

Wisconsin Future Problem Solving
Affiliate of Future Problem Solving Program International

Scenario Writing

Basics for Coaches
2023-2024



IMPORTANT!

- An adult MUST proofread the story and help students correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
- WORD documents submitted MUST be checked to be sure they meet the requirements.
- Stories that do not meet the requirements when opened will be RETURNED to be fixed.

Entries due Tuesday, January 16, 2024
Entry fee \$25

Wisconsin Future Problem Solving Scenario Writing Competition 2023-2024



What is Scenario Writing?

Scenario writing is an individual competition in which students develop short stories of 1500 words or less. The story has a single author, is set at least 20 years in the future, is related to one of four topics for the year, and is an imagined but logical outcome of actions or events taking place in the world today. It is written as though the future were the present.

Why Scenario Writing?

To prepare students for the challenges of the 21st century, the Future Problem Solving Program International teaches students to think critically, creatively, and futuristically. The Scenario Writing component of FPSPI strives to help students enlarge, enrich, and make more accurate their images of the future, while honing their creative writing skills. Scenario writing personalizes the ever-growing perspective a student has on the future. A rubric-based authentic evaluation is provided, giving students feedback for continued growth.

Who can participate in Scenario Writing?

Students may participate in Scenario Writing in three divisions: Junior (grades 4-6), Middle (grades 7-9), and Senior (grades 10-12). For students who participate in the Global Issues Problem Solving component of FPSPI, Scenario Writing can serve as an excellent complement to their work on any of the annual topics.

Scenario Writing is also an excellent offering for students who do not participate in other components of FPSPI; 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, a parent, or any instructor with students who are interested in creative writing.

Do students need to know the six-step creative problem solving process for Scenario Writing?

The creative problem solving process is used in the Global Issues and Community Problem Solving components. Although knowing the process can help students to think about the future, it is not a prerequisite for Scenario Writing. Since scenarios must relate to one of the annual topics, it is important that students complete background reading and research on their chosen topic.

Scenario Topics 2023-2024

- Tourism
- Urbanization
- Antarctica
- Autonomous Transportation

How can I get started with my students?

The best way to become acquainted with scenarios is for you and your students to read many of them. See the Scenario Writing Essential Publications page for more information. You can purchase past Wisconsin winners and International winners at wisfps.org.

Excerpt from *Asphodel*

Senior Division, Topic: Human Environment Impact
2021: 1st Place Wisconsin FPS, 3rd Place, Int'l FPS

“Darling, come down from there,” Miriam calls below her, soft and bright, highlighted against the sky with Bodhi propped up on her shoulders, and Jayna is weak for the love of them.

“Just a moment!”

Jayna shifts, brittle bark crumbling beneath her fingers, looking out once more at the desolate landscape that stretches out before them; nothing but the skeletal remains of vegetation, bone white trees that bear no leaves. Gas hangs in the distance, a distinct, poisonous yellow clouding her view of the mountains that loom ahead.

She grinds her teeth a little. The gas looks thick, might actually *be* poisonous, and there’s no telling what it’ll do to her or Miriam, much less a child like Bodhi, Otherling though he is. But there it is, all the same, and they’ve been delayed enough. If they want to make it to safety at Elysium before Sun-dark and the deadly winter it heralds, they cannot afford the time it will take to go around.

How much help should I give?

The student’s writing must be original. As a coach, you may read the student’s work, ask questions that occur to you as a reader, and make general suggestions for improvement. Authors must receive adult help to correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. Students should complete multiple drafts.

How are scenarios evaluated?

Scenarios are read and scored by experienced evaluators who consider these elements: creative thinking, futuristic thinking, idea development, style/voice, character development, mechanics/structure, and topic related research. See the Scenario Evaluation page for more info.

How do I enter student work for Scenario Writing?

Follow the requirements for submitting entries as outlined in this document. Entry forms can be found at wisfps.org. Click on Registration & Fees. Entries are due mid-January.

What are the levels of competition?


Wisconsin selects three winning scenarios in each division. The writers of these winning stories will be invited to attend the opening activities on Thursday evening at State Bowl, where they will read the scenarios at a division session. The stories will be published in an anthology. All writers who score well in the first round of evaluation will be invited to participate in a Scenario Writing Competition at State Bowl. First-place and some second-place winners are eligible to compete in the Scenario Writing Competition at the International Conference in June.

Note: As of 2022-23, there is no additional competition between Wisconsin State Bowl and the International Conference.

Scenario Writing Requirements 2023-24

Please distribute to students who are preparing scenarios for competition.

STORY CONTENT

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 <i>as though the future were the present</i> . Futuristic concepts and trends are incorporated into the scenario, but a specific date is not required.
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.
Related to one of the FPSPI topics	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <p>The scenario must have a recognizable relationship to one of the topics for the year. You can find descriptors for the topics in this document. It should be obvious which topic you are using when reading the story. <i>Readings, Research, and Resources</i> has chapters with an overview and article summaries on the topics. These can be purchased at fpspimart.org.</p> </div> </div>

DOCUMENT DETAILS – Coaches check all before submitting!

Max of 1500 words	Use a WORD doc computer count of words. The title is not included in the count.
Title on first page	Center the title on the first page of your story. Use bold 14-point font. No author’s name, school, or affiliate may appear in the story document.
Double-spaced; 1” margins	Double-check this! Use double spacing, not space-and-a-half! Tab to indent paragraphs but do not put extra space between them unless to show the passing of time. Use 1-inch margins, not 1.25 inches.
12 point font	The font MUST be 12-point and easily readable. Use Arial, Cambria, Calibri, Times, or Times New Roman. DO NOT use script fonts or all caps.
Adult proofing	An adult MUST proofread your work and assist you to correct errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. The adult should not change your word choices. (See Guidelines for Adult Proofreaders for details on proofreading.)

ENTRY SUBMISSION – All must be submitted by the **COACH**. Label correctly!

Document	Format	Label document	Submit
Scenario Story	Microsoft WORD only	Junior Smith Story Middle Jones Story Senior Anderson Story	By e-mail to martha.wisfps@gmail.com Do NOT send files with Google Docs.
Scenario Entry Form	Microsoft WORD only	Junior Smith Entry Middle Jones Entry Senior Anderson Entry	
Publication Release	PDF scanned & e-mailed	Single student or batch from coach: Junior Smith Release (stud) Junior Coach Bauer Releases (coach)	
Fees	\$25 per scenario. Check or cash mailed, PO’s mailed or e-mailed		If mail, by postmark date: Wisconsin FPS 3318 Conservancy Lane Middleton, WI 53562

All four parts of the entry must be e-mailed or postmarked by January 16, 2024



**If your students use Google Docs,
the COACH must make all the conversions and corrections
and submit in the correct PDF and WORD formats**

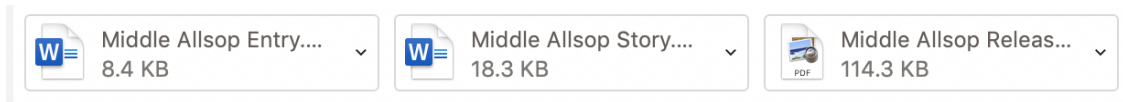
While your students may write their drafts in Google docs, we do NOT accept submissions that are sent via Google Docs or Google Drive. These are some examples of what we do not accept:



Conversion information

- Even though the examples on the left above show extensions of .pdf and .docx, when you click on them, they are NOT YET pdf and Word documents. They are still Google documents.
- After clicking any of the examples above, they must be DOWNLOADED to the computer desktop and then ATTACHED to an email. All computers have pdf software. To download the .docx ones, the computer must have Microsoft Word software.
- **After downloading the Story documents, you MUST recheck them for formatting and word count.** These are some things that may not convert correctly:
 - Word count – In 2020 a story with a word count of 1500 in Google Docs had a count of 1593 in Microsoft Word, which is the official count. This story had to be edited down to 1500 words.
 - Line spacing and paragraphing
 - Margins
- Note: Release PDFs must be scanned PDFs, not photos taken and turned into PDFs.

Submitted documents must be attached and look like this:



All documents MUST be titled correctly

- Division/Last Name/Release or Story or Entry
- There must be a space between each word
- The sample on the right above (MiddleNathansonRelease) is not labeled correctly as there are no spaces between the words; the rest are labeled correctly

Why so picky about the document titles?

- When titled correctly, the documents line up by division and then by last name when put into the same computer folder.
- This makes them easy to find. This is absolutely essential when dealing with 60-120 submissions, each with 3 documents.
- Organizing all of the documents and checking all of the word counts is already a time-consuming process. If labeled incorrectly, documents will be returned to be renamed and resubmitted!
- Note: **MANY** stories have mistakes in formatting: titles, margins, paragraphing, line spacing, fonts, etc. Please check these and indicate they are correct on the entry sheet.

Scenario Writing Essential Publications

Important resources from the FPSPI Catalog.
(Available at www.fpspimart.org)

Int'l Scenario Writing Champions 2022

Includes award winning stories published each year:

- The top five scenarios from each division in the FPSPI International Scenario Writing Competition 2021
- Evaluator scores and comments



\$34 Download PDF

Readings, Research, and Resources (RRR)

Provides essential background information on the topics for scenario writers:

- Topic Overview, Terms, Definitions
- Questions for Discussion
- Themes and Concepts
- Article Summaries
- Digital Resources

Note: Later in the year it may be possible to purchase single topics.

\$73 Download PDF

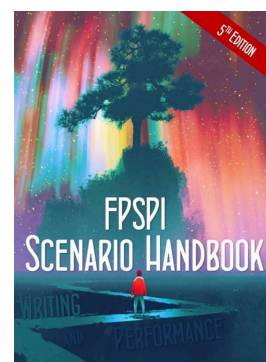


FPSPi Scenario Handbook

Designed to help teachers effectively guide students in Scenario Writing and Scenario Performance, this manual includes:

- Explanations of scenario development
- Classroom activities
- Award-winning student work

\$44 Download PDF



Into the Future: A Kid's Guide to the Process of Scenario Writing

Guides students through the Scenario Writing process:

- Topic selection and research
- Infusing futures
- Using the creative writing process

\$30 Download PDF



Scenario Writing Topics 2023-24

Click the link for a video introducing the 2023-24 topics.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AB2BYXihylg>

Tourism (Practice Problem 1, 2023-24)

Tourism not only benefits host locales but those on holiday. Travel enriches their lives, expands their understanding of people and cultures, while also serving as a respite from daily life. The economic stability of such destinations depends on the sustainability of their tourist trade. As the popularity of such destinations grows, international corporations and developers typically flock to these growing places, trying to capitalize on the financial possibilities. There is money to be made in building hotels, restaurants, and in developing an area's growing tourism industry. As outside groups seek to attract tourists and the revenue they generate, locals often struggle to maintain their location's unique appeal and ability to support local venues. As this build-up occurs, local people can have their cultures exploited, lands destroyed, and their local businesses put in jeopardy. As the tourism sector grows and expands, we are seeing the expansion of the Special Interest (SIT) market - tourists wishing to match their vacations with their interests (e.g., ecotourism, wellness tourism, event tourism, ancestry tourism, etc.).



How will changing forms and trends of tourism impact tourists and hosts alike? How can the advantages of expanding tourism be balanced with the protection of destinations?

Urbanization (Practice Problem 2, 2023-24)

Today nearly half the world's population lives in an urban area. By 2050, that number is expected to reach 70% due to this increase in Urbanization. Urban areas and their large populations often hold power over governance, economic development, and international connectivity beyond their immediate regions. With proper planning, urban centers can provide educational and economic opportunities to residents not found elsewhere. However, they can also easily give rise to slums and increase income inequality. With growing footprints, cities are also struggling to provide basic needs, essential services, and safety. Future urban planners must address tough questions: What qualities in society should be valued most? What is fair and equitable? Whose interests will be served first? Planners must balance the speed of decision-making with the need for thoughtful, well-considered programs for development. As urban areas expand, how can we develop areas that are efficient, resilient, and inclusive?



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Antarctica (Qualifying Problem, 2023-24)

Antarctica, the highest, driest, coldest continent, has no permanent population and is governed by a collection of agreements between fifty-four countries. The Antarctic Treaty System designates the entire continent and surrounding waters for scientific endeavors, bans military activity, and promotes environmental research and preservation. Although Antarctica remains the most remote place on Earth, it is highly regulated and heavily impacted by activities around the globe. Parts of the continent are polluted by sewage, discarded machinery, fuel products, and rubbish. Antarctica is thought to be rich in minerals and resources, though an 'indefinite' ban on mining is in place through 2048. Antarctica also holds over 60% of the Earth's fresh water in an ice sheet that contains 90% of the Earth's total ice volume. As global temperatures rise, these are breaking apart and melting faster, endangering local wildlife and entire ecosystems.



Without a consistent population or a sovereign state, Antarctica possesses a unique space within political, economic, and environmental crossroads. How can Antarctica be sustainably utilized yet simultaneously preserved to best benefit our global population?

Autonomous Transportation (Affiliate Bowl, 2022-23)

Our transport needs, desires, and realities are rapidly changing due to global growth and increased connectivity. As modes of transportation continue to evolve, increasing levels of complexity and efficiency are pursued. What role will autonomous vehicles, cars, airplanes, ships, etc., which operate without human intervention, play in this pursuit? Their development continues to increase exponentially with advancing technological capabilities. Since all scenarios are not programmable, autonomous vehicles must learn and react. They do this by surveying their environment with multiple sensors and utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) to process vast amounts of data. Autonomous vehicles can deliver on demand, refuel, park, and store themselves. By creating a network of these vehicles, entire systems of transport could become autonomous, controlled by a central AI.



How will the efficiency of autonomous vehicles affect the development of transportation, on land and sea, in the air, and possibly space? How will autonomous transport cope with unexpected risk situations and ethical decisions? In what ways will autonomous transport impact jobs, industries, infrastructure, and lifestyles?



FPSPi
FUTURE PROBLEM SOLVING PROGRAM
INTERNATIONAL



Tips for Scenario Coaches

General

- A great place to start is to review the evaluation criteria with students; then read a number of past scenarios, discussing them in light of the criteria.
- When submitting for the competitive round, follow the Scenario Writing Requirements carefully (1,500 words, title on the first page of the scenario, double-spaced, correct fonts and margins, etc.).

Topics: Review each of the four topics with students.

- Which topic interests them the most?
- Generate imagined futures for the topics.

Research: Students should read as much material on their chosen topic as they need to understand its various facets.

- Chapters from the *Readings, Research and Resources* publication are essential materials for understanding the topic. The topics page has a link to suggested readings. Students may also do their own research.
- 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.



Problem Solving Model: If students are familiar with the 6-step problem solving model, encourage them to use a shortened version based on their readings on the topic to help them clarify their thinking, as well as provide sources for a scenario theme.

- Scenario writing can be considered a “seventh step” in the FPS process.
- A suggested shortened version of the process includes 6-8 challenges for Step 1, an underlying problem for Step 2, and 6-8 solution ideas for Step 3.
- What outcomes and scenarios might result from using the problem solving model?

Characterization: Scenario writers should identify a central, identifiable, sustained character(s) – animate or inanimate.

- 1-2 main characters are usually enough for a story of this length.
- Character development should take place throughout the events of the scenario.

Futuristic Elements: Scenarios should read as though the future is the present.

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

Post-Writing: Provide opportunities for writers to participate in peer review to improve and discuss their writing.

(Tips for Scenario Coaches continued)

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. Use the evaluation criteria to guide your feedback.

Feedback: Legitimate assistance provides feedback and food for thought but does not make decisions for students about the writing.

- Point out strengths
 - (Good word choice here. Strong visual image. Etc.)
- Ask 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.)
- Make general suggestions for improvement
 - (More visual description might give us a clearer image. You might want to let us know what she is thinking. More futuristic details might be good. Etc.)

Author Decisions: It should be up to the student author to determine what revisions to make in response to the questions and suggestions.



Guidelines for Adult Proofreaders

Share this page with adult proofreaders.

All authors **MUST** have adult an adult proofreader who will work with them on correcting formatting, spelling, punctuation, and glaring grammar mistakes. This does not need to be the coach. The proofreader **SHOULD NOT CHANGE WORD CHOICES**. All corrections should be discussed with the author. The copy submitted should be as error free as possible.

WORD Work with the student to check each of these items in the document that will be submitted. On the entry sheet, put an X for each item that has been checked:

- The computer word count is a maximum of 1500 words. The title is not counted.
- The title is centered on the first page, NOT in the header. The title should be bold and 14-point font.
- A 12-point font is used for the story. The font used is Arial, Cambria, Calibri, Times, or Times New Roman. NO script or other unusual fonts should be used, except in small instances for a special effect.
- Margins are consistently 1 inch, NOT 1.25 inches, unless used for special effect.
- The text is set to double space, NOT space and a half. There are no extra blank lines between paragraphs, except to show the passing of time.
- All paragraphs, including dialogue, are indented. Tabs, NOT spacing, are used for indenting paragraphs. Other formatting is allowed for a few special effects in the story.
- Dialogue is punctuated correctly. The proofreader MUST be knowledgeable about punctuating dialogue. This can be challenging, especially for young students, but it must be done accurately.
- There are no mistakes in punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

These items MUST be correct in the Word doc that is submitted. Do NOT submit a document that has not been checked.



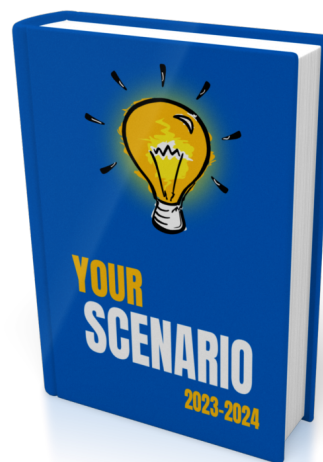
Tips for Scenario Authors

General

- Creative ideas *and* good writing are both important in FPSPI scenario writing.
- When submitting for the competitive round, follow the instructions carefully (word count, typed, double-spaced, title on the first page of the scenario, etc.). See Scenario Writing Requirements for more information.

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 indicate the 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 is appropriate to do so.
- To give background information, “bits and scratches” in dialogue and/or thoughts in a sentence or two work best. Blocks of flashback may be too long for 1,500 words.
- 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.

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)

Creative and Futuristic Thinking

- Incorporate creativity into your writing – use inventive, innovative, original, resourceful ideas.
- 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.")

Idea Development

- Involve the audience (readers) immediately in the introductory paragraph.
- Develop the idea of the scenario to point out positive social and cultural aspects or the consequences of doing without them.
- Form the climax 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 to think about.



Style/Voice

- Demonstrate a consistent voice/tone throughout the scenario.
- Exhibit the author's personal touch through vivid, colorful description that gives the writing life and spirit.
- Vary the sentence structure and use interesting vocabulary.
- Be aware of your audience. Involve readers by writing to elicit an emotional response from them.

Mechanics/Structure

- Use appropriate grammar, effective sentence structure, and conventions to enhance meaning.
- Use effective organizational strategies and appropriate transitional elements.

Post-Writing

- Edit, edit, edit! Do NOT submit a first draft.
- Read for revisions: Is the scenario whole, unified, coherent? Are paragraphs/sections clear, unified, coherent?
- Your coach should give you feedback for improvement based on the evaluation criteria.
- You **MUST** have an adult proofread your work before submission.

Scenario Writing Evaluation Criteria

Creative Thinking

Exemplary stories will have a strong portrayal of innovative/ingenious/novel ideas with unusual/ imaginative details that provide a unique/powerful experience for the reader (Scored 1-10)

Futuristic Thinking

Exemplary stories will show an understanding of patterns/trends and how they might evolve; will use/develop specialized terms/language related to the topic and storyline; will show a strong portrayal of futuristic trends/predictions that enhance the story (Scored 1-10)



Idea Development

Exemplary stories will include complex ideas supported by rich/engaging/pertinent details; will show strong evidence of analysis, reflection, and insight exploring different aspects of the topic; will show obvious sophistication in organizational strategies; will hold the readers attention with significant details (Scored 1-15)

Style/Voice

In exemplary stories, the use of literary techniques makes the text lively/engaging; a clear, distinctive personal touch prevails; stylistic nuances and elements are uniquely mastered; well crafted, varied sentence structure is used; skillful use of vocabulary allows the reader to become emotionally involved (Scored 1-10)

Character Development

Exemplary stories will have authentic character(s) with dynamic nature enhancing the overall impact and effectiveness of the writing; characters will evoke an emotional response; the writer will provide insight, perspective, and empathy with the character(s) and a sense of involvement with them (Scored 1-10)

Mechanics/Structure

Exemplary stories will show clear control of grammar and punctuation; creative use of conventions may be used to enhance meaning; license with some conventions may be taken intentionally to make a point; dialogue/dialect/slang, etc. may be 'played with' to creatively portray character(s); the story will be carefully edited (Scored 1-5)

Topic Related Research

In exemplary stories, knowledge of the topic is evident and is artfully blended with the story line; an understanding of the topic's futuristic trends is evident (Scored 1-5)

