

Art

This contest involves the study of paintings from the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. and paintings from selected Texas museums. As part of their study, students will demonstrate an understanding of art history and interpret ideas and moods in original artworks while making informed judgments about the artwork.

Part A requires contestants to identify the artist's name, as it appears on the official list, and the title of 15 paintings selected randomly from the official list of 40 paintings as published in the Art Smart Bulletin and on the UIL website. Part B consists of 30 questions about art elements and art history characteristic of the 40 art selections. Both Parts A and B of the contest shall be conducted. Approximately 30 minutes will be allotted for Part A and 30 minutes for Part B of the contest exclusive of time required for instructions.

Calculator Applications

This contest is designed to stimulate the development of mathematical and calculator skills. Goals are both intellectual and practical: developing mathematical reasoning and knowledge and requiring the application of problem-solving skills toward realistic problems.

Students will take a test containing 80 problems. The contest consists of problems that may include calculations involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, roots and powers. It also includes straightforward calculation problems and simple geometric and stated problems similar to those found in recently adopted textbooks. Districts shall offer either a separate division for each participating grade level or combined grade level divisions as specified in official contest procedures.

Chess

The study of chess teaches analytical thinking, pattern recognition and creativity, which in turn improve student performance in reading, writing,

Students will take an objective test containing approximately 20 chess puzzles, plus a separate tie-breaker section. Answer formats may include fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice and/or true/false. Thirty minutes will be allotted for the testing period and an additional five minutes will be allotted for the tiebreaker, exclusive of time required for instructions.

Dictionary Skills

Thorough knowledge of the dictionary is a way to increase a student's ability to find the information that is needed for class work as well as everyday living. The subject matter of all tests is taken from Merriam Webster's Intermediate Dictionary. Contestants may use other dictionaries in the contest. In preparation for this contest, students will develop skills to communicate effectively.

Each test consists of 40 objective questions. Contestants use dictionaries in the competition. Twenty minutes will be allotted for the testing period exclusive of time required for instructions.

Editorial Writing

Editorial writing teaches critical and analytical thinking, as well as the ability to write persuasively and concisely. Students learn to examine both sides of an issue, select and develop a stance and support that stance with logical, clear writing.

Contestants will be provided a fact sheet from which they will develop and write an editorial. Forty-five minutes will be allotted for the writing period exclusive of time required for instructions.

Impromptu Speaking

This contest gives students experience in formulating and organizing clear thoughts and effectively delivering those thoughts to an audience. The contest provides opportunities for students to explore the use of the voice and body in speaking situations; to examine different purposes for speaking; to organize ideas and deliver speeches on a variety of topics; to evaluate speeches given by others; and to develop self-confidence.

Contestants will draw three topics, select one, and have three minutes to prepare a speech, which shall be presented without any notes. Contestants may not use costumes or props in the contest. The maximum time limit for each speech is five minutes. There is no minimum time limit. Students who exceed the allotted five minutes shall be penalized one rank. For example, if the judges rank a student second who has gone overtime, that student shall be assigned third place and the student who was ranked third will be give second place. No speaker may be coached or prompted in any manner during the presentation.

Listening

This contest is designed to help students recognize the importance of effective listening skills and to identify problems they may have in listening effectively. It also provides a challenging format to test the improvement of their listening abilities. Through preparation for the contest, participants will listen to a variety of material and learn to evaluate and critically analyze a speaker's message. The objective tests will measure skills such as identifying the main idea and supporting ideas, listening for details, drawing conclusions and distinguishing fact from opinion.

Contestants will listen to a script ranging from approximately seven to 10 minutes in length, take notes as needed, and use their notes to answer 25 objective questions. Ten minutes will be allotted for the testing period.

Maps, Graphs, & Charts

This contest is designed to help students learn to get information from a variety of maps, graphs and charts including world maps, pie charts, bar charts and local area maps. The objective test will measure skills such as using an atlas as a reference book to locate information, making comparisons, estimating and approximating, using scale and interpreting grid systems, legends and keys.

Some subject matter will be taken from the designated official sources(s). Students will be given an objective test containing approximately 75 objective questions. Contestants may use an atlas during the contest; an atlas will be needed to answer some test questions. Forty-five minutes will be allotted for the testing period exclusive of time required for instructions.

Mathematics

Learning to complete math problems quickly is a valuable skill in all facets of life. This contest includes problems covering, but not limited to: numeration systems, arithmetic operations involving whole numbers, integers, fractions, decimals, exponents, order of operations, probability, statistics, number theory, simple interest, measurements and conversions. Geometry and algebra problems may be included as appropriate for the grade level.

The contest consists of 50 multiple-choice problems. Thirty minutes will be allotted for the testing period exclusive of time required for instructions.

Modern Oratory

In this contest, the contestant will select one of the topics, determine the critical issues in the topic, and acknowledge both pro and con points citing support discovered in their research. Students will choose a side they will defend and support that side with additional evidence. Along with the skills of analysis, research, note-taking, documentation, evaluation and decision-making come those of memorization and delivery.

The UIL will provide a selection of topics each academic year from which the student will pick one. Contestants will deliver a three to six minute speech on their topic without the use of notes. Contestants shall not use costumes or props in the contest. Students going over the maximum or under the minimum time limit shall be penalized one rank. For example, if the judges rank a student second who has gone over the time limit, that student shall be assigned third place and the student who was ranked third will be given second place. No speaker may be coached or prompted in any manner during the presentation.

Music Memory

The focus of this contest is an in-depth study of fine pieces of music taken from a wide spectrum of genres to expose students to great composers, their lives and their music. The League will publish each year the Official UIL Music Memory List and provide sources for obtaining recordings of the music and information on the pieces and composers.

Students will have 10 minutes to complete a 20-question multiple-choice section. Students will then listen to approximately 20 seconds each of 20 musical selections, with sufficient time allotted to write down the name of the major work, if it is required, selection title and the name of the composer. Districts may choose to include scores on the multiple-choice section in overall scoring, or to use the multiple-choice scores only as a tiebreaker. If the multiple-choice section is included in overall scoring, there is no other tiebreaker.

Number Sense

Individuals are called upon every day to use their ability to make quick mental calculations to make decisions. The development of such abilities should be an integral part of the math curriculum. Concepts covered include, but are not limited to: addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, proportions, and use of mathematical notation.

Students will be given a fill-in-the-blank test which they shall complete without doing calculations on paper or on a calculator. Erasures, mark-overs and mark-outs are not permitted. Requirements for numeric forms shall be as specified in official contest procedures. Exactly 10 minutes shall be allotted for the testing period exclusive of time required for instructions

Oral Reading

Reading a text out loud serves four purposes: to analyze the text as a literary critic; to grow and to develop as a performer; to communicate a message to an audience; and to perform an artistic creation. All of these apply to the Oral Reading competition, which should be an extension of the classroom literary and language arts activities in poetry, short stories and children's fiction.

Requirements for acceptable selections shall be as specified in official contest procedures. The maximum time for each presentation is six minutes. There is no minimum time limit. Students who exceed the allotted six minutes shall be penalized one rank. For example, if the judges rank a student second who has gone overtime, that student shall be assigned third place and the student who was ranked third will be given second place. Contestants may not use costumes or props in the contest. No speaker may be coached or prompted in any manner during the presentation.

Ready-Writing

Texas has put a great emphasis on writing skills at all levels of school and all levels of statewide testing. Ready Writing builds upon those skills and helps students refine their writing abilities. In particular, this contest helps them learn to write clearly and correctly a paper that is interesting and original.

Contestants are given a choice between two prompts, each of which defines the audience and provides the purpose for writing. Students should be encouraged to analyze the prompts for purpose, format, audience and point of view. The format may be, for example, a letter, an article for the newspaper or an essay for the principal. Various writing strategies may be stated or implied in the prompt. Some of these include:

(A) description to inform – describe the happening or person/object from imagination or memory;

(B) narration – write a story;

(C) persuasion – describe and argue just one side of an issue; describe both sides of an issue then argue only one side; write an editorial; write a letter to persuade, etc. There is no minimum or maximum number of words the contestants may write. Two hours are allowed for writing the composition. The District Executive Committee may shorten the length of the contest period to conform to the needs of the grade level.

Science

Emphasis for the Science contest will be placed on knowledge of scientific fact, understanding of scientific principles and the ability to think through scientific problems. The contests are designed to test not only memory but the ability to think critically about science and scientific processes and concepts. Such concepts include, but are not limited to: matter and energy, equilibrium, force and motion, physical and chemical properties, the relationship between organisms and the environment, the components of our solar system, the composition of matter and genetics. The contests will build upon the vast body of changing and increasing knowledge described by physical, mathematical and conceptual models.

Each test will consist of approximately 35 objective questions that will be taken primarily from current state-adopted science textbooks and the curriculum. Forty-five minutes will be allotted for the testing period exclusive of time required for instructions.

Social Studies

This contest is designed to encourage students to expand their knowledge of social studies, particularly in the areas of history, government systems, economics, citizenship and culture. Subject matter used for the test will be taken from currently adopted social studies textbooks and identified primary sources.

Students will be given an objective test containing approximately 40 questions. Thirty minutes will be allotted for the testing period exclusive of time required for instructions.

Spelling

This contest is designed to give students exposure to a wide variety of vocabulary words. It is not a contest of memorization. For the most educational value, preparation for this contest should include instruction in the rules of the English language, meanings and definitions, and root words. In addition to learning to spell proficiently, contestants will learn to write clearly and to capitalize words properly. Words will come from the appropriate UIL spelling list, state adopted textbooks and Words of Common Usage. Approximately 20 percent of the test words will come from sources other than the UIL spelling lists. The source designated in official contest procedures will serve as the authority for all words in the contest.

Students will write down words given by the pronouncer on their paper at a rate of approximately five words per minute.

(A) Grades 3 and 4: 50 words; tie breaker, 15 words.

(B) Grades 5 and 6: 80 words; tie breaker, 20 words.

(C) Grades 7 and 8: 110 words; tie breaker, 30 words.

The tiebreaker is given to all contestants immediately following the initial test. Contestants who do not take the tiebreaker shall be disqualified.