

Lochac A&S Competition - Judging Guide

For the use of the judges. Provide one copy of this document for each skill category. Provide pens, and sheets of paper for making working notes. Collect and destroy working notes after the competition.

- Entrants want to finish a competition feeling good about it, and we want people to keep entering and enjoying the competitions.
- Anyone can judge a competition! You don't have to be a Laurel, or at all knowledgeable about the topic. We have Judging Criteria to guide you.
- If you need extra help evaluating an entry, it's okay to ask someone with more expertise.
- Make working notes on a separate paper, so you can keep track of your thoughts without writing prematurely on the Judging Report.
- Make sure to point out lots of positive aspects of an entry.
- It's better to under-criticise.

Process:

Find out which skill category you are responsible for, and get together with the other people judging that category. **Judging is a group task!**

Look at each entry carefully, and read the documentation to find out more about it. The documentation provided may answer any questions which have arisen.

Fill in your name (and contact details, if willing) at the beginning of the Judging Report for each entry.

Compare each entry to the Judging Criteria (rubric), and decide how many points you think the entry should receive in each category. Make notes on your separate paper.

Together, discuss the entries, and place them in order from best to least.

Together, discuss appropriate scores for each entry.

Write the agreed scores into the spaces provided. Put the total at the bottom.

(Only if judges are giving separate scores; ignore this step if agreed scoring is being used) Determine the average for that entry from the individual judges' scoring, and write that in the space provided.

The total for each entry in your category should match with your previously-agreed order.

Together, decide what feedback the judges will give. Remember to emphasise the positive! Page 2 of this document offers some tips.

One person should write the agreed comments onto the Judging Report.

Tell the co-ordinator if you think any entries are particularly worthy of acclaim. Outstanding entries should be mentioned in court, at the event where they were judged.

Transfer individual results from the Judging Form to the Record of Results.
(The competition co-ordinator may organise this.)

Once the Record of Results is complete, the Judging Form can be returned to each entrant.
(The competition co-ordinator may organise this.)

Good Feedback:

Giving good feedback is a skill that can be learnt.

A common reason people enter A&S competitions in Lochac is to seek feedback on their work. Harsh or thoughtless commentary can make someone give up on A&S altogether.

The Judging Criteria are designed to work well with a physical item or a performance. Some entries will not match this at all - an essay, for instance. If you have such an entry to deal with, one solution is to award only a 'total' score, without assigning numbers to the different categories. Include a comment for the entrant, explaining why their result looks different from the rest.

When formulating feedback, consider the entrant's skill level.

- Beginners need lots of encouragement.
- Intermediates may appreciate ideas for improvement, or suggestions for resources.
- Experts will probably be glad to have taught -you- something through their entry.

If you are actually speaking to the person, ask them questions to elicit what they think is good about their entry.

- How many of these have you made?
- What worked well here?
- What did you learn from creating this?
- How would you improve it?
- What's your next step?

If you are giving written feedback, remember to stress the positive aspects of the entry, and be gentle. Even the lightest criticism can seem severe to someone feeling anxious or fragile.

Try some approaches:

- **Sandwich** - mention two things you like, then a helpful suggestion, then two more things you like about the entry.
- PHI - (**P**ositive-**H**elpful-**I**nteresting) - say something positive, then offer a helpful suggestion, then point out an interesting thing about the entry.
- Give **reasons** for any criticism.
- **Bullet points** can help keep comments brief and focussed.
- Offer a good **resource** you know of, or the name of a helpful person working in the field.
- Your **words** will matter a lot. Use phrases like:
 - "Could be more successful if..."
 - "...would improve the overall look"
 - "You could try..."
 - "(*this resource*) would help with...."
 - "You've worked hard on..."
 - "This looks good because..."
 - "Very impressive for your level"