** Send **1** entry sheet and **1** publication release, NOT stapled. Send **2** sets of the story with a Story Information sheet stapled to the top of each copy. (Check the order of your pages!) Paperclip everything together.
- 13. Must be postmarked by January 27, 2010.** Stories must be mailed on time in order to allow for preparation and mailing to the evaluators. **DO NOT** send mail that requires a signature on delivery.

# Tips for Scenario Coaches

## General

- Ideas and good writing are both important in FPSP scenario writing.
- If participating in the competitive round, follow the instructions carefully (1,500 words, identification of word processing program, printed/typed, double-spaced, title on the first page of the scenario, number of copies, etc.). See the scenario writing guidelines for more information.



Review each of the five topics with students.

- Which topic interests them the most?
- Review the future scenes if provided.
- Generate imagined futures for the other topics.

Students should read as much material on their chosen topic as they need to understand the various facets of the topic.

- The enclosed bibliographies, readings students find in the library, or the appropriate chapters in the *Readings, Research and Resources* are useful materials for understanding the topic.
- As students read, have them take notes on facts, which may be useful in their writing, as well as impressions or ideas they get while reading the materials.

Encourage students to use a shortened version of the FPS model to help them clarify their thinking on the topic, as well as provide sources for a scenario theme.

- Scenario writing is actually a seventh step in the FPS process.
- A suggested shortened version of the process includes 10 challenges for Step 1, an underlying problem for Step 2, and 10 solution ideas for Step 3.
- What outcomes and scenarios might result from students' findings in using the Future Problem Solving model?

Students should now be ready to identify an outcome to develop into a scenario.

Scenario writers should identify a central, identifiable, sustained character(s) -- animate or inanimate -- and develop that character throughout the events and/or plot of the scenario.

Students should write their scenarios as though their future were the present.

- A strong portrayal of futuristic trends and predictions should be evident.
- Lengthy explanations and descriptions of the present day mechanical devices and social trends can interfere with the flow of the scenario that should be placed 20 years in the future.

If, for example, you were writing today about computers, you would simply mention computers; you would not describe what computers are, what they do, and how they were developed because the audience would already be familiar with computers.

## Be an Active Scenario Coach!!

The student's work must be original. However, before submission, each student's story should be read by an adult, who will discuss the story with the student or provide written feedback.

- ◆ Legitimate assistance includes
  - pointing out strengths
    - (Good word choice here, etc.)
  - asking questions that occur to you as a reader
    - (Why did the spaceship land in the middle of the city? What happened to the rest of the travelers, who only showed up in the first paragraph? Etc.)
  - making general suggestions for improvement
    - (More visual description might give us a clearer image. You might want to let us know what she is thinking. Needs more futuristic details. Etc.)
- ◆ It should be up to the student author to determine what revisions to make in response to the questions and suggestions.
- ◆ All authors should have adult help to correct spelling, punctuation, and glaring grammar mistakes. The copy submitted should be as error free as possible.



# Tips for Scenario Authors

## General

- Ideas and good writing are both important in FPSP scenario writing.
- If participating in the competitive round, follow the instructions carefully (1,500 words, typed, double-spaced, title on the first page of the scenario, number of copies, etc.). See scenario writing guidelines for more information.

## Futures

- Incorporate futuristic thinking into your writing – portray futuristic information and trends. (It is fun to explain how inventions affect our future lives, but don't "overgadgetize.")
- Incorporate creativity into your writing – use inventive, innovative, original, resourceful ideas.



## Pre-Writing

- Read and gather information in *Readings, Research and Resources; Omni; Futurist; Discover, etc.*
- Use creative problem solving generating tools to come up with a title that captures the essence of your scenario.
- Write an outline and rough draft of your scenario.
- Use key words or phrases to identify your story with the selected topic and the time period in which your scenario is set.

## Technique

- A narrative, dialogue, diary, journal, and letter are among appropriate formats for writing a scenario.
- Conflict, adventure, suspense, humor (satire, parody) can be used in the development of the scenario.
- Use first or third person.
- Incorporate dialogue, if it's appropriate to do so.
- To give background information, "bits and scratches" in dialogue and/or thoughts in a sentence or two works best. Blocks of flashback are usually too long for 1,500 words.

## Character(s)

- Use a minimum number of characters, animate or inanimate (usually 1–2 protagonists).
- Introduce main character(s) as soon as possible.
- Place the lead character directly into the situation developed in the scenario.
- Demonstrate how things have changed and how the main character is affected.
- If conflict is a central part of the story, lead to the point where the character(s) has a chance to "win, lose or draw." This sets up a moment of suspense.

(Tips for Scenario Authors continued)

## Purpose

- Narrow the topic to establish and maintain a clear focus.
- The scenario tells a story with a point set in the future as if it were really happening in the present.



## Audience

- Involve the audience (readers) immediately in the introductory paragraph.
- Be aware of your audience. Involve readers by writing to elicit an emotional response from them.

## Style

- Demonstrate a suitable voice/tone throughout the scenario.
- Exhibit the author's personal touch through vivid, colorful description that gives the writing life and spirit.

## Idea Development

- Develop the idea of the scenario to point out positive social and cultural aspects or the consequences of doing without them.
- A climax must occur as a logical outgrowth of the story line or character development.
- Provide a resolution to any conflict developed in the scenario.
- Provide a conclusion. Be sure to end; don't just stop without giving the reader something think about.

## Mechanics/Structure

- Use appropriate grammar, effective sentence structure, organizational strategies, and effective closure.
- Use effective organizational strategies and appropriate transitional elements.

## Post-Writing

- Edit, edit, edit.
- Proofread: Is the scenario whole, unified, coherent? Are paragraphs/sections clear, unified, coherent?
- Sentence by sentence check the following: grammar, spelling, omissions, repetitions, verb tenses, word usage.

# Scenario Writing Evaluation – Scoresheet Criteria

## **Creative Thinking**

Exemplary stories will have a strong portrayal of innovative/ingenious/novel ideas with unusual/ imaginative details providing a unique/powerful experience for the reader



## **Futuristic Thinking**

Exemplary stories will show an understanding of patterns/trends and how they might evolve; use/development of specialized terms/language related to the topic and storyline; strong portrayal of futuristic trends/predictions enhancing the story to create an entire future scene

## **Idea Development**

Exemplary stories will include complex ideas supported by rich/engaging/ pertinent details without being overwhelming; strong evidence of analysis, reflection, insight exploring different aspects of the topic; sophistication in organizational strategies obvious; holds readers attention with significant details

## **Style/Voice**

In exemplary stories, the use of literary techniques makes text lively/engaging; clear, distinctive personal touch prevails; stylistic nuances and elements uniquely mastered; well crafted, varied sentence structure; skillful use of vocabulary allowing reader to become emotionally involved; reader motivated to consider consequences

## **Character Development**

Exemplary stories will have authentic character(s) with dynamic nature enhancing the overall impact and effectiveness of the writing; total sense of involvement with the character(s) throughout the writing

## **Mechanics/Structure**

Authors should have clear control of grammar and punctuation; creative use of conventions to enhance meaning; license intentionally taken with some conventions to make a point; dialogue/dialect/slang, etc. ‘played with’ to creatively portray character(s), etc.; carefully edited

## **Research**

In exemplary stories, research is artfully blended with story line; includes topic relevant research as well as research into futuristic trends

