

GFWC 2022-2024 Writing Contests

Express Yourself Creatively

The GFWC Writing Contests seek to provide an avenue for GFWC members and community youth to freely express themselves and draw upon their experiences through writing. These submissions illustrate the talent of GFWC members and are a reflection of our communities. GFWC offers short story and poetry contests for members and youth in the communities GFWC serves.

2022-2024

GFWC-WI Writing Contests Chairman

Alexandra Lerch-Gaggi

W275N2337 Oak Ct

Pewaukee, WI 53072

alerchgfwc@gmail.com

October 1, 2022

Dear Madam President,

It is my pleasure to announce the annual writing contests for the GFWC-WI. Each year we sponsor two contests one for our own GFWC members, and one for the youth in the community of your club.

There are two categories for each group: Short story and Poetry.

The member writing contest and its rules should be announced at your club meetings and published through your district and local club newsletters.

I have attached all the required materials that I anticipate that you might need for each contest. Should you need any further information, please feel free to contact me using my contact information listed below. Additional information is available in the 2022-2024 Club Manual at www.gfwc.org.

I hope that each club will conduct its own contest, and that we will have lots of submissions. Remember that our Arts Department exists to provide a framework for club women to pursue a variety of artistic interests which educate their communities about the important role art plays in our lives. Our Education Department encourages us to provide learning opportunities for youth to experience the arts and lifelong learning.

I look forward to reading and submitting your entries for judging.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Lerch-Gaggl, PhD

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GFWC-WI Member Short Story and Poetry Contest Rules

- Authors must be dues-paying members of an active GFWC club.
- Entries must be typed, double-spaced, printed on one side only, with minimum margins of one-inch (1") on all four sides, on 8.5 x 11 – inch paper.
- Entries must be written during the contest year. January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021, and the following year from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022.
- Entries **must have the following information** on the top right-hand corner of **each** page:
 - Author's complete name, email address, mailing address and phone number.
 - Name of author's GFWC Club and State Federation
 - Local Club Name
 - GFWC- WI
 - Category – Poetry or Short Story
 - Title of work – no quotation marks or italics necessary
- Authors must be amateurs; earnings from writing may not exceed \$500 annually.
- Entries may not have been published prior to the competition and must be original works by the author.
- A signed GFWC Creative Arts Waiver must be included with each submission. A copy of this waver is included in this packet
- Short stories are limited to 2,000 words.
- Poetry entries can be any style with a minimum length of eight lines and a maximum of 50 lines.
- One entry per member per category.
- Clubs or individuals must send winning entries – one poem and one short story – to the GFWC-WI Writing Contest Chairman for judging.

- The 2022-2024 GFWC-WI Chairman:

Alexandra Lerch-Gaggi
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- The entries must be postmarked on or before February 12 of the given year (2/12/2023). Entries may be submitted by email as attachments in either .doc or .pdf format.
- The submissions must be complete, including the author's information in the right top corner if each page.
- GFWC-WI Chairman shall choose judges to select first place in each category.
- The GFWC-WI Chairman will submit one winning GFWC-WI entry per writing contest, per category, and ensure that the work is received by the National GFWC Writing Contests Chairman National no later than April 1 of the given year.
- Manuscripts will not be returned. All authors should keep an original copy of the entry.
- By submitting a short story or poem to GFWC-WI or GFWC, you are providing GFWC-WI or GFWC with royalty-free perpetual license to use, reproduce, post, display, create derivative works, sell, license the work in any media known or later invented without limitation, for commercial or non-commercial purposes.

GFWC-WI Youth Short Story and Poetry Contest Rules

- Entries must be typed, double-spaced, printed on one side only, with minimum margins of one-inch (1”) on all four sides, on 8.5 x 11-inch paper.
- Entries must be written during the contest year. January 1 – December 31, 2021 or the following year from January 1 to December 31 of 2022.
- Entries **must have the following** on the top right-hand corner of **each** page.
 - Author’s full name, email address, mailing address, and phone number.
 - Author’s school name and district, or home school supervisor
 - Name of the GFWC Club submitting the entry and GFWC-WI
 - Category – Poetry or Short Story
 - Title of Work
 - Grade Level Category
 - Category 1: Grades K, 1, and 2
 - Category 2: Grades 3, 4, and 5
 - Category 3: Grades 6, 7, and 8
 - Category 4: Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12
- Authors must be amateurs; earnings from writing may not exceed \$500 annually.
- Entries may not have been published prior to the competition and must be original works by the authors.
- A signed **GFWC Creative Arts Waiver must be included** with each submission. **This waiver must also be signed by a parent.** A copy of the waiver is included in this packet.
- One entry per youth per category.
- Short stories are limited to 2,000 words.
- Poetry entries can be any style, with a minimum length of eight lines and a maximum of 50 lines.

- The entries must be postmarked on or before February 12 of the given year (2/12/2023) to the GFWC-WI Chairman. Entries may be submitted as attachments via email in either .doc or .pdf format

- The 2022-2024 GFWC-WI Chairman:

Alexandra Lerch-Gaggl
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Pewaukee, WI 53072
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- GFWC-WI Chairman shall choose judges to select first place in each category.
- The GFWC-WI Chairman will submit one winning GFWC-WI entry per writing contest, per category, and ensure that the work is received by the National GFWC Writing Contests Chairman National no later than April 1 of the given year.
- **Manuscripts will not be returned.** All authors should keep an original copy of the entry.
- By submitting a short story or poem to GFWC-WI or GFWC, you are providing GFWC-WI or GFWC with royalty-free perpetual license to use, reproduce, post, display, create derivative works, sell, license the work in any media known or later invented without limitation, for commercial or non-commercial purposes.

Writing Contests Awards

Local Contests

Each local club may decide on its own award. It could be a certificate, a ribbon, a gift card or any other form of award that might engage writers.

GFWC-WI State Level Contests

- Member Contests

GFWC-WI will present a certificate annually to the top state entry in each contest.

- Youth Contests

GFWC-WI will present a certificate annually to the top entry in each category, per contest. (A total of eight (8) certificates)

GFWC National Level Contests

- Member Contests

GFWC will present certificates annually to the top three national entries per category. Three short story certificates and three poetry certificates.

- Youth Contests

GFWC will present certificates annually to the top entry in all four levels of each category.

Tips for Conducting a Top-Notch Youth Poetry and Short Story Competition in Your Community.

GFWC-WI Club's Responsibility

1. Advertise the contest in schools. Make the initial contact in September/October. Be sure to include private, public and parochial schools in your community. Also publish in the local newspapers to be sure to reach home-schooled students.
2. Provide contest rules to schools/teachers.
3. To encourage participation, your Club may want to offer monetary prizes, gift certificates or coupons for winning entries in addition to a certificate and the opportunity to proceed to the state competition level. No monetary awards are provided at the state and national levels.
4. Arrange for qualified judges to select winners.
5. Forward winning entries to the State Chairman by the deadline. **Be sure all entries follow all the contest rules.**
6. Follow up with notification to any winner in the state and national contests. Perhaps the winners could read their entries at a club meeting, or the entries could be published in the club newsletter.

Principal/Teacher's Responsibility:

1. Make students aware of the contest.
2. Assist students in selecting appropriate entries.
3. Make sure entries conform to contest requirements.
4. Forward entries to local club by deadline.

Timeline:

1. Be sure to meet your local club deadline.
2. Winners of club contests must be sent to State Chairman and be postmarked by February 12, 2023. Entries may be emailed.
3. State Chairman will forward winners to GFWC Writing Contests Chairman by April 1, of the given year.

(Sample Letter Introducing the Youth Contest to the Schools.)

Use Club Stationery or GFWC-WI Stationery

Date

Name of Principal/Teacher

Name of School

School Street Address

City, WI Zip code

Dear (name of principal/teacher):

The GFWC-WI (name of your local club) is sponsoring a Youth Poetry and Short Story contest for grades K through 12. The goal of this contest is to promote creative arts as a method of self-expression and encouragement to youth.

(If you are offering an incentive, put that paragraph here)

The rules for the contest are attached to this letter. The entries will be judged locally before going on to the state contest. Those winning at the state level will be forwarded to the national writing contest of the GFWC. The winners from the national contest will be announced at the GFWC International Convention in June.

We ask that you make copies of this letter and the rules of the contest and forward them to your teachers. (If this is a grade school you should ask that they be forwarded to all teachers. If a junior high, middle school, or high school, ask that they be forwarded to Language Arts or English teachers. If it is a K-8 school, ask for both grade level and Language Arts/English teachers to receive copies)

To not put a burden of postage on your school, a member of the (name of your club) will be available to pick up the entries on (set a date well before the date you have to submit your winners to the state chairman). Please have the entries available at the front desk of your school by (set specific time of day).

We are very pleased to offer this opportunity to your students. The (your local club) has been serving our community for (number of years) and is excited to be part of this statewide contest. If you have any questions, please call or email.

Sincerely,

Name of Your Club President

Phone and email of club President

Tips for Conducting a Top-Notch Member Poetry and Short Story Competition in Your Club.

1. Promote the contest within the club. Make announcements of contest in September/October. Encourage all members interested in writing to participate. Offer incentives if the club wishes.
2. Provide contest rules to all club members. Put the contest rules in club newsletter, hand out rules at meetings.
3. Make sure entries conform to contest requirements.
4. Make sure all entries are in proper format. Please be sure your members are not disqualified on a technicality.
5. Be sure all entries have a completed and signed GFWC Creative Arts Waiver.
6. Arrange for qualified judges to select winners.
7. Forward winning entries to State Chairman postmarked no later than February 12 of the given year (2/12/2023).
8. A contest in your club is not necessary. All members are able to submit a poem or short story directly to the state chairman by the appropriate due date.

Suggested GFWC-WI Judging Criteria for Poetry Contests

1. Entertainment
 - Does the poem serve to entertain or amuse reader?
 - Does the poem move the reader, stir passion, lift the reader up emotionally?
 - Would the poem be of great interest to others? Do you want to pass it on to other readers?
2. Polish and Expertise
 - Is the time and effort that went into the poem obvious?
 - Does it have the appearance of being thrown together with little effort?
3. Punctuation and Grammar
 - Does it read easily with periods, commas, accents and syllables flowing naturally?
 - Is the author's word choice appropriate and accurate?
4. Originality and Overall Impact
 - Has the writer taken the effort to coin unusual phrases or to make unusual comparisons?
 - Does this poem have the ability to get under your skin or to be so delightful as to be virtually unforgettable?
 - Does the poem flow smoothly?
 - Does the poem educate?
5. Does the poem meet the technical criteria?
 - Minimum of 8 lines and maximum of 50 lines
 - Correct margins? Typewritten? Printed on one side only?
 - Correct heading on every page?

Suggested GFWC-WI Judging Criteria for Short Story Contests

1. Originality of thought and idea
 - Judges should keep in mind that there are very few short story ideas that have not been used in one way or another.
2. Overall writing
 - Does the beginning catch your attention?
 - Is there too little action? Too much?
 - Is it too wordy? Too terse?
 - Is there a good balance between dialogue and narration?
 - Is the dialogue realistic and believable?
3. Character development
 - Are the characters well-developed and convincing?
 - Is there good interaction between characters?
 - Is it clear in whose point of view the story is told?
 - Is there at least one character interesting enough for you to care what happens to him or her?
 - In the short amount of space available, how well did the writer give life to his characters and make the reader care about them?
4. Setting
 - Is the setting well described?
 - Is there enough description of the setting? Too much?
5. Plot
 - How well did the author use the given parameters to create an interesting and believable plot?
 - Is the plot fresh and imaginative?

- Does one thing lead to another as the plot develops?
 - Are there plot gaps the reader wishes had been filled?
6. Ending
- Is the ending acceptable and satisfying to the reader?
 - Were all loose ends neatly tied up?
 - Did the reader feel more ending was needed? Less?
7. Overall Feeling
- In addition to all the other criteria, how does this story compare with others the reader has read?
8. Interest Retention
- Did the story hold the reader's interest all the way to the end?
9. Desire for Continuation
- How much did the reader want the story to continue because it was enjoyable, rather than being glad the story was over?
10. Mechanics
- Is the story mechanically correct? A minimum of usage, spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.
11. Technical Criteria
- Does not exceed two thousand (2,000) words?
 - Correct margins, printed on one side only? Typewritten and double spaced?
 - Correct heading on every page?

	GFWC National	Six Trait Writing Rubric	2022-2024
	Ideas / Content	Organization	Conventions
6	Especially clear, focused, interesting, controlled Main ideas stand out Strong support: rich relevant details well-suited to audience and purpose Thorough, balanced, in-depth explanation Makes connections, shares insights	Organization appropriate to topic Effective sequencing, easy to follow Strong inviting beginning Strong, satisfying conclusion Smooth transitions Details fit where placed	Strong control of conventions: spelling, paragraphing, punctuation guide reader Unusual use may occur for stylistic effect Skill in using wide range of conventions Little or no need for editing
5	Clear, focused, interesting, controlled Main ideas stand out Strong support: relevant, carefully selected details well-suited to audience and purpose Thorough, balanced explanation Makes connections, shares insights	Organization appropriate to topic Effective sequencing, easy to follow Inviting beginning Satisfying conclusion Smooth transitions Details fit where placed	Correct grammar, usage, spelling Sound paragraphing Few capitalization errors Skill in using a wide range of conventions Little need for editing
4	Easily identifiable purpose; clear main idea(s) Supporting details relevant, but limited and/or too general for audience and purpose Topic is explained, but details may be somewhat out of balance with main ideas Some connections, insights	Organization predictable, too obvious Clear sequencing helps reader, but weak Developed beginning not inviting Developed conclusion lacks subtlety Transitions are stilted or predictable Body easy to follow with details that fit	Control of conventions, but not wide range Basically sound paragraphing structure Minor, occasional lapses in grammar, usage, spelling, internal sentence punctuation Errors don't confuse reader Moderate need for editing
3	Easily identifiable purpose and main idea(s) Predictable, obvious main ideas heard before Support attempted: limited, out of balance, off topic, predictable, and/or overly general May have clichés, stereotypes Difficulty moving from general to specific	Sequencing attempted, but unclear Undeveloped or obvious beginning / ending Overuse of a few transitional devices Too tight formulaic structure Confusing placement of details Organization breaks down in places	Errors begin to interfere with readability Some control over only basic conventions Text too simple to evidence mastery Significant need for editing
2	Unclear purpose, main ideas Minimal development; insufficient details Irrelevant, off-topic details Excessive repetition	Sequencing frequently unclear Missing or undeveloped intro, body, ending Transitions missing, ineffective, overused Randomly placed details confuse reader	Little control over basic conventions Errors interfere with meaning Substantial need for editing
1	Ideas extremely limited or unclear Minimal development; too short	Lack of effective sequencing, transitions No beginning, ending	Very limited skills in conventions Errors interfere with readability

			Extensive need for revision
	GFWC National	Six Trait Writing Rubric	2022-2024
	Voice	Sentence Fluency	Word Choice
6	Effective, appropriate level of closeness to or distance from audience for purpose of writing Exceptionally strong sense of audience A sense that the topic comes to life with appropriate originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, suspense	Effective, effortless flow, rhythm Extensive variation in sentence structure Patterns add interest, power, grace Sentence structure helps meaning Strong control of structure, style, dialog Expressive oral reading is easy, enjoyable	Powerful, accurate, specific words energize writing, evoke strong images Fresh, original expression Vocabulary striking, varied, but natural Slang, if used, is purposeful and effective
5	Appropriate level of closeness to or distance from audience for purpose of writing Strong sense of audience A sense that the topic comes to life with appropriate originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, suspense	Easy flow, rhythm Variation in sentence structure Sentence structure helps meaning Control of structure, style, dialog Expressive oral reading is easy	Accurate, specific words give energy to writing Fresh, vivid expression Vocabulary may be striking but natural Slang, if used, is purposeful and effective
4	Voice present, but inconsistent level of closeness to or distance from the audience A sense of audience; writer aware of reader but not consistently employing appropriate voice Uses liveliness, sincerity, humor, but at times, inappropriately casual or formal	Natural sound, may lack rhythm, grace Some repeated patterns of structure Strong control over simple sentences; variable control over complex Lapses in control Ease in oral reading	Words functional but do not add energy Attempts at language may seem overdone Technical jargon may not suit audience or purpose; slang not particularly effective Some fine moments; generally avoids clichés
3	No apparent matching of voice to topic, purpose, audience Occasional sense of the writer Limited ability to shift to more objective voice when necessary	Some fluid, others choppy, lack energy Some structure variety, some repetitive Little control over complex sentences Lapses in control; stilted or unnatural Requires reader to slow down or reread	Words ordinary, rarely capture reader Most words accurate; some not Attempts at colorful language overdone Relies on clichés and overused expressions Language inappropriate for audience, purpose
2	Lack of audience awareness; little sense of “writing to be read” Little or no hint of writer behind words Voice overly formal or personal	Awkward, choppy, rambling construction Sentence patterns overly repetitive Difficult to read aloud	Words colorless, flat, or imprecise Repetition Relies on worn, detracting expressions Fuzzy or absent images
1	Flat, lifeless, stiff, mechanical Lacks audience awareness; doesn’t engage reader No hint of writer behind words	Confusing word order clouds meaning Fragmented, confusing, choppy, rambling Difficult to follow or read aloud	General, vague words do not communicate Words limited, inadequate, do not fit



CREATIVE ARTS WAIVER

With my signature I declare that:

- I have created the submitted work, entitled _____, and I own the full copyright. The work has not been published before.
- With my work, including pictures, tables, or additional media, I do not violate or infringe the copyright of other persons or entities.

The work in question is (please check one): Photography Poetry Short Story

- I grant the General Federation of Women's Clubs a royalty-free perpetual license to use, reproduce, post, display, create derivative works, sell, license, or sub-license the work in any media now known or later invented without limitation, for commercial or non-commercial purposes.
- I agree that I shall not release the work to any other publication in the same or substantially similar form, without prior written and explicit consent from the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

This agreement shall become effective and binding at the date of formal acceptance of the work for publication by the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

Full Name (Print)		
Mailing Address		
City	State	Zip
Email		
Phone		

Signature

Date