



全美中小学中文教师协会

Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools

THE NATIONAL CLASS ESSAY CONTEST OFFICIAL RULES

(Revised August 2024)

Since 2003, CLASS has sponsored a national essay contest for K-12 students around the USA to craft an original essay in Chinese. Students from different age groups, language levels, and heritage and non-heritage speakers have competed across different proficiency categories to ensure fair competition.

1. The contestant must be a student **currently enrolled** in a Mandarin Chinese program during the current school year at an elementary school, a middle school, or a high school that is fully accredited by regional Accreditation institutions like the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) or is a member of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS).
2. The contestant's teacher must be **a current member** of the Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS).
3. Essays must be written on the provided paper and handwritten legibly. Any illegible writing will result in deducted points. **All submissions will be online.**
4. Eligibility of Contest Entry: All entries must be solely and entirely the student's original independent work, without the aid of computer translators or AI assistance*. No contestant may use an essay by another contestant in previous years or resubmit an essay that was a previous submission. CLASS reserves** the right to disqualify contestants with identical essays.
5. It is the teacher's responsibility to place the essay contest participants in the most appropriate category commensurate with the student's background and training. CLASS reserves the right to disqualify a contestant who provides false background and training information.
6. **Each CLASS member may submit up to ten essays in total.** Teachers often find it helpful to assign essays to all students to encourage participation and choose the best essays.
7. The length of the essay **should be a minimum of 100 characters and a maximum of 500 characters not counting punctuation marks (two writing sheets provided by the Essay Contest Committee)**. All punctuations should be marked in the grid of the writing sheet.
8. Award certificates will be sent to teachers after the results are finalized.
9. Each contestant must agree to compete in the assigned division and category as outlined below. The judge will evaluate the contestant's writing in the division and category registered by the teacher.

Categories: Students' language background information

Category A (Regular)	Category B (Immersion)	Category C (Heritage)
Students who are non-heritage speakers of Chinese in a regular foreign language program	Students who have been in an immersion program regardless of first language background.	Students who are heritage learners*

***The Heritage Speaker Category is defined as follows:**

- This category consists of students whose home language includes all dialects of Chinese.
OR
students who have learned Chinese through extended residence abroad (for example, more than one year) within the past FIVE years.
- These students, REGARDLESS OF THE COURSE IN WHICH THEY ARE PRESENTLY ENROLLED, MUST BE PLACED in the Heritage Speaker category.

(*Adapted from the Connecticut COLT Poetry Contest)

Divisions: students' starting entry point to learn Chinese and the current level

<u>Division I</u> <i>Beginner</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginner K-5: Students who started learning Chinese as a beginner in elementary school • Beginner 6-8: Students who started learning Chinese as a beginner in middle school • Beginner 9-12: Students who started learning Chinese as a beginner in high school
<u>Division II</u> <i>Intermediate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermediate 6-8: Students who started learning Chinese at elementary school and continued at the middle school level • Intermediate 9-12: Students who started learning Chinese at middle school and continued at the high school level
<u>Division III</u> <i>Advanced</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced 9-12: Students who started learning Chinese at elementary school and continued at the middle school through high school level

Example of group coding: a student in C-II-7 means this is a seventh grader who has been in an immersion program since elementary school.

***Definition of "Original Independent Work"**

Essays must be drafted and written by individual student authors. No online translator is allowed to create any part of the text. No parental or teacher assistance/editing is allowed. Proper citation is required if others' words are quoted or employed.

****Please note:** CLASS Student Essay Judging Committee reserves the right to reject any entry that is under the suspicion of plagiarism or tempered with more sophisticated authorship. If two judges

raise suspicion based on their professional knowledge, a third authoritative figure such as the CLASS president or a board member will be consulted to make the final decision. Teachers and administrators are expected to model and reinforce ethical behaviors.

Prizes

The Essay Contest will have **Gold, Silver, and Honorable Mention** awards. All participants in the contest will receive a CLASS certificate of participation.

Scoring Rubric

Category _____ Division _____ Name _____ Score _____/20

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
<u>Ideas and Structure</u> (8 points)	Writing effectively conveys a message that is clear, accurate and focused with many supporting details. (8)	Writing clearly conveys a message containing several details that support the main ideas. . (6)	Writing requires interpretation on the reader's part and/or only basic development with few details. (4)	Writing is barely comprehensible, lacks a central topic, or has no supporting details. (2)
<u>Word Choice and Discourse</u> (5 points)	Demonstrates creative use of words and cohesive devices to seamlessly connect sentences. (5)	Demonstrates adequate use of words and some use of cohesive devices to connect sentences. (4)	Shows repetitive words and/or little to no cohesive devices that connect sentences. (3)	Shows erroneous or poor choice of words and incomplete sentences with no cohesive devices. (2)
<u>Syntax and Accuracy</u> (5 points)	Demonstrates excellent command of sentence structure and accurate grammar use. (5) .	Demonstrates good control of language structure and mostly accurate grammar use. (4)	Shows developing use of language structure and some degree of grammar control. (3)	Shows lack of language structure command and little if any grammar control. Poor use of language structure most of the time. (2)
<u>Formatting and Appearance</u> (2 points)	Demonstrate neat and accurate handwriting with few or no errors in punctuation and/or characters. (2)	Demonstrates good handwriting; however, it may contain several errors in punctuation and/ or characters (1.5)	Demonstrates adequate handwriting; however, it contains many punctuation and/or character errors. (1)	Demonstrates illegible or barely legible handwriting with many punctuation and/or character errors . (0.5)