

**Wisconsin Future Problem Solving**  
Affiliate of Future Problem Solving Program International

# Scenario Writing

**Basics for Coaches**  
**2021-2022**



**Entries due Tuesday, January 18, 2022**  
**Entry fee \$25**

## Wisconsin Future Problem Solving Scenario Writing Competition 2021-2022



### What is Scenario Writing?

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

### Why Scenario Writing?

To prepare students for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Future Problem Solving Program International teaches students to think critically, creatively, and futuristically in a variety of ways. 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 FPSPI strives to help students enlarge, enrich, and make more accurate those images of the future, while honing their creative writing skills. Scenario writing personalizes the ever-growing perspective a student has on the future. We look forward to your participation in the Scenario Writing component of the Future Problem Solving Program.

### Who can participate in Scenario Writing?

Students may participate in Scenario Writing in three divisions: Junior (grades 4-6 or the equivalent), 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 topics also used for scenarios. 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.

#### Scenario Topics 2021-2022

- Neurotechnology
- Water Supply
- Building Green
- Insects
- Mining

### Do students need to know the creative problem solving process for scenarios?

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. However, the scenarios must relate to one of the topics, so students should do some background reading about the topic they select for their story.

### **Excerpt from *Chameleon***

**Senior Division, Topic: identity Theft, 2017  
2nd Place, Wisconsin FPS, 4th Place, Int'l FPS**

Droplets of mist dance around my head, drifting down from the sullen sky onto the steely skyscrapers of Chicago. My feet kick at the slush on the sidewalk, the icy water soaking through the thin soles of my boots and sending chills running down my spine. I pull my woolen coat closer to my shivering body. Even in the balmy year of 2098, the Chicago winter is still something to be reckoned with. In the distance, I can see anonymous figures smoking; their cigarette butts glow like fireflies against the dark sky. And up above me, silhouetted against the fluorescent glow of a streetlamp, is the soulless face of a camera.

I know that they watch me. They see every move that I make, hear every sound that comes out of my mouth. I used to think about it. My information traveling at the speed of light to a processing center where it was sorted to find any seed of rebellion. It bothered me, the thought that nothing truly belonged to me, but my mind has grown desensitized to it.

A mechanical buzz emanates from the pocket of my jacket, dragging me out of my daze. "Today is December 18th, 2098," the monotonous voice of my personalized newsfeed recites. "For the first time all winter, snow is in the forecast. Please plan accordingly. In other news, the 15th anniversary of the Leader's coronation is fast approaching. Donations to his organization are always appreciated as a means of thanks for all that he has done. Should I deduct 5% from your paycheck this week?"

"No," I mumble quietly. My measly paycheck was too precious to spend on the frivolous causes espoused by the Leader on a daily basis. I can still remember how he came to power. From nothing, his rise was swift and unabashed, taking advantage of the deep socioeconomic rifts embedded in society to create a regime. He promised change. But by building his leadership on the needs of one group alone, his policies increased the divide between classes. Once the discontent from all spheres reached its climax, he formed a surveillance state to maintain a fragile sense of order. It's best not to talk.

## **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.

## **How much help should I give?**

The student's writing must be original. As 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. See the Tips for Coaches pages for more information.

## **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](http://wisfps.org). Click on Registration & Fees.

## **When are scenario entries due?**

In Wisconsin, Scenario Writing entries are due in mid January. Evaluation takes place in February, and results are announced in late February or early March.


## **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 the Scenario Writing Team Competition at State Bowl. First and second place scenarios are entered into the International level competition. All Wisconsin first-place winners and all International winners are eligible to compete in the Scenario Writing Team Competition at the International Conference in June.

# Scenario Writing Requirements 2021-2022

Please distribute to students who are preparing scenarios for competition.

## STORY CONTENT

<b>At least 20 years in the future</b>	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.
<b>Develop a character</b>	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.
<b>Related to one of the FPSPI topics</b>	 <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 <a href="http://fpspimart.org">fpspimart.org</a>.</p>

## DOCUMENT DETAILS – Coaches check all before submitting!

<b>Max of 1500 words</b>	Use a WORD doc computer count of words. The title is not included in the count.
<b>Title on first page</b>	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.
<b>Double-spaced; 1" margins</b>	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.
<b>12 point font</b>	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.
<b>Adult proofing</b>	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 <a href="mailto:martha.wisfps@gmail.com">martha.wisfps@gmail.com</a>  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 18, 2022





**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:

Middle Campbell Release.pdf

Middle Gray Story.docx

Middle Gray Entry.docx

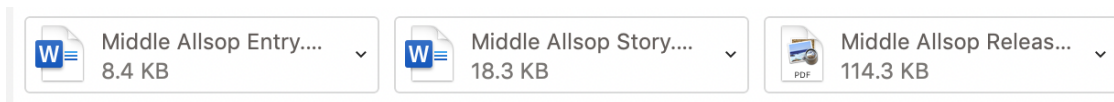
MiddleNathansonRelease

Open

### **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
  - Paragraphing
- 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, paragraphing, line spacing, fonts, etc. Please check these and indicate they are correct on the entry sheet.

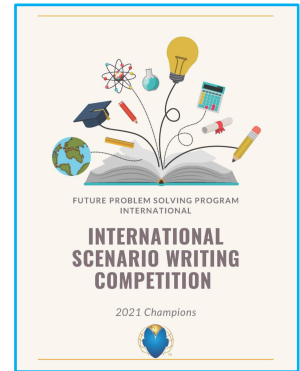
# Scenario Writing Essential Publications

Important resources from the FPSPI Catalog.  
(Available at [www.fpspimart.org](http://www.fpspimart.org))

## Int'l Scenario Writing Champions 2021

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



**\$32 electronic**

## 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.



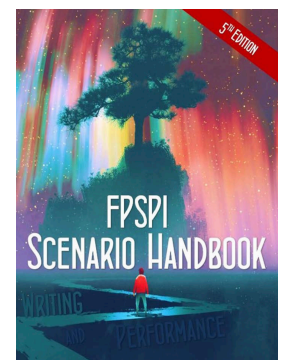
**\$66 electronic**

## 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

**\$40 electronic**



## 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 electronic**

# Scenario Writing Topics 2021-22

This document contains topic descriptors for the Scenario Writing competition. *Readings, Research, and Resources* (RRR) chapters for all topics can be purchased at [fjspimart.org](http://fjspimart.org). The information in parentheses denotes when the topic is used in the Global Issues Problem Solving component.

---

## Neurotechnology (GIPS International Competition, June 2021)



Neurotechnology is a growing science that helps people understand the brain as well as aspects of consciousness, thought, and high-functioning activities. Since the development of brain imaging, scientists have made significant progress in the field. Neurotechnology includes products and procedures that improve and repair brain function. Presently, we can create images of almost all aspects of the brain, and to some degree, control its functions. Brain imaging, stimulation, measurement, and cell therapy all show promise, as do developments in brain-computer interfaces. Neurotechnology can help treat depression, insomnia, Parkinson's disease, and many other conditions, as well as improving the quality of life for those with disabilities or injuries. However, its side effects are not well understood, and the implications related to its use have not been fully explored. What potential challenges could scientists, policymakers, and the public face as this technology continues to develop? How can neurotechnology be used to heal and enhance human and animal brains? What are the potential benefits and consequences of its growing use?

## Water Supply (GIPS Practice Problem 1, 2021-22)

In many parts of the world, freshwater is in short supply. Water is often pumped for miles, streams diverted and reservoirs and dams are constructed to provide for the growing populations in dry areas. As water levels drop and aquifers decline, people become more concerned about preserving their water resources. More than 2 billion people lack access to safe drinking water services, and more than 4 billion lack safely managed sanitation services. Differing governmental and commercial demands must be balanced so that communities have enough safe water for their needs. As available water supplies deplete, adjacent areas begin to battle with water contracts and water rights. How might the right to access clean water be achieved? How will regulations shape the future of access to water? How will water scarcity shape society?



### **Building Green** (GIPS Practice Problem 2, 2021-22)



The world is now more urbanized than ever before, and more and more people are flocking to live in large cities. Singapore was once known as the 'Garden City,' now it is being promoted as the 'Garden in the City' as new buildings incorporate trees and other greenery in their designs. Many quickly growing population centers are more environmentally aware as they expand the living spaces for their citizens. This awareness is not just a case of saving the environment and reducing emissions; it is a matter of necessity for creating healthy cities. Buildings can be designed to conserve both energy and water while improving the indoor and outdoor environment. Advancing technology is changing how architects are incorporating sustainable living practices into buildings. Light-based modulated sunlight, improved insulation, enhanced ventilation, eco-friendly building materials – are a few of the ecologically-preferred innovations changing the face

and function of buildings. Some buildings now incorporate wind turbines to provide the necessary energy to power the building. Will these developments solve the problems they have set out to address? Will these change the way cities work and the way people live in them? Will these changes improve safety during natural disasters or introduce new problems?

### **Insects** (GIPS Qualifying Problem, 2021-22)

Insects - human's best friends and worst enemies. We are surrounded by more than a million species of insects. Without them, humankind couldn't survive. Some insects destroy crops and carry diseases. Mosquitoes, which carry diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, Ross River, Zika, and West Nile viruses, kill and maim more people each year than any other animal. Others do essential jobs like pollinate blossoms, aerate the soil, decompose dead plant material, or eat other harmful insects, making them essential to the food web. As weather patterns and temperatures change, the distribution and habitat of many insect species are likely to change dramatically. The numbers of bees around the world have been radically reduced due to disease. How does the reduction of some species and relocation of others impact health, agriculture, and horticulture?



Over 1,900 insect species have been identified as suitable for human consumption and animal feed and could assure food security. Incorporating insects into the human food and medical supply indicates the ever-growing importance of insects in the world. Will insects and their products, such as genetically modified mosquitoes or manuka honey help to fight diseases? Will toasted grubs, fried crickets, and other edible insects become important global protein choices?



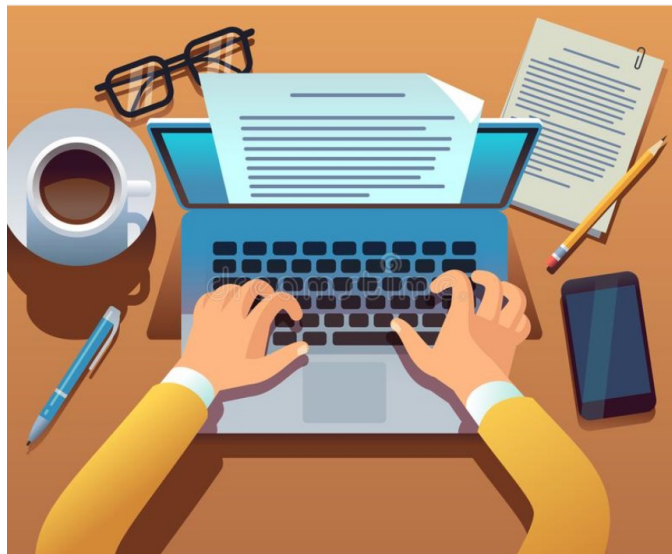
### **Mining** (GIPS Affiliate Bowl Problem, 2021-22)



Mining is a long-standing means of gathering a wide range of resources vital to aspects of everyday life. The growing demands of mined materials continues to see the mining industry expand at an incredible pace. The technologies in use today and projected for the future are more minerals intensive than ever before. While technology has made mining both safer and more environmentally sensitive than any other time in history, environmental and other risks remain. Yet without the collection of these important materials, the cornerstones of society like buildings, machines, and communication would not be possible.

With environmental protections varying greatly from country-to-country, how can the world collaborate on the best way to extract and share geological materials? With mining as the foundation of countless communities, how will they be impacted by the changing landscape of mining? In the future, are there new areas that might be mined for resources?

## **Happy Writing!**





## 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 five topics with students.

- Which topic interests them the most?
- If available, review the future scenes to elicit ideas.
- 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.

- The provided reading lists, readings students find in the library, or the appropriate chapters from the *Readings, Research and Resources* publication 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.

**Problem Solving Model:** If students are familiar with the 6-step problem solving model, encourage them to use a shortened version to help them clarify their thinking on the topic, 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.

Work with the student to check each of these items in the **WORD** 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.



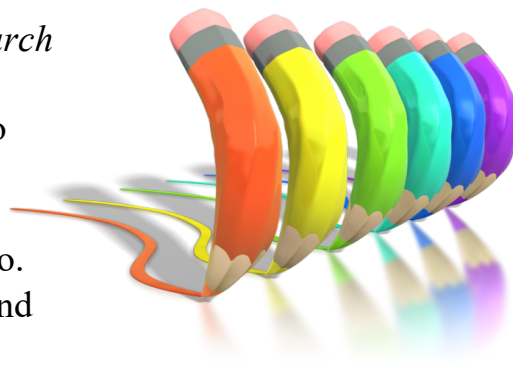
## Tips for Scenario Authors

### 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 1-15)

## **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 1-5)

## **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)

