

Writing Contest Rules and Guidelines

Rules:

1. Participants must be a student in Middle School (6th-8th grade), High School (9th-12th grade), College (ages 18-21), or the home-school equivalent for 6th-12th.
2. You may only submit ONE short story.
3. Short story must be 500 words or less (not including the title or punctuation).
4. Entries must be received by emailing Courtney.Jackson@flower-mound.com (Courtney Jackson, Youth Services Librarian) by the last submission date (listed on fmlibrary.net).
5. Formatting:
 - a. Title of the story should appear at the top.
 - b. Font: Times New Roman or Arial, 12pt size, black color
 - c. Spacing: 1.5
6. All short stories must stand alone. Excerpts of larger works will not be considered. All entries must be original work.
7. By submitting your short story, you certify that the story submitted is your own original work and has not been copied from any pre-existing work. You certify that you're a student between grades 6 and 12 or college-aged, and you understand that upon submission, you give permission to the Flower Mound Public Library to use the work for promotional purposes, including, but not limited to, publication on the library's teen blog, fmplteens.wordpress.com.

Tips for Writing Well:

1. PROOFREAD. Have at least one other person read your work to look for spelling and grammar mistakes, as well as how well your story makes sense.
2. DIALOGUE. Dialogue can be integral to the story but difficult to write. Poorly written dialogue is distracting and confusing for the reader.

Here are some tips to help you:

<http://writetodone.com/10-easy-ways-to-improve-your-dialogue/>

3. SPELL CHECK. When using spell check, don't just click on the suggested word. Sometimes the computer doesn't know what word you're trying to use, and that can destroy your sentence.
4. THESAURUS. This can be your best friend or your worst enemy! Using words suggested by the thesaurus can make your story more interesting, but you must know the exact definition of your word choice. Sometimes the suggested word has a slightly different meaning, which can change the whole meaning of your sentence!