



PTA Reflections Program JUDGING TIPS

How to Select Judging Dates

Judging dates should take into consideration the date entries are due to your unit, the deadline for submitting entries to the next level of judging, and the number of entries you expect to receive. Dedicate a minimum of two weeks to the judging process. Allow another two to three weeks for preparing artwork for the next level of judging.

How to Judge Entries

All PTA Reflections Program entries should be judged on artistic merit, creativity, mastery of the medium, and interpretation of the theme. Mastery of the medium in the context of the national Reflections Program pertains to the level of skill the student demonstrates in the basic principles/ techniques of the arts area. However, a well-developed concept is more important than technique. Entries should be judged primarily on how well the student uses his or her artistic vision to portray the theme.

The chart below offers a basic judging rubric to use in evaluating entries and assigning awards.

Sample Judging Rubric

Interpretation of Theme	How closely the piece relates to the theme, based on the artwork itself and the artist statement	5pts
Artistic Merit/ Creativity	How creative and original the piece is in its conception of the theme and its presentation	3pts
Mastery of Medium	The level of skill demonstrated in the basic principles/techniques of the arts area	2pts

With this rubric, each entry would have a total of no more than 10 possible points from each judge. Have judges record their points for each entry on a score card (see the template provided at PTAreflections.org). Add the points from each judge and rank the artwork accordingly. If two entries are tied, the entry with the higher score for interpretation of theme receives more recognition.

In addition to the judging rubric and score card, give all judges the general participation rules and arts area rules.

Recruiting Judges

Reflections Program judges can be any members of your community who have expertise or experience in the arts area(s) they are selected to judge. Individuals who have taught in the arts area are often ideal judges. Sources of judges might include:

- Art, literature, dance, film, journalism, and music educators or college/university professors

- Teachers from other schools participating in the Reflections Program
- Art museum directors, docents, curators, or historians
- Professional photographers and local artists
- Local symphony orchestra or choral directors, musicians, conductors, or composers
- Local dance conservatories, dance studios, ballets, or theaters
- Local multimedia/video production companies
- Newspaper journalists, editors, or photographers
- Local television stations
- Arts advocacy organization presidents or directors

To determine the number of judges needed, consider the number of entries and number of arts areas being judged. No one person should have to review more than 75 to 100 entries for any given arts area. A good point of reference may be to offer a minimum of one judge per grade division per arts area. Judges may judge more than one arts area as long as they are qualified in all areas in which they judge.

Remember to recognize judges in promotions and thank them for their participation. Some PTAs provide each judge with a small gift or certificate of appreciation.

Blind Judging

It is important to conduct blind judging—where judges do not see the artists' names—in situations or settings where judges may know a student. Here are some tips for conducting blind judging.

- **Literature:** Distribute photocopies of *only* the front side of each literature entry. However, send the *original* manuscript of each winning entry on to the next level of judging.
- **Musical composition, dance choreography, and film production:** For each arts area, prepare a CD or DVD of all the entries, as well as a list of the entries, using a code for the students' names. Include the grade division, title of work, playing time, and artist statement in the list of entries.
- **Photography and visual arts:** Cover the personal information attached to the artwork by folding the Student Entry Form. If the student has signed the artwork, cover the signature for judging.

Beyond the local PTA level, blind judging will need to occur only if there is a chance that the judges may know a student. In most situations, judges at the council, district/region, and state levels should be able to use the original materials for judging.

Conflicts of Interest

If a judge is connected to a student participant, or would know a student's work despite blind judging, the judge should remove him- or herself from the judging process for the affected arts area(s) to prevent a conflict of interest. Teachers from the host school may know student work and/or have a conflict of interest in judging, so it is better to invite teachers from another school that offers the Reflections Program.