

# Literary Composition: Prose

## Category Rules

This category is for all original prose, fiction or nonfiction, written in a pre-17th-c. style such as history and chronicle, saga, hagiographic legend, treatise, and romance. Dramatic works should be entered in the Composition: Drama category. The topic(s) must be pre-17th-c. in nature or presented in terms that suggest a pre-17th-c. world. This category is **not** for transcriptions, translations, etc. While a limited amount of material written by others is allowable (i.e., quotes from other sources or significant reworking of an existing story into a new piece), the newly composed material must be of sufficient quantity and nature to justify its classification as a new work. Furthermore, all material not composed by the entrant must be out of copyright (or accompanied by written permission from the copyright owner) and clearly attributed to the original source in the entry's documentation and bibliography. This is a mail-in category. All mail-in entries must be sent (postmarked) to the KMOAS **by January 15**. No late entries will be accepted. **THE KMOAS RECOMMENDS THAT YOU EMAIL YOUR ENTRY**. Any updates or changes to this deadline will be published in the Middle Kingdom newsletter, *The Pale*. Post-mail entries are accepted, but will be scanned in and delivered via email to judges. This category is eligible for Regional Faires.

Judges may choose not to evaluate more than 15 pages of text. If the entry is longer, the entrant must clearly indicate in the documentation which 15 pages the judges should examine. Judged material need not be contiguous and may include up to five segments, as needed. For face-to-face judging, each entry must include four printed copies of the composition and four printed copies of the documentation. See Research and Documentation for desired content of the composition and documentation.

## Research and Documentation (Score: 0-4 points)

Documentation should include historical information relevant to the piece, as well as justification for creative decisions. For full points, the entry should include a discussion of major and minor aspects of the work, and:

- When, where, and by whom such a work would have been composed.
- Its intended audience and/or milieu of distribution.
- The literary and linguistic characteristics of style and content appropriate to its period (including, wherever relevant examples would aid understanding, quotes from other works in that style).
- Any occurrences and reasons for departures from period stylistic practices.
- An overview of the general creative process involved in the entry.
- Entries or sections written in languages not normally using the Latin alphabet such as Japanese, Arabic, or Greek should be transliterated into Roman letters and include a pronunciation guide. Transcriptions, redactions, or translations of period works in whole or in part should include references and thorough documentation of the source material including publication data.

- 0 No documentation provided with entry. Face-to-face judging adds very little information.
- 1 Minimal info is provided for time, place and style. Face-to-face judging adds some background info.
- 2 As in #1, generalized sources are given with no emphasis on primary and/or scholarly resources. In face-to-face judging, no further understanding of the resources is evident. Materials and methods of composition of the entry are described.
- 3 As in #2, there is a good balance of resources: primary and/or scholarly sources well supported by other resources. Documentation and/or face-to-face judging provides well developed discussion of research. Materials and methods of composition are described and reasons for choices discussed.
- 4 As in #3, in-depth and extensive documentation provides a good balance of resources, emphasizing primary (if available) and/or scholarly resources backed up with a significant selection of other resources. Documentation and/or face-to-face judging provide a good explanation of original research and experimentation related to the research. Face-to-face judging indicates a keen grasp of the research and the entrant can discuss it easily with active engagement. Appendices included in documentation (if any) help provide further pertinent information to subject and time period.

### **Materials and Methods** (Score: 0-4 points)

Rank the quality and accuracy, not the difficulty, of the materials and methods used in the entry. Materials may include topics, source documents, real people/places/events, etc. mentioned in the entry. Methods may include type or style of composition, use of language, literary devices, and/or narrative conventions. Regardless of the time/place of the piece's style, entries will not be penalized for being written in modern English, provided that the text avoids mention of post-16th-c. objects, persons, and places, and the vocabulary and syntax are free of obvious "modernisms." Literary/linguistic devices that do not work in modern English or are offensive/incomprehensible to modern audiences may be replaced with equivalent devices that work well in modern English for modern audiences, provided the substitutions are logical and the differences between the substitute and the original technique are adequately explained in the documentation.

- 0 No attempt at an authentic composition, piece is completely modern.
- 1 Use of modern themes, devices, and conventions to produce a work that wouldn't be accepted in period but either bears a relationship to an authentic work or which might be useful in SCA culture.
- 2 Use of primarily modern themes/devices/conventions to produce a work that looks, feels, or sounds authentic to the relevant time period. SCA-cultural topics are obviously modern but fit into period context.
- 3 A mixture of some modern themes, devices, and conventions and some authentic themes, devices, and conventions to produce a work that looks, feels, or sounds authentic. SCA-cultural topics or themes are referenced but in a believable manner for the relevant time period.
- 4 Use of totally authentic themes, devices, and conventions (ex: period use of language and vocabulary or reasonable equivalent if style would have required a foreign language; special effort to make theme, literary devices, conventions fit form; total consistency of form, language, sentiments, subjects, etc.; appropriateness to the specified time and place context or occasion).

### **Scope** (Score: 0-6 points for each bullet item)

Rank the **ambition**, not the success, of the entry for each of the following elements, respective to the intended genre of the work.

- Complexity of form/structure.
- Intricacy of plot or subject matter.
- Extent of supporting detail and background.
- Use and depth of characters.
- Difficulty/variety of linguistic elements (grammar, spelling, diction, etc.).
- Difficulty/variety of literary techniques (tone, pacing, balance, flow, etc.).
- Difficulty/variety of literary devices (repetition, hyperbole, metaphor, etc.).
- Attempt to understand and communicate with intended audience.

### **Skill** (Score: 0-6 points for each bullet item)

Rank the **success** of the entry for each of the following, respective to the intended genre of the work.

- Cohesion to intended form/structure.
- Coherence/clarity of plot or subject matter.
- Quality of supporting detail/background.
- Quality/clarity of characterization.
- Skillfulness of linguistic elements (grammar, spelling, diction, etc.).
- Skillfulness of literary techniques (tone, pacing, balance, flow, etc.).
- Skillfulness of literary devices (repetition, hyperbole, metaphor, etc.).
- Demonstrated understanding of intended audience.

### **Ingenuity** (Score: 0-4 points)

Judge the ingenuity of the entry. Was the entrant resourceful and inventive in the approach to creating their entry? Does the entry reflect the entrant's vision of period context? Is original thought, contemplation, interpretation, and vision evident according to the entrant's period?

### **Judge's Observation** (Score: 0-6 points)

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 judges may allow their personality, private opinions, and personal preferences to influence scoring.