

1996-97 VHSL CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST

JUDGES' GENERAL COMMENTS

We found the majority of this year's entries to be of a very high standard. All of the entries had a myriad of diverse qualities in terms of their subject matter, imagery and technical competence.

In addition to specific criteria which were universally important, we realized that there were also aspects to any quality work that cannot be neatly categorized. For example, a piece that took risks and claimed the language in a unique fashion could conceivably overcome certain limitations. Because each genre had its own challenges, we approached each category from different perspectives.

We found that the most successful stories were ones that grabbed the reader's attention in the first paragraph and were consistent in maintaining narrative motion which culminated in a surprising, satisfying conclusion. One common mistake we found was the inability of a story to contain and connect all of the events and characters it established. Often a sense of humor provided a broader range of expressive possibilities. In addition, consistency of voice and close attention to detail and concrete imagery was appreciated.

We were particularly impressed by essays with a tone that showed evidence of strong personal connection with the material at hand. Essays that brought specific information to bear on larger issues often displayed a broader perspective than essays that limited themselves to purely anecdotal. We found that technical problems were the most common flaw. Ability to state a clear thesis, to remain on topic, to use a style appropriate to the audience, and to push the analysis beyond generalities were some key elements to outstanding essay.

We found that organization was also important in poetry, in terms of line and stanza composition. Consistency of tone and subject seemed to be common difficulties. While use of poetic strategies such as rhyme and repetition were appreciated, it seemed at times that these were used to vague ends. Originality, *concrete* imagery, creative diction, and a voice that was consistently engaging (perhaps even idiosyncratic) were characteristics of the most successful poems.

Finally, there were many excellent works which we were not able to award the top rankings. Some of the works we believed had great potential did not receive the highest marks due to technical difficulties, which should not discourage anyone from pursuing their writing to the maximum potential. We appreciate the opportunity to read so many fine manuscripts, and hope that our comments were helpful. Keep writing!

1996-97 VHSL CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST RESULTS

GROUP AAA

Folder

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Woodbridge Senior HS | 5. Oakton HS |
| 2. C. D. Hylton HS | 6. George Washington HS |
| 3. Monacan HS | 7. James Madison HS |
| 4. West Springfield HS | 8. Nansemond River HS |

Essay

- First: "George Frank Kraus III", George Kraus, Oakton HS
- Second: "An Essay in Four Parts", Lacey Thomas, James Madison HS
- Third: "Bless Me Father, For I Have Been to Catholic School", Bridgit Kelly, Woodbridge Senior HS
- Honorable Mention: "Open Wide", Heather Baker, Woodbridge Senior HS

Short Story

- First: "Mac's Friend's Inferno", Jon O'Neill, C. D. Hylton HS
- Second: "Death and My Volvo", Susan Berryman, Monacan HS
- Third: "The Last Picasso", Alicia Collins, North Stafford HS
- Honorable Mention: "Ashcake Road", Barbara Heritage, Woodbridge Senior HS

Poetry

- First: "Off Color Conversation", Kimberly Moore, Chantilly HS
- Second: "Under the Ardent Sun", LaToya Smith, George Washington HS
- Third: "Random Lunch", Randy Bickford, George Washington HS
- Honorable Mention: "Thwarted Arrow", Ellen Parr, Douglas Freeman HS

(OVER)

1996-97 VHSL CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST ESULTS

GROUP AAA - 26 Entries

S = Superior, E = Excellent, G = Good

School	Sponsor	Booklet Rating	Essay Ratings	Story Ratings	Poem Ratings
Cave Spring HS	Jennifer Cohodas	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Chantilly HS	Naomi Dixon	E	E & E	E & G	S & E
Frank Cox HS	Mary Hyman	G	E & E	G & G	G & G
Fairfax HS	Katherine Siggers	E	S & S	S & G	G & G
Douglas Freeman HS	Sharon Boyles	E	G & E	G & E	S & G
Gar-Field HS	Judy Powers	E	E & E	E & G	G & E
E. C. Glass HS	Cheryl Scruggs	E	E & S	G & G	E & E
Green Run HS	Fran Sharer	G	E & G	G & G	G & G
Hampton HS	Max Jarrell	G	E & G	G & G	G & E
Hayfield HS	Sue Rauch	E	G & E	E & G	G & E
Hermitage HS	Linda Mills, Barbara Holdren	E	S & E	E & G	G & S
Herndon HS	Constance Cassely	E	E & G	E & G	E & E
Hopewell HS	Brenda Lee, Karen Rhodes	E	G & E	E & G	S & G
C. D. Hylton HS	Carol Moore	S	S & E	S & S	E & E
Stonewall Jackson HS (Man)	Lois Roy	G	G & G	G & E	E & G
Floyd Kellam HS	Diane Fincher	G	G & E	E & G	G & G
James Madison HS	Kathleen Kelly	E	S & G	S & E	E & E
Monacan HS	Judith Land	S	E & E	S & S	E & S
Nansemond River HS	Sandra Purdy	E	E & E	S & E	E & E
North Stafford HS	Judy Norton	E	E & E	S & E	G & E
Oakton HS	Erica Jacobs	E	S & E	E & E	S & E
Ocean Lakes HS	Lori Molodow	G	G & G	E & S	G & G
Tallwood HS	Susie Pedigo, Marge Kelly	G	S & G	E & G	G & G
George Washington HS	Bernard Leigg	E	E & E	E & G	S & S
West Springfield HS	Carolyn Gomez-Foronda	S	S & E	E & S	E & S
Woodbridge Senior HS	Cathy Hailey	S	S & S	S & S	E & E

1996-97 VHSL CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST RESULTS

GROUP AA

Folder

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. William Byrd HS | 5. Sherando HS |
| 2. Abingdon HS | 6. Loudoun County HS |
| 3. Loudoun Valley HS | 7. James Wood HS |
| 4. Appomattox County HS | 8. Grundy Senior HS |

Essay

- First: "The Choice To Find Essence", Christine Csizmadia, Sherando HS
- Second: "The People of Thebes v. Creon", Brian Sutton, William Byrd HS
- Third: "Shared Images: A Comparison of Wuthering Heights and The English Patient", Katie Boone, Abingdon HS

Short Story

- First: "The Great American Dream", Jeff Spicer, Abingdon HS
- Second: "The Best Tea in the World", Chris Sloan, William Byrd HS
- Third: "The Cat", Daniel Broome-Raines, Loudoun Valley HS

Poetry

- First: "Night's Mask", Holly Henderson, William Byrd HS
- Second: "Side Order", Jennifer Johnson, James Wood HS
- Third: "Here", Jeremy Sutton, Broadway HS

(OVER)

1996-97 VHSL CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST ESULTS

GROUP AA - 14 Entries

S = Superior, E = Excellent, G = Good

School	Sponsor	Booklet Rating	Essay Ratings	Story Ratings	Poem Ratings
Abingdon HS	Merry Jennings	S	E & E	S & S	G & E
Appomattox County HS	Brenda Kasperski	E	E & S	S & E	E & G
Blacksburg HS	Jane Carr	G	G & G	G & G	E & E
Broadway HS	Michelle Ornstein	G	E & G	G & G	E & G
William Byrd HS	Rebekah Woodie	S	S & E	S & E	S & E
Charlottesville HS	Patricia Vandever, Lorraine Seitz	G	G & G	E & S	G & G
Graham HS	Carol Hart	G	E & G	G & G	G & G
Grundy Senior HS	June Lee Clevinger	E	G & G	E & E	G & E
Loudoun County HS	Toni Rader	E	E & G	E & G	G & S
Loudoun Valley HS	Priscilla Hill	S	G & E	S & S	G & S
Prince Edward County HS	Rachel Overstreet	G	E & E	G & G	G & E
Sherando HS	Mary Adams-Legge	E	G & S	E & E	E & E
Tazewell HS	Tamara Meade, Susan Whittaker	G	G & G	S & G	G & G
James Wood HS	Theresa Manchev	E	G & G	E & G	S & E

1996-97 VHSL CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST RESULTS

GROUP A

Folder

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Haysi HS | 5. West Point HS |
| 2. King William HS | 6. New Kent HS |
| 3. Page County HS | 7. Rappahannock HS |
| 4. Madison County HS | 8. Lancaster HS |

Essay

- First: "Scoliosis", Leann Yates, Haysi HS
- Second: "Undying Love", Jodi Groseclose, Pocahontas HS
- Third: "The Genetics of Homosexuality", Andrea Gram, Bath County HS
- Honorable Mention: "The Beat is Back", Jeremy Garrett, Galax HS

Short Story

- First: "Coming of Age", Sean Thomason, John I. Burton HS
- Second: "Exit Dreaming", Erin Wood, Madison County HS
- Third: "Falling", Heather Justice, Haysi HS
- Honorable Mention: "Taming the Horses", James Bolling, Powell Valley HS

Poetry

- First: "Depression", Lora Sudduth, Page County HS
- Second: "God's Masterpiece", Katrina Robinson, King William HS
- Third: "The Voice of A Woman", Amy Ironmonger, Lancaster HS
- Honorable Mention: "Ode To My Coat", Andy Cox, Rappahannock HS

(OVER)

1996-97 VHSL CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST ESULTS

GROUP A - 30 Entries

S = Superior, E = Excellent, G = Good

School	Sponsor	Booklet Rating	Essay Ratings	Story Ratings	Poem Ratings
Appalachia HS	Pam Hutchinson, Kim Blanken, Frank Gentry	G	G & E	G & G	E & G
Bath County HS	Joyce Breen	E	S & E	E & E	E & E
John Battle HS	Brenda Roop	E	E & G	E & E	E & E
Brentsville District HS	Chris Lem	E	E & G	E & E	E & E
Buckingham County HS	Robin Smith	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
John I. Burton HS	Lisa Hamilton Davis	E	E & E	S & E	E & E
Central HS (Woodstock)	Bonnie Gochenour	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Clintwood HS	Monnie Skeens	G	E & G	E & G	E & G
Coeburn HS	Karen Peters	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Essex HS	Nancy Thompson	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Galax HS	Evelyn Beamer	E	E & S	E & E	E & E
Giles HS	Karen Yolton	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Haysi HS	Robin Charles	S	E & S	S & E	E & E
Patrick Henry HS (GS)	Anne Coulthard	E	G & E	E & E	E & E
King William HS	Vicky Cline	S	E & S	E & E	S & E
Lancaster HS	Sandra Davis	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Madison County HS	Donald Hitt	E	S & E	S & E	E & E
New Kent HS	Michele Curle	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Page County HS	Larry Dickerson	E	E & E	E & E	E & S
Pocahontas HS	J. B. Viers	E	S & E	E & E	E & E
Pound HS	Betty Carter	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Powell Valley HS	Jerry Clark	E	E & G	E & E	E & E
Powhatan HS	Kathy Liesfeld	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Rappahannock HS	Ann Vandeloecht	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Rye Cove HS	Jeanette Taylor	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Saint Paul HS	Frances Wall	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Surry County HS	Mary Farley	E	E & G	E & E	E & E
Sussex Central HS	Mary Lewis	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
West Point HS	Patricia Hoppe	E	E & E	E & E	E & E
Windsor HS	Lohrer Mise	E	E & G	E & E	E & E