

SCENARIO WRITING COMPONENT

Tips for Coaches

General

- Be aware that ideas and good writing are both important in FPSPI scenario writing.
- If participating in the competitive round, follow the instructions carefully (1,500 words, printed/typed, double-spaced, title on the first page of the scenario, number of copies, etc.). See the 2009-2010 scenario writing rules for more information.

Topics

- Review each of the five topics with students.
- Discuss which of the five topics interests them the most.
- Review the future scenes, if provided.
- Generate imagined futures for the other topics.

Research

- Encourage students to read as much material on their chosen topic as they need to understand the various facets of the topic.
- Provide the enclosed bibliographies and/or the appropriate chapters in the *2009-10 Readings, Research, and Resources*.
- Have students take notes on useful facts or ideas from their research.

FPS Model

Encourage students to use a shortened version of the FPS model to help them clarify their thinking on the topic, as well as provide sources for a scenario theme.

- A suggested shortened version of the process includes 8 challenges for Step 1, an underlying problem for Step 2, and 8 solution ideas for Step 3.

Characterization

Scenario writers should identify a central, identifiable, sustained character(s) -- animate or inanimate -- and develop that character throughout the events and/or plot of the scenario.

Futuristic Element

Encourage students to

- Write their scenarios as though their future were the present.
- Make evident futuristic trends and predictions throughout the scenario
- Avoid lengthy explanations and descriptions of the present day mechanical devices and social trends

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Tips for Authors

General

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Futures

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

Pre-Writing

- Read and gather information in *2009-2010 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 identify your story with the selected topic and the time period in which your scenario is set.

Technique

- Utilize appropriate formats for writing a scenario - narrative, dialogue, diary, journal, and letter writing, etc.
- Use conflict, adventure, suspense, humor (satire, parody) in the development of the scenario.
- Use first or third person.
- Incorporate dialogue, if it's appropriate to do so.
- Provide background information in "bits and scratches" in dialogue and/or thoughts. Blocks of flashback are usually too long for 1,500 words.

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," in order to set up a moment of suspense.

Purpose

- Narrow the topic to establish and maintain a clear focus.
- Write the scenario with a point set in the future as if it were really happening in the present.

Audience

- Involve the audience (readers) immediately in the introductory paragraph.
- Be aware of your audience; involve readers by writing to elicit an emotional response from them.

Style

- Demonstrate a suitable voice/tone throughout the scenario.
- Exhibit the author's personal touch through vivid, colorful description that gives the writing life and spirit.

Idea Development

- 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.

Mechanics/Structure

- Use appropriate grammar, effective sentence structure, organizational strategies, and effective closure.
- Use effective organizational strategies and appropriate transitional elements.

Post-Writing

Check the scenario to see if the paragraphs/sections are clear, unified, and coherent; check for accuracies in the following areas: grammar, spelling, omissions, repetitions, verb tenses, word usage, etc. Edit, edit, edit.