

**Torrance Legacy Creative Writing Awards
Short Story Scoring Rubric**

Category	4	3	2	1
Originality and Insight	The story is marked by a fresh, distinctive approach. It is highly imaginative or creative, or it reflects exceptional insight well beyond the commonplace.	The story conveys some creative, imaginative, or insightful ideas beyond the commonplace.	The story reflects few creative, substantive, or imaginative ideas out of the ordinary.	The story communicates no substantive or imaginative ideas and is unremarkable.
Language Expression	Vivid description, concise elaboration, and lucid expression enrich the story. Skillful use of creative and authentic language captivates the reader and makes the story wonderful.	Word choice, phrasing, description, and elaboration are generally suitable and effective.	Word choice and phrasing are minimally effective. Description and elaboration may be insufficient, too wordy, or pretentious.	Use of language is trite, bland, contrived, or unsuitable.
Plot Development	The plot is fully developed: setting, conflict, climax, and qualifying resolution are readily identifiable and well detailed. The story is highly intriguing, poignant, or evocative. A real page-turner; clearly plausible or imaginable.	The plot is moderately developed: setting, conflict, climax, and qualifying resolution are basically present. The story draws the reader in somewhat and is generally plausible or imaginable.	Only parts of the plot are developed: time or place may be missing; main conflict or climax may not be apparent; concluding event may not qualify as resolution. The story is of marginal plausibility and interest for the reader.	The author has not developed a plot: common story elements are not identifiable. The story is implausible or not imaginable and is of little or no interest to the reader.
Character Development	Engaging characters are well developed and fully plausible in keeping with the nature of the story. They are convincingly portrayed and come alive.	Characters are basically understood and generally believable. Their qualities and behavior are depicted to some degree.	Characters are loosely understood but do not ring true consistently. Few personal characteristics are delineated.	There is no development or apparent understanding of main characters.
Organization and Flow	The story is carefully sequenced and flows smoothly; it is clearly focused and easily understandable to the reader. An engaging introduction, engrossing development, and fulfilling, suitable conclusion form a clear framework.	The story is basically sequenced and flows fairly smoothly; it is generally focused and relatively understandable to the reader. It has an adequate beginning, development, and ending.	The focus and flow of the story are inconsistent; the reader must work to understand it. Sequencing of events is confusing and transitions are inadequate. Introduction and/or conclusion are minimal.	The story lacks focus and fluidity. The point of the story is indiscernible. Story events lack logical sequence. Details either ramble on unnecessarily or are absent. Introduction, conclusion, or both, are missing.

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[View Poetry Rubric](#)