

# GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION OF SCENARIO WRITING

## For Coaches

### USE OF RUBRIC

Evaluators will use the rubric to score all scenarios. They will read all scenarios and form a preliminary opinion as to the ranking of the sample.

Evaluators will:

- Use the Rubric with each scenario.
- Beginning with the middle score (3; 5-6; or 7-9), evaluate the scenario using each criterion.
- If criterion is met, move up to next higher score for consideration.
- Repeat and assign highest score that fits the scenario.
- If criterion with the middle score is not met, move down to the next lower score.
- Repeat for each criterion, rating each criterion independent of the others.
- Assign the total score that best fits the scenario.

### RUBRIC DESCRIPTORS

Although each criterion of the rubric is explained on the scoresheet, it is helpful to look more closely at a more detailed description of each before evaluating.

#### **Creative Thinking:**

Look for fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration when scoring creative thinking. Using creativity in a variety of ways also advances this score. Highest scores will be awarded if many of the following elements are present:

- Inventive thinking (originality) – Note unusual approaches to problems or solutions, novel characteristics of objects or characters, “out of the box” thinking, etc.
- Unusual setting or characters (originality)
- Surprise or novel ending (originality)
- Elaborated and relevant details (elaboration/fluency) – Look for sensory details as well as details of reflections, emotions, or thoughts.
- Variety in categories of creative ideas (flexibility) - See the FPS Category List for ideas about the different areas in which creativity may be displayed.

This main difference between Strong and Proficient levels for Creative Thinking is that the Proficient level does not always sustain the creative thinking whereas the Strong level will see evidence throughout the writing.

#### **Futuristic Thinking:**

Look for consistent futuristic thinking throughout the scenario – not just in one or two places where futuristic “gadgets” are described. Also ask these questions:

- Does the writer base ideas on current trends/research and make logical projections into the future? Distinguish here between futuristic trends research as opposed to Topic Related Research.
- Are the ideas believable?
- Are the futuristic ideas relevant to the story and/or the topic?
- Has the writer projected specialized language – terminology unique to the topic or specialist in the field - into the future?

An innovative idea that is also futuristic is a blending of research, analogy, and creativity that predicts a possible future. By combining futuristic thinking, creativity, and research, a writer may justify and make his/her unique idea believable. This sophistication of thought will be awarded points in multiple criteria.

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### Idea Development:

Note here the differences between the Strong and Exemplary levels. “In-depth” at the Strong level signifies understanding in great detail and the ability to share the key details the reader needs to understand. “Complex” at the Exemplary level goes one step further. Instead of just showing a comprehensive awareness that focuses the reader, the writer is able to connect this information into complex ideas revealed by choosing key pertinent details that engage the reader and allows him/her to take the story to a new level of understanding. Keep these things in mind when evaluating Idea Development:

- Strong, positive social/cultural aspects
- Logical connection to the topic
- Believable explanations
- Consequences/impact of ideas on situation posed
- Sophistication in organizational strategies
- Natural transitions
- Appropriate rising action/conflict leading to resolution/dénouement  
Note: Resolution does NOT necessarily mean a solution.
- Reflections – Insights into the consequences of characters’ actions or challenges related to the topic or plot, allowing the reader to make connections and reflect on the points being made

### Style/Voice:

The tone of the scenario should entertain, inform or persuade without being overly “haughty” or “chummy.” A writer’s anger should not seep through the scenario except as a reflection of a character’s thoughts and emotions. Scenarios should avoid overused adverbs and adjectives, should use colorful verbs, and include words that convey feeling. In addition, a mixture of some of the following elements of style should be evidenced throughout the scenario:

- Simile/Metaphor
- Idioms
- Sensory Detail
- Symbolism
- Understatement/Exaggeration
- Personification
- Foreshadowing
- Allusion

In addition:

- Well crafted, varied sentences
- Personal touch motivating reader to consider consequences
- Skillful use of vocabulary

*\*Special Note: The Audience criteria descriptors on the previous scoresheet are now included in Style/Voice in order to avoid the confusion that the writer must address a specific audience as in a diary, letter, etc. The Audience previously referred to is anyone who reads the scenario. The writer should use an appropriate tone and voice acceptable to a wide range of reader.*

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### Character Development:

Look for a central/main character(s) - animate or inanimate - developed throughout the scenario. Some more mature writers may include a second “main” character or a subordinate character that is also well developed. Save the scores of 1 for scenarios that narrate without advancing a character through the action. When evaluating a well developed character(s), consider the following:

- Many facets of characters’ personalities evident
- Characters show emotional responses to situations and dialogue
- Characters analyze, reflect, or show insight to ideas, issues, or concepts
- Main character undergoes a change (however slight) as a result of the “rising action” of the story
- Characters evoke emotional response in reader

### Mechanics:

An evaluator must consider punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar for this criterion; however, advanced writers may:

- use conventions creatively for a purpose or to enhance meaning
- “play with” dialogue, dialect, or slang without detracting from story line

### Topic Related Research:

Good writers will artfully blend research about the topic or topic related futuristic trends into the story line. Look for relevant terminology as well as a logical projection of knowledge about the topic into the future.

## REMINDERS TO EVALUATORS

1. **Consider Age of Writer** - FPS students may sound like they are in graduate school, but don’t forget their youth. Although a similar amount of effort, thought, and time may have gone into both a junior and a senior scenario, a world of difference exists between the two finished products. Junior and some middle writers may not have yet developed their own personal style and may have had limited knowledge of how real people behave in complex situations. Junior writers also have a much more limited understanding of how economic, government, and educational institutions really operate. Even for senior writers, research alone may not replace the real world knowledge that they simply have not yet experienced. Understanding the students is a key to providing effective feedback.
2. **Leave out Personal Biases and Beliefs** – FPS scenario writers come from a variety of religious, cultural, and political backgrounds. It is not your job as an evaluator to change a writer’s perspective on life, convince them of a different viewpoint, or impose your beliefs on them. Your comments and scoring should reflect the clarity and effectiveness of their writing regardless of your ideas on the subject. As scenario writers, they are encouraged to make their audience think about their purpose, not necessarily to persuade.
3. **Use the Rubric** – Once again, please work the rubric as instructed above in order to ensure more consistency in scoring. Students and coaches can then better evaluate ways to improve for the next time.

None of the suggested techniques for providing effective feedback should be misinterpreted as saying that you should set low expectations. In fact, the opposite is true. Scenario writers will continually amaze you with their breadth of knowledge, creativity, and insight. Furthermore, high expectations often produce better results. Evaluators should set their expectations high and remember that students with limited life experience and great potential for growth write sophisticated FPS scenarios. Set your expectations realistically high, offer feedback in a positive manner, and encourage writers to reach their full potential.

## RANKING

Each evaluator receives a sample of randomly distributed scenarios. The top scoring booklet in each evaluator’s sample is awarded a rank of “1.” The second highest scenario receives a “2,” and so on. Multiple evaluations determine the top scenario. Using a ranking system, the toughness or leniency of evaluators is less significant. The important factor is how a scenario is scored with the others in a sample.