



## Entry, Category, and Division Guidelines

### Overall Entry Guidelines

PTA Reflections is a multi-level art program. Students must participate through a PTA/PTSA. Eligibility is determined by the PTA/PTSA units, and especially, the state PTA. This packet includes basic guidelines that all Reflections entries must meet to be eligible on the national level. Additional state and/or local program requirements may apply.

### AVAILABLE REFLECTIONS ARTS CATEGORIES AND GRADE DIVISIONS

#### Arts Categories

- Dance Choreography
- Film Production
- Literature
- Music Composition
- Photography
- Visual Arts

#### Grade Divisions

- Primary (Pre-K-Grade 2)
- Intermediate (Grades 3-5)
- Middle School (Grades 6-8)
- High School (Grades 9-12)
- Accessible Arts\* (All Grades)

*\*Accessible Arts Grade Division: This division welcomes students who identify as having a disability and may receive services under IDEA or ADA: Section 504 and offers non-artistic, division-specific accommodations.*



**Each entry must be new artwork inspired by the current year's theme.**

- **Theme-Inspired:** Engage with the theme and create inspired artwork. This is critical to success in Reflections.
- **New Artwork:** Do not “recycle” artwork by submitting a piece created for other purposes (e.g., homework not related to Reflections; art used in another competition).

**Each entry must be the original work of one student only.**

- **Individual Originality:** Reflections is designed to encourage and recognize individual creativity. Artistic assistance from friends, family, and/or teachers is not allowed.
- **No Group Submissions:** Only one student will be recognized/awarded for each entry.
- **Artwork Details:** Titles, artist statements, and any additional statements must be the student's own words and interpretations of the theme.
- **Creative Choices:** Decisions in the creative process must be made and/or directed by the student. If support is required, it should be limited and appropriate to the student's grade level and needs.

**Each entry must contain a title and an artist statement.**

- **Word Count:** Artists statement must include at least 10 words and not exceed 100 words.
- **Be Creative and Unique:** Each entry submitted in Reflections must have a unique title and artist statement specific to that submission. Learn more about crafting a title and artist statement in the section below.

**Each entry using digital technology/software in creation process must consider the following:**

- **Enhance:** Technology/software may be used to develop, enhance and/or present an entry.
- **Original Use:** Technology/software may not be used to provide the primary design and/or concept.
- **Use Description:** If digital technology software/tools are used in the creation process, including any generative elements (AI), entrants should use the back of the student entry form to briefly describe these methods in 10 to 50 words. This description will be used to assist judging during the evaluation process.

## ***DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY***

**DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY** is the act of creating movement, usually coordinated with music, to represent an idea through dance (e.g., your interpretation of the Reflections theme).

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### **Portray Your Original Choreography**

- **Consider the following styles and ensembles:**
  - Ballet, Contemporary, Hip Hop, Jazz, Tap, Folk Dance, Religious Dance, Dance Ensembles (color guard/indoor guard), Ice Skating/Dancing, Gymnastics-floor Routine
- **To show a clear relation to the theme,** use choreographic style and techniques, background song(s), props, etc.





## Entry Checklist & Reminders

### **National-Level Requirements:**

- **Student Artist:** Must be the original choreographer. Only the choreographer (e.g., student submitting the entry) is recognized for awards.
- **Performers:** The choreographer may be the performer or one of the performers, but does not have to perform in the entry.
- **Lengths and Size:** Videos must not exceed 5 minutes or 1,000 MB (1,000 megabyte).
- **Cite Sources:** If background music is used, *it must be cited on the entry form.*
- **Formats:** Accepted file formats: MP4, MOV, AVI.

### **Reminders:**

- **Performing others' choreography (e.g., recitals, renditions, dance trends) is not accepted.** Submit only original pieces inspired by the theme.
- **Editing:** Entries with added elements (e.g., graphics, filters) or heavy video editing *are not accepted.*

## Category Tips: Artist Statement and Title

Titles and artist statements can be useful in sharing details specific to your choreography that help capture your creative process and theme interpretation. Consider the following:

- **Describe** the choreographic style and techniques, and how your choices connect to the theme or your interpretation.
- **Explain** how background song(s), props, and/or the location influence the narrative of your choreography.
- **Highlight any innovative approaches** or elements that blend traditional elements with contemporary techniques.
- **Discuss** your use of a range of movements, structure, form and/or variations in speed, intensity and emotion, and how your choices convey specific thoughts, feelings or emotions.

### Video Quality Tips

Tips for creating, finalizing, and saving a high-quality video file for your submission:

- **Start and end with silence:** Leave two seconds of silence at the beginning and end of your recording.
- **Do a test recording:** Record a short test and listen to it. Make sure the record volume is not too high or too low.
- **Remove background noise:** Make the room quiet by turning off things like air conditioners, fans, and phones.
- **Clear background music:** If using background music, make sure it sounds clear in the recording. Using an external speaker can help improve the sound quality.
- **Use the back camera:** If recording with a smartphone, use the back camera for better quality.
- **Keep the camera still:** Use a tripod to hold the camera steady. Avoid editing, multiple angles, and jump cuts, as they can distract from the choreography.
- **Choose good angles:** Make sure the camera shows all of you. Film in a horizontal position (side-to-side) to show more space. Remember that the camera's height affects how you look.
- **Fill the frame:** Try to fill the camera frame with your dance without cutting off any part of your body. Do not film too far away so your facial expressions are still visible. Mark the floor to know where the edges are in the camera frame.
- **Good lighting:** Record in a well-lit space, and try to avoid shadows that block any part of your body or choreography.

### Copyright and Plagiarism

**Plagiarized entries will be disqualified. Use of copyrighted material is not acceptable,** including any copyrighted cartoon characters, material downloaded from the internet, copyrighted recorded music, and/or copyrighted photographs/stock images, except for the following:

- Entries may include public places, well-known products, trademarks, or certain other copyrighted material as long as that copyrighted material is incidental to the subject matter of the piece, and/or is a smaller element of a whole. The resulting work cannot try to establish an association between the student and the trademark/business/material, or influence the purchase/non-purchase of the trademarked good.
- If background music is used in **dance choreography** entries, it must be cited on the entry form (title/artist).



## **Digital Tools and Technology**

**Digital technology and/or software may not provide the primary design and/or concept, but can be used to develop, enhance, and/or present an entry.** Entries may not be exclusively created with generative tools (e.g., AI), and/or composed exclusively of elements generated or provided by a technology platform.

### **Accepted:**

- Videos may only be minimally edited, using basic visual/audio touch-ups (e.g., remove background noise, crop video background).

### **Not Accepted**

- Videos with extensive edits, added digital graphics, and/or other elements. *Only choreography is scored.*

### **Guidelines**

- **Use Description:** If digital technology software/tools are used in the creation process, including any generative elements (AI), entrants should use the back of the student entry form to briefly describe these methods in 10 to 50 words. This description will be used to assist judging during the evaluation process.
- **Verify Prohibited Technology:** Check if your state PTA prohibits the use of any digital platforms and/or methods (i.e., artificial intelligence). \*Ohio PTA does not prohibit the use of digital platforms beyond permitted usage stated in the National PTA Entry, Category, and Division Guidelines.

## ***FILM PRODUCTION***

**FILM PRODUCTION** is the process of making a film. The producer (student submitting the entry) is not required to appear in the film, but a tripod may be used if the student chooses. All screenwriting, directing, and editing must be done by the student producer. *PowerPoint presentations are not allowed.*

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### **To Portray Your Original Film**

- **Consider creating your film in using the following styles:**
  - **Animation:** Demonstrates motion by sequencing still objects or using computer-generated graphics.
  - **Narrative:** Tells a fictional story developed by the student.
  - **Documentary:** Presents facts and information.
  - **Experimental:** Explores movement, light and montage.
  - **Multimedia:** Uses a combination of different contents (text, audio, still images, animation, etc.).
- **To show a clear relation to the theme,** develop a work of fiction or nonfiction, and make use of plot, characters, visuals (setting, costumes, animation), sound and background music, editing, etc.





## **Entry Checklist & Reminders**

### **National-Level Requirements:**

- **Student Artist:** All screenwriting, directing, and editing must be done by the student producer. Only the producer (e.g., student submitting the entry) is recognized for awards. The producer is not required to appear in the film.
- **PowerPoint:** Use of PowerPoint presentations or other pre-made, template-based tools is prohibited.
- **Lengths and Size:** Videos must not exceed 5 minutes or 1,000 MB (1,000 megabyte).
- **Cite Sources:** If background music is used, *it must be cited on the entry form.*
- **Formats:** Accepted file formats: MP4, MOV, AVI.

### **Reminders:**

- **Entry Originality:** All entries must be original student creations and use original student footage. *Any use of b-roll or unoriginal video elements must be minimal, if at all, and must be credited.*
- **Originality with Platforms:** When using movie-making platforms (e.g., Scratch), the producer should heavily customize and transform graphics/materials to create new artwork and concepts.

## **Category Tips: Artist Statement and Title**

Titles and artist statements can be useful in sharing details specific to your film that help capture your creative process and theme interpretation. Consider the following:

- **Explore** themes or metaphors used in the storyline, characters, or setting.
- **Discuss** the significance of the film style (visual aesthetics, directorial approach/techniques, sound/music).
- **Examine** the film's genre, how it connects to the theme, influences the narrative, and/or how you followed or broke from genre traditions.
- **Analyze** the role of sound design and music, and how your choices convey the film narrative, the theme, or your interpretation.

### Video Quality Tips

Tips for creating, finalizing, and saving a high-quality video file for your submission:

- **Start and end with silence:** Leave two seconds of silence at the beginning and end of your recording.
- **Do a test recording:** Record a short test and listen to it. Make sure the volume is not too high or too low.
- **Remove background noise:** Make the room quiet by turning off things like air conditioners, fans, and phones.
- **Clear background music:** If using background music, make sure it sounds clear and does not drown out any dialogue.
- **Position the microphone close:** Place the microphone close to the sound source for clearer audio. Encourage actors to speak clearly and project their voices.
- **Use the back camera:** If recording with a smartphone, use the back camera for better quality.
- **Keep the camera still:** Use a tripod to avoid camera shakes. This helps keep all shots steady and allows for smooth movements.
- **Film horizontally:** Record in a horizontal position (side-to-side).
- **Check the lighting:** Be aware of the light you are using. Fluorescent lights can give a greenish or grey hue. High contrast lighting can create hard shadows, and overhead lights can be unflattering.
  - **Use natural light:** If you're in a room with overhead lights, try filming near an open window to add natural light.
  - **Add soft light:** Place a lamp or two nearby to soften the light and reduce shadows.

### Copyright and Plagiarism

**Plagiarized entries will be disqualified. Use of copyrighted material is not acceptable,** including any copyrighted cartoon characters, material downloaded from the internet, copyrighted recorded music, and/or copyrighted photographs/stock images, except for the following:

- Entries may include public places, well-known products, trademarks, or certain other copyrighted material as long as that copyrighted material is incidental to the subject matter of the piece, and/or is a smaller element of a whole. The resulting work cannot try to establish an association between the student and the trademark/business/material, or influence the purchase/non-purchase of the trademarked good.

- If background music is used in film entries, it must be cited on the entry form (title/artist).
- Film entries may include portions of existing copyrighted works, such as photographs, magazine or digital media clippings, and/or type cut out of a newspaper, as long as those portions of copyrighted works are used to create a completely new and different work of art.

### **Digital Tools and Technology**

**Digital technology and/or software may not provide the primary design and/or concept, but can be used to develop, enhance, and/or present an entry.** Entries may not be exclusively created with generative tools (e.g., AI), and/or composed exclusively of elements generated or provided by a technology platform.

- **Accepted:**
  - With significant student manipulation and customization, use of templates, graphics, etc., provided by a platform/technology.
  - Assistive tools to add or remove objects in a photo or film footage, or to review original writing to find errors.
- **Not Accepted:**
  - Without significant student customization, use of templates, formulas, graphics provided by a platform/technology.
  - Plot, characters, and/or literary elements generated by a platform/technology.
- **Guidelines:**
  - **Use Description:** If digital technology software/tools are used in the creation process, including any generative elements (AI), entrants should use the back of the student entry form to briefly describe these methods in 10 to 50 words. This description will be used to assist judging during the evaluation process.
  - **Verify Prohibited Technology:** Check if your state PTA prohibits the use of any digital platforms and/or methods (i.e., artificial intelligence). \*Ohio PTA does not prohibit the use of digital platforms beyond permitted usage stated in the National PTA Entry, Category, and Division Guidelines.

## ***LITERATURE***

**LITERATURE** is the art of writing. The author (e.g., student submitting the entry) is a person who expresses their own thoughts and ideas through the use of words. *Collections of literary work, such as multiple poems or short stories are not accepted.*

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### **To Portray Your Original Writing**

- **Consider the following literary styles:**
  - Prose, Poetry, Drama, Reflective Essay, Narrative, Short Story
- **To show a clear relation to the theme,** use fiction or non-fiction, plot and characterization, setting and imagery, style, symbolism, etc.



## Entry Checklist & Reminders

### **National-Level Requirements:**

- **Student Artist:** Authors submit a single literary work using grammar, punctuation, and spelling appropriate for their grade and/or support needs.
- **Word-count:** Entry must not exceed 2,000 words.
- **Accepted formats:** PDF. Handwritten & typed entries are accepted on 8.5x11 paper (one sided only). Number each page.
- **Copyright:** Use of copyrighted material is prohibited. *Plagiarized entries will be disqualified.*

### **Reminders:**

- **Length Considerations:** While there is no minimum word count, entries less than 10 words must be intentionally short, and the artist should explain the creative reason for the shortened entry.
- **Illustration:** While original illustration is accepted, *only literature content is scored.*

## Category Tips: Artist Statement and Title

Titles and artist statements can be useful in sharing details specific to your writing, that help capture your creative process and theme interpretation. Consider the following:

- **Summarize** the plot (main events, key turning points) without revealing too much.
- **Describe** how the structure and point of view enhance the narrative or help convey the theme.
- **Explain** the themes in the piece, along with how they relate to you personally, to the reader, and to the annual Reflections theme.
- **Examine** the significant elements of narrative voice, literary devices, language, and/or diction in the piece.

## Illustration, Dictation, Translation, and Transcription

Review the following considerations for informed use of dictation, transcription, illustration, and/or translation.

### **Illustration**

- The following uses of illustration are acceptable:
  - **Originality:** Illustrated entries are acceptable if the visual content is created by the student artist. *Only literary content is judged.*

- **Prioritize Your Writing:** The plot or purpose of an illustrated entry must be explained through written content, not illustration. For example, an illustrated comic may be accepted, but only the written plot, dialogue, and descriptions will be reviewed.

### **Dictation, Transcription, and Translation**

- As necessary, the following uses of dictation, transcription, and translation are acceptable. Collaborate with your PTA/PTSA or state PTA on any additional needs.
  - **Translation:** Students may submit in their preferred language. An interpretive translation in English must accompany the entry.
  - **Transcription:** Based on the student's grade and/or support needs, entries may be dictated to another person, and printed or typed in exact words as provided by the student.
  - **Accuracy:** Translators/transcribers should make every attempt to retain the same level of language and accuracy that is reflected in the student's original work.

### **Digital Tools and Technology**

**Digital technology and/or software may not provide the primary design and/or concept, but can be used to develop, enhance, and/or present an entry.** Entries may not be exclusively created with generative tools (e.g., AI), and/or composed exclusively of elements generated or provided by a technology platform.

#### **Accepted:**

- Prototyping an original idea, design, or concept before creating the final submission. Final pieces must be an original student creation.

#### **Not Accepted:**

- Using templates, formulas, and/or graphics provided by a platform/technology.
- Plot, characters, and/or literary elements generated by a platform/technology.

#### **Guidelines:**

- **Use Description:** If digital technology software/tools are used in the creation process, including any generative elements (AI), entrants should use the back of the student entry form to briefly describe these methods in 10 to 50 words. This description will be used to assist judging during the evaluation process.
- **Verify Prohibited Technology:** Check if your state PTA prohibits the use of any digital platforms and/or methods (i.e., artificial intelligence). \*Ohio PTA does not prohibit the use of digital platforms beyond permitted usage stated in the National PTA Entry, Category, and Division Guidelines.

## ***MUSIC COMPOSITION***

**MUSIC COMPOSITION** is the process of creating a new piece of music. The composer (e.g., student submitting the entry) is a person who expresses their own thoughts and ideas through the use of sound. *Entries in the middle and high school grade divisions must include music score/notation.*

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### **To Portray Your Original Composition**

- **Consider the following musical styles and instrumentation:**
  - A Cappella, Blues, Choral, Country, Electronic, Hip hop, Jazz, Latin, Musical, Orchestral, Pop, R&B, Religious, Rock, Symphonic/Concert Band, Traditional
- **To show a clear relation to the theme**, use structure, melody, rhythm, instruments, lyrics, emotion, etc.
- **Explore new methods** and make use of instruments, sounds, styles, and combinations. *All are accepted.*



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## Entry Checklist & Reminders

### **National-Level Requirements:**

- **Student Artist:** The student submitting the entry must be the composer.
- **Performers:** The composer may be the performer or one of the performers, but does not have to perform in the entry.
- **Music Recording:** Required for all entries.
- **Music Score/Notation:** Required for middle and high school grade divisions only.
- **Copyright:** Use of copyrighted material is prohibited. *Plagiarized entries will be disqualified.*
- **Lengths and Size:** Audio files must not exceed 5 minutes or 1,000 MB (1,000 megabyte).
- **Accepted formats:** Audio recording: MP3, WAV. Notation: PDF.

### **Reminders:**

- **Entry Originality:** Performing another's composition (e.g., recitals), and/or singing over unoriginal musical accompaniment is not accepted.
- **Songs:** This category focuses on original music compositions, rather than song-writing or performance skills. The composition must be the primary focus, and entries are scored on musical elements and style.
- **Vocals-Only Entries:** A cappella compositions are accepted; however, entries without musical accompaniment (vocals-only) must showcase a complete musical piece, including musical elements like pitch, tone, key, rhythm, and harmony.
- **Supported Editing:** Edits, mixing, and adjustments must be suitable for the student's grade and/or support needs. Guardians or friends should not make adjustments without specific direction from the student artist.

## Category Tips: Artist Statement and Title

Titles and artist statements can be useful in sharing details specific to your music composition that help capture your creative process and theme interpretation. Consider the following:

- **Delve** into the creation process of your piece, highlighting unique elements, techniques, new approaches, or new fusions of style/traditions.
- **Reflect** on the significance of the musical influences, historical background, cultural elements or personal connections you have to the music or instruments.
- **Share** why and how you used specific musical elements (rhythm, melody, harmony, instrumentation), especially if your piece is a song without instrumental accompaniment.

### Music Notation

Entries in the **middle and high school grade divisions must include music score/notation**, either traditional or tablature, or a written reflective statement. To meet this requirement, consider the following:

- **Notation software may be used to create a score.** Whether the score is hand-written or software-generated, appropriate instrumentation and voicing are required for the performance.
- **In place of traditional music score/notation, artists may submit a reflective statement.** Reflective statements provide a musically technical explanation of how the music was created (100 words or less).
- **A reflective statement does not replace the required entry artist statement.** Whereas the artist statement emphasizes the Reflections theme, a reflective statement emphasizes the musical elements in the creative process. *A Reflective Statement must be distinct from the artist statement.*

### Audio Quality Tips

Tips for creating, finalizing, and saving a high-quality audio file for your submission:

- **Find a good room:** Choose a room that does not have too many hard surfaces or tight spaces. An uncluttered room works best.
- **Use a good microphone:** If you can, use an external microphone or a portable recorder for better sound quality.
- **Turn off noise reduction:** If you're using your computer's microphone, turn off noise reduction. It can make your instrument sound weird.
- **Remove background noise:** Make the room quiet by turning off things like air conditioners, fans, and phones. Also, watch out for squeaky floors and noisy electronics.
- **Do a test recording:** Record a short test and listen to it. Make sure the record volume is not too high or too low.
- **Test microphone placement:** Do not put the microphone on top of instruments or speakers. Try different positions and distances to find the best sound.
- **Start and end with silence:** Leave two seconds of silence at the beginning and end of your recording.



## **Digital Tools and Technology**

**Digital technology and/or software may not provide the primary design and/or concept, but can be used to develop, enhance, and/or present an entry.** Entries may not be exclusively created with generative tools (e.g., AI), and/or composed exclusively of elements generated or provided by a technology platform.

### **Accepted:**

- A sound library generated performance of the student's original, composed score.
- Use of audio editing platforms to mix, enhance, or completely transform original audio.

### **Not Accepted:**

- Algorithmic composition techniques in music submissions.
- Use of templates, formulas, etc. provided by a platform/technology.

### **Guidelines:**

- **Use Description:** If digital technology software/tools are used in the creation process, including any generative elements (AI), entrants should use the back of the student entry form to briefly describe these methods in 10 to 50 words. This description will be used to assist judging during the evaluation process.
- **Verify Prohibited Technology:** Check if your state PTA prohibits the use of any digital platforms and/or methods (i.e., artificial intelligence). \*Ohio PTA does not prohibit the use of digital platforms beyond permitted usage stated in the National PTA Entry, Category, and Division Guidelines.

## ***PHOTOGRAPHY***

**PHOTOGRAPHY is the process of creating an image. By focusing on objects using various lenses, filters, and light sources, photographers may demonstrate the use of photographic techniques conventionally or digitally. *Collages and collections of photos are not accepted.***

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### **To Portray Your Original Artwork**

- **Consider the following accepted forms of photography:**
  - A Single Photo, Panoramic, Photomontage (one print of multiple original photos), Multiple Exposure, Negative Sandwich, Photogram
  - Entries may be black-and-white and/or color images.
- **Avoid the following unaccepted forms of photography:** entries with added graphics and/or non-photographic elements (e.g., lettering, icons), collages and collections of photos, original film (negatives or transparencies), and multidimensional pieces.
- **To show a clear relation to the theme,** use objects, lighting, location, etc.



## Entry Checklist & Reminders

### National-Level Requirements:

- **Student Artist:** The photographer (student submitting entry) is a person who captures their own thoughts and ideas with a camera.
- **Accepted formats:** JPEG, JPG, PNG.
- **Sizing:** Print images should be between 3x5 to 8x10 inches. Digital should be at least 640x960 pixels and 300 dpi resolution. Mounted prints must not exceed 11x14 inches, including matting. *Framed photos are not accepted.*

### Reminders:

- **Photomontages vs. Collages:** Collages make use of non-photographic elements, and are not accepted. Photomontages, which are accepted, are composed of multiple original photographs which are edited and combined to create a new photographic creation. *Collages may be submitted in the Visual Arts category.*
- **Added Elements:** Do not include graphics, illustrations, word overlays, or other non-photographic elements (e.g., craft or other external materials).
- **Reproductions and Replications:** Inspiration may come from existing photographs, but the final piece must be an entirely new and original creation and interpretation, including angles, perspective, shape, size, values, message, etc.

## Category Tips: Artist Statement and Title

Titles and artist statements can be useful in sharing details specific to your photography that help capture your creative process and theme interpretation. Consider the following:

- **Describe** the main subjects or objects in your piece (composition, arrangement, lighting, location) that most clearly connect to the theme.
- **Provide context** around the photo setting (environmental elements, season, time of day), and how it influences the piece.
- **Explain** the photographic techniques and equipment used to take, edit, and/or enhance the photo.

## Image Quality Tips

Tips for taking, finalizing, and saving a high-quality photography image file for your submission:



### Preparing to Take the Photo:

- **Find Good Lighting:** Natural light is your best friend! Take photos near windows or outside during the day. If light is too strong, use a sheer curtain or a white sheet to soften the light and reduce harsh shadows.
- **Use Multiple Light Sources:** Combine different light sources, like lamps and overhead lights, to create a balanced and well-lit scene. Avoid using just one light source, which can create unflattering shadows.
- **Keep Steady:** Hold your camera or phone with both hands to avoid blurry pictures. You can also use a tripod if you have one.

### Taking the Photo:

- **Focus on Your Subject:** Make sure your main subject is in focus. Tap on the screen of your phone or use your camera to focus if needed.
- **Try Different Angles:** Experiment with different angles and perspectives to make your photo more interesting.
- **Edit Your Photos:** Use simple editing apps to adjust brightness, contrast, and colors. You can also crop your photo to remove any unwanted parts. Add filters sparingly. Use edits to enhance your photo, not change it completely.
- **Check the Details:** Zoom in to make sure everything looks good and there are no unwanted spots or blurs.

### Finalizing and Saving the Photo:

- **Avoid compression:** Minimize the use of compression when saving your images, as this can reduce quality. Save files in formats like PNG or TIFF for better quality.
- **Resize with care:** If you need to resize an image, do so carefully to avoid losing quality. Use tools that allow you to maintain the original aspect ratio and resolution.
- **Sizing and quality:** Before finalizing your image, check the properties to ensure its quality and sizing needs are met. Digital images should be at least 640x960 pixels and 300 dpi resolution. Most editing software allows you to view and adjust these settings easily.

## Copyright and Plagiarism

**Plagiarized entries will be disqualified. Use of copyrighted material is not acceptable**, including any copyrighted cartoon characters, material downloaded from the internet, and copyrighted photographs/stock images, except for the following:

- Entries may include public places, well-known products, trademarks, or certain other copyrighted material as long as that copyrighted material is incidental to the subject matter of the piece, and/or is a smaller element of a whole. The resulting work cannot try to establish an

association between the student and the trademark/business/material, or influence the purchase/non-purchase of the trademarked good.

- Photography entries may include portions of existing copyrighted works, such as photographs, magazine or digital media clippings, and/or type cut out of a newspaper, as long as those portions of copyrighted works are used to create an original interpretation and a completely new and different work of art.

### **Digital Tools and Technology**

**Digital technology and/or software may not provide the primary design and/or concept, but can be used to develop, enhance and/or present an entry.** Entries may not be exclusively created with generative tools (e.g., AI) and/or composed exclusively of elements generated or provided by a technology platform.

#### **Accepted:**

- Prototyping an original idea, design, or concept with generative tools before creating the final submission.

#### **Not Accepted:**

- Creating an entry composed of generative elements and/or unoriginal, downloaded materials.
- Entries composed with generative elements and/or unoriginal, downloaded materials, including templates, formulas, graphics, drawings, paintings, etc.

#### **Guidelines:**

- **Use Description:** If digital technology software/tools are used in the creation process, including any generative elements (AI), entrants should use the back of the student entry form to briefly describe these methods in 10 to 50 words. This description will be used to assist judging during the evaluation process.
- **Verify Prohibited Technology:** Check if your state PTA prohibits the use of any digital platforms and/or methods (i.e., artificial intelligence). \*Ohio PTA does not prohibit the use of digital platforms beyond permitted usage stated in the National PTA Entry, Category, and Division Guidelines.

## ***VISUAL ARTS***

**VISUAL ARTS** includes many art forms that are visual in nature. Through combined elements like color, shape, and texture, visual artwork is not only pleasing to look at but also expresses an idea or thought. *Collections are not accepted.*

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### **To Portray Your Original Artwork**

- **Consider the following accepted forms of visual arts:**
  - Architecture (2D/3D), Carpentry, Ceramics, Collages (Combined Non-photographic and/or Photographic Elements), Digital Art and Graphics (Drawings/Paintings/Illustration), Crafts, Design, Dioramas, Drawing, Fiberwork, Jewelry, Kites, Metal Etching/Punch Work, Mobiles, Painting, Printmaking, Sculpture, Wind Chimes
- **Avoid the following unaccepted forms of visual:** reproductions or enlargements of other artwork.
- **To show a clear relation to the theme,** use art form, color, texture, shape, proportion, etc.



## Entry Checklist & Reminders

### **National-Level Requirements:**

- **Student Artist:** The artist (student submitting entry) is a person who captures their own thoughts and ideas to create a visual piece of art.
- **2D artwork** (e.g., painting): Must *include at least 1 digital image* of artwork for judging.\* Dimensions must not exceed 24x30 inches, including matting. Paper entries must be mounted on sturdy material. Framed artwork is not accepted.
  - \*Ohio PTA does not require a digital image to be submitted if the original work of art is being sent for judging. If an entry is selected to move on to the National-level competition, the Reflections Committee will take the photo to submit to National PTA.
- **3D artwork** (e.g., sculpture): Must *include at least 3 digital images* of artwork at different angles for judging.\* Artwork containing loose materials and/or requiring assembly/repair from transporting is not accepted.
  - \*Ohio PTA does not require 3 digital images to be submitted if the original work of art is being sent for judging. If an entry is selected to move on to the National-level competition, the Reflections Committee will take the photos to submit to National PTA.
  - If submitting 3D artwork to Ohio PTA, please consider that artwork will be transported and handled in different locations for the state-level submission and judging process. Although great care is taken in the handling of artwork, 3D artwork has a higher risk of becoming damaged. To help artwork stay intact and safe, please submit artwork in a sturdy appropriately-sized box/container with packaging materials as needed.
- **Accepted Digital Formats:** JPEG, JPG, PNG.

### **Reminders:**

- **Reproductions or Replications:** Inspiration may come from existing artworks or artistic styles, but the final piece must be entirely new and original creation and reinterpret the elements that compose the piece (e.g., color, shape, size, medium, values, message, etc.).
- **Photographic Collages:** Collage entries are artistic compositions made by physically combining various materials (such as paper, cloth or wood) to create a new image. Collages may include photos, but should include other material and elements that visually transform the photographic elements.

## Category Tips: Artist Statement and Title

Titles and artist statements can be useful in sharing details specific to your artwork that help capture your creative process and theme interpretation. Consider the following:

- **Describe** the style (abstract, realism, impressionism, surrealism, etc.) and how it aligns with the theme, your interpretation, or creative vision.
- **Mention significant steps** in your creative process, including medium, techniques and influences.
- **Explore** how your goals, artwork, creative ideas, and inspiration evolved during the creation process.
- **Explain** important symbols and how they connect to the theme or contribute to the overall meaning of the piece.

### Image Quality Tips

Tips for creating, finalizing and saving a high-quality image file for your submission, if submitting photographs of artwork:

- **Sizing and quality:** Digital images should be at least 640x960 pixels and 300 dpi resolution, so they are clear and visible to reviewers.
- **Take clear photos:** Make sure your photos are clear and simple. Avoid any extra blank space or distractions around the artwork.
- **Avoid reflections:** If your artwork has shiny surfaces, be mindful of reflections. Adjust the lighting or angle to minimize glare.
- **Fill the frame:** Try to fill the camera frame with your artwork, leaving only a small border around it. Do not use digital zoom because it lowers the image quality. Instead, move your camera closer.
- **Use diffused light:** Natural light on a cloudy day is best. If using artificial lights, place a white sheet between the lights and the artwork. Avoid using your camera's flash as it can change the colors and create shadows.
- **Photographing 2D art:** Position the camera so it faces the artwork directly. The lens should be at the center of the artwork and not tilted. Ensure the lighting is even across the entire piece.
- **Photographing 3D art:** Take photos from different angles to show all sides of the artwork. To show texture and depth, use a stronger light on one side to create slight shadows.
- **Take multiple shots:** Take several photos and check them as you go. Make small changes to the lighting or setup to get the best shots.

### Copyright and Plagiarism

**Plagiarized entries will be disqualified. Use of copyrighted material is not acceptable**, including any copyrighted cartoon characters, material downloaded from the internet, and copyrighted photographs/stock images/artwork, except for the following:

- Entries may include public places, well-known products, trademarks, or certain other copyrighted material as long as that copyrighted material is incidental to the subject matter of the piece, and/or is a smaller element of a whole. The resulting work cannot try to establish an association between the student and the trademark/business/material, or influence the purchase/non-purchase of the trademarked good.
- Visual Arts entries may include portions of existing copyrighted works, such as photographs, magazine or digital media clippings, and/or type cut out of a newspaper, as long as those portions of copyrighted works are used to create an original interpretation and a completely new and different work of art.

### **Digital Tools and Technology**

**Digital technology and/or software may not provide the primary design and/or concept, but can be used to develop, enhance and/or present an entry.** Entries may not be exclusively created with generative tools (e.g., AI) and/or composed exclusively of elements generated or provided by the technology platform. If digital technology is used, entrants must use the “Additional Details” field to provide a brief description of the tools and method used in the creation process, including any generative elements (10 to 50 words).

#### **Accepted:**

- Prototyping an original idea, design, or concept with generative tools before creating the final submission.
- Using digital tools to draw, illustrate, and/or create an original entry.

#### **Not Accepted:**

- Creating an entry composed of generative elements, and/or unoriginal, downloaded materials.
- Entries composed with only generative elements and/or unoriginal, downloaded materials, including templates, formulas, graphics, drawings, paintings, etc.

#### **Guidelines:**

- **Use Description:** If digital technology software/tools are used in the creation process, including any generative elements (AI), entrants should use the back of the student entry form to briefly describe these methods in 10 to 50 words. This description will be used to assist judging during the evaluation process.
- **Verify Prohibited Technology:** Check if your state PTA prohibits the use of any digital platforms and/or methods (i.e., artificial intelligence). \*Ohio PTA does not prohibit the use of digital platforms beyond permitted usage stated in the National PTA Entry, Category, and Division Guidelines.