

General Guidelines for Using The Middle Kingdom Arts and Sciences Faire Judging Criteria

All entries in the Middle Kingdom Arts and Sciences Faire will be scored on a scale of 0 to 30 points. The point breakdown is described below.

Documentation (0 to 4 points): In this section, the judge rates the quality and comprehensiveness of the documentation, as well as how well the entrant has made use of the sources obtained. Although minimal documentation is required, extra points may be awarded if the entrant discusses:

- Precedent or rationale for original work or deviations from period norms.
- How the entry fits into the entire period's style.
- Appropriateness of the entry to a specified occasion, person, use or period environment.
- Primary source references.
- Sources used in documentation include:
 - Primary sources, which are works from period, artifacts in museums, buildings and statuary that are still in existence, paintings, description of performances, books and manuscripts written in period.
 - Secondary sources are books and articles which were written with reference to primary sources.
 - Tertiary sources are books which rely on secondary sources, such as most college-level history books.
 - Direct experience by the entrant when working with materials and processes.

All four elements are important in documentation and the best entries will have all four elements significantly represented. Clear, typed, well-organized and concise documentation is preferred and outline form may be helpful.

All the categories will use the following criteria to judge documentation:

- 0: No documentation provided with entry.
- 1: Minimal information consisting of time, place and style.
- 2: As in #1, plus use of general sources; emphasis on tertiary sources with perhaps one second source (ex: use of encyclopedia articles with a possible additional use of a book or article that refers to a period source.).
- 3: As in #2, plus a developed discussion making use of critical references; sources are largely secondary (ex: sources refer to period references; documentation discusses, compares, and contrasts the source's views).
- 4: As in #3, plus explanation of original research/experiment and relation of source material to it. Primary sources, if available, are emphasized (ex: sources used are from the appropriate period for the entry, such as period manuscripts, paintings or artifacts).

Methods and Materials (0 to 4 points): In this section, the judges will rate how "period" the entry is, in terms of materials and methods of manufacture. A piece will score lower if the entrant uses non-period elements or combines period elements in a manner which is illogical to the specified period. The judges will always assume modern tools and materials unless the entrant says otherwise in their documentation. The entrant is also advised to justify material substitutions and non-period methods of the entry's authenticity in the accompanying documentation.

All the categories will use the following criteria to judge authenticity:

- 0: Entry is completely modern with no relationship to period elements or practices.
- 1: Use of modern materials and methods to produce an item or performance that would not be accepted in period but either bears some relationship to an authentic work or which might be useful within SCA Culture.
- 2: Use of both modern material and methods to produce a work that looks, feels or sounds authentic

- to the time period it purports to be.
- 3: Use of either modern material or methods to produce a work that looks, feels or sounds authentic.
 - 4: Use of totally authentic materials and methods.

Scope (0 to 6 points): In this section, the judges will rate the ambition, not the success of the entry. In most cases, the judges assign a ranking in a number of broad areas, such as the scope of the endeavor, the techniques required, the variety of elements combined, etc., and averages the rankings for the entry's total Scope score. The judges are instructed to judge each entry within its time period, so the assumption of earlier period (600-1100 c.e.) works are automatically easier than later period (1400-1600 c.e.) works is invalid since although the techniques involved in earlier period works are often simple, the amount of research required to create the entry is often far greater due to lack of extant artifacts.

Skill (0 to 6 points): [Formerly called "Workmanship"] In this section, the judges will rate how well the entry was made. In most cases, the judges assign a ranking in a number of broad areas, such as how well the entry does what it was meant to do, how well it's various elements work together, how skillfully the details are handles, etc. and averages the rankings for the entry's total Skill score.

Creativity (0 to 4 points): In this section, the judges rank the extent of originality and innovation shown by the entrant, but the creativity shown must be in a period context, such as the substitution of one logical element for another or the substitution of materials within period context.

Judge's Observations (0 to 6 points): In this section, the judges rank the entry as a whole. How well do all the separately judged parts fit together? The entry's overall effect is judged in this section. This is the only section of the Criteria where the judge may allow her/his personality, private opinions and personal preferences to influence scoring.