

The R. Joel Senter Sr. Memorial Prize

*A Sherlock Holmes Essay Contest for
10th to 12th Grade*

“The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter”

*Sponsored by
Mrs. Carolyn Senter*

*Administered by
The Beacon Society, a Scion Society of
The Baker Street Irregulars*

This booklet contains the essay contest rules, suggestions to help entrants read the story critically and write an essay, a glossary of British terms found in the story, recommended essay questions, and the rubric that will be used to judge the essays.

Copyright 2019

All of the stories proposed to be read for this contest are in the public domain, and the Beacon Society holds no rights to their content. The Beacon Society holds the copyright for all other content in this booklet.

The content in this booklet may not be reproduced for any purpose other than the 2019 R. Joel Senter Sr. Memorial Prize Essay Contest without the express permission of the Beacon Society. Individual contributors will retain copyright of their contributed material.

The Beacon Society
In care of:
Denny Dobry
5003 Stony Run Drive
Reading, PA 19606

Special thanks to:

**Watson's Tin Box of Columbia, Maryland and
Andy Solberg for permission to use the format of the
*Sherlock Holmes Essay Contest for Seventh Grade Students Sponsored by Watson's Tin Box***

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| R. Joel Senter Sr..... | 2 |
| Sir Arthur Conan Doyle | 4 |
| Contest Rules | 5 |
| A Reader's Guide | 7 |
| Pre-Reading Activities | 7 |
| During Reading | 7 |
| Reading Questions | 8 |
| Critical Questions | 8 |
| After Reading | 9 |
| Some Factual Questions | 9 |
| Essay Writing Tips | 10 |
| Thinking About Your Essay | 10 |
| The Traditional Structural Rules | 11 |
| Essay Questions | 12 |
| Writing the Essay | 12 |
| Rubric to be Used in Judging the Essay..... | 13 |
| Official Entry Form and Cover Sheet | 14 |

Introduction

Sherlock Holmes has survived the last 130 years as one of the most famous literary characters of all time. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote sixty Sherlock Holmes stories, a body of work referred to by Sherlockians as “The Canon.” However, from Holmes’s first appearance in 1887 in the short novel *A Study in Scarlet*, thousands of imitations of the Holmes character – some of them parodies – have appeared in books, plays, radio, movies, and television.

The following link provides a whimsical overview of Sherlock Holmes:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8992A5oAWM>

A factual essay can be found on The Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Literary Society’s website:

<https://www.arthurconandoyle.com/sherlockholmes.html>

Carolyn Senter is sponsoring this contest in the memory of her late husband, R. Joel Senter Sr., with the administrative assistance of the Beacon Society. The Beacon Society was founded in 2003 with the expressed mission to encourage and assist young people to read by introducing them to Sherlock Holmes. Information on the Beacon Society can be found at www.beaconsociety.com.

We hope that throughout the rest of your life you will return to the Sherlock Holmes stories from time to time and enjoy the fun of hearing Holmes say to Watson, “The game is afoot!” There is a worldwide community of people who love Sherlock Holmes. If your interest in Holmes continues, feel free to join in the fun by reading, writing, and becoming a member of one of the many clubs of Sherlock Fans around the world.

We hope that you enjoy your adventure with Sherlock Holmes. Good luck with your essay.

R. Joel Senter Sr.



The R. Joel Senter Sr. Memorial Prize was founded by Joel's wife, Carolyn. Carolyn wanted the legacy of her husband to live on in the Sherlockian world after his death.

R(oderick) Joel Senter, Sr. (1930 - 2018) was a man of many interests and correspondingly numerous accomplishments. He played in bands, he performed magic, he taught mnemonics to Air Force personnel, he hosted a Dixieland jazz radio show, he wrote and produced Old Time Radio re-enactments (one of which won an award), and – probably best known – he and his wife, Carolyn, operated the premier Sherlock Holmes mail order catalogue for almost three decades.

Joel was a professor of psychology at the University of Cincinnati for 32 years. For about 10 of those years, he taught enormous-sized classes – from 300 to 800 students. Decades later, those students still remember his clear teaching and his dry wit. Joel also established and headed an Experimental Psychology Laboratory at the University and received numerous grants from government agencies. But he may have been even better known in the field of statistics. A textbook he wrote, *Analysis of Data*, is something of a classic on the subject. One student, who himself later became a professor, recalled that he hated and feared math until he studied with Joel. "Astonishingly," he reported, "because of his way of teaching, I loved statistics."

Throughout all those years of professional achievement, Joel retained a passion for a certain consulting detective that he met in a high school English literature class via "The Adventure of the Red-Headed League." So, after he accepted an early retirement package from the university in 1988, Joel and Carolyn embarked on the great adventure of the rest of their life together. It involved the founding of Classic Specialties and eventually the *Sherlockian E-Times* newsletter. Classic Specialties was the Amazon.com of the Sherlockian world before there was Amazon – a place where one could buy all manner of Holmes-related books and other products. Many of those products were unique, the creation of Joel's fertile imagination.

The Senters traveled widely as members of several Baker Street Irregulars scion societies around the country. Along with the operation of Classic Specialties, that gave them a network of Sherlockian friends far and wide. Drove of them appeared to offer condolences and messages of encouragement to Carolyn when Joel unexpectedly passed beyond the Reichenbach in July 2018. Carolyn decided to give back to this supportive community, and at the same time keep green Joel's memory, by creating the R. Joel Senter Memorial Prize for essays by young readers about Sherlock Holmes. It brings together two worlds that meant so much to R. Joel Senter, Sr. – education and the Great Detective.

Joel was fond of quoting a professor of his who said, “He who toots not his own horn, so shall it not be tooted.” But, as Carolyn pointed out, “he never followed his own advice and, indeed, even eschewed his own accomplishments.” It is her hope that with this prize Joel’s horn shall be un-tooted no more.

SOME WIT AND WISDOM FROM R. JOEL SENTER SR.

- *When hearing or reading a statement/proclamation always ask: Who is the speaker and how the heck do they know?*
- *Always keep in mind when you hear a report such as 40% of some group does something bad or suffers from some disaster that (in this example) 60% didn't. The presentation of this kind of data is meant to shock. Always take note of the inverse.*
- *Educated does not equal smart.*

Arthur Conan Doyle

Sir Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle, best known today as the creator of Sherlock Holmes, was born on May 22, 1859 in Edinburgh, Scotland. In addition to his stories about the world's most famous detective, Conan Doyle was a prolific writer whose other works include science fiction stories, historical novels, plays, romances, poetry, non-fiction, and writings on spiritualism.



He originally set out to be a doctor. From 1876 to 1881, he studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh. In 1882, Doyle established his own medical practice in the community of Southsea, a suburb of Portsmouth, England.

However, his early medical practice was not very successful, so he wrote fiction to supplement his income. His first Sherlock Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet*, was published in *Beeton's Christmas Annual* for 1887. Conan Doyle modeled the character of Holmes in part on one of his former medical school professors, Dr. Joseph Bell. Dr. Bell had the ability to identify a patient's occupation, background, and many other details just by looking at him or her.

The second Sherlock Holmes novel, *The Sign of Four*, followed in 1890. But Holmes really took off when Conan Doyle hit upon the idea of a series of stories about the same character to run each month in a magazine. This had never been done before. Conan Doyle pitched the idea to a new publication, *The Strand Magazine*, shortly after it began in 1891. *The Strand* initially published the first twelve Sherlock Holmes, which later appeared in book form as *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. They were an immediate hit with the public. *The Strand* ordered more stories – and then wanted still more.

At the end of the second set of stories, published as *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (1893), Holmes's friend, Dr. John H. Watson, related in *The Final Problem* how the detective appeared to have died at the hands of a criminal mastermind, Professor Moriarty. Holmes came back, however, in perhaps his most famous adventure of all – *The Hound of the Baskervilles* that ran in *The Strand* from 1901-1902. Three more books followed. In all, Conan Doyle wrote 56 short stories and four novels featuring Sherlock Holmes over a forty-year period ending in 1927.

Conan Doyle wrote nearly 200 novels, short stories, poems, historical books and pamphlets, including *The Lost World* and *The White Company*. He was knighted by Queen Victoria of England in 1902.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle died of a heart attack in 1930, at age of 71. He is buried in the churchyard at Minstead in the New Forest, Hampshire, England, beneath a tombstone that reads in part:

STEEL TRUE
BLADE STRAIGHT
ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE
KNIGHT
PATRIOT, PHYSICIAN, & MAN OF LETTERS

A detailed biography of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle can be found on

The Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Literary Society's website:
<https://www.arthurconandoyle.com/biography.html>

Contest Rules

1. Students in the 4th to the 12th grade level in the United States and Canada are eligible to participate in this contest. The contest is divided into three categories:

4th to 6th Grade –

Essay based on “The Adventure of the Red-Headed League” from *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*

Essay Length:

300 words Minimum;

Approximate Maximum 500 words.

7th to 9th Grade –

Essay based on “The Adventure of the Copper Beeches” from *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*

Essay Length:

500 words Minimum;

Approximate Maximum 750 words.

10th to 12th Grade –

Essay based on “The Greek Interpreter” from *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*

Essay Length:

750 words Minimum;

Approximate Maximum 1000 words.

On-line versions of the stories can be found at:

<https://www.arthur-conan-doyle.com/index.php?title=The 62 Sherlock Holmes stories written by Arthur Conan Doyle>

2. Each Entrant must have an adult Sponsor, 21 years of age or older (parent, teacher or family friend). The role of the Sponsor is to ensure that the Entrant follows the Contest Rules and to provide pre-writing* guidance to the Entrant.
3. Sponsors **may not write or edit** the essay for Entrants. The essays must be entirely the work of the students. However, the Sponsor may make suggestions to the Entrant prior to the start of the essay composition as specified in this document.
4. Sponsors and Entrants should read the section of this booklet entitled *Essay Questions* carefully before starting the essay. It includes questions that Sponsors may wish to suggest to the Entrants as the subjects of their essay.
5. Essays must include a fully completed Cover Sheet/Entry Form as included in this booklet. Essays received by the Beacon Society without this completed form will not be read and will not be eligible for prizes.
6. Essays are to be written in English, using word-processing software such as Microsoft Word or an equivalent, in a 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced. Sponsors may guide the Entrants in complying with this requirement.
7. The Entrant's name, email address and the page number (page x of x) must appear in the lower left-hand corner of the footer of each page following the Cover Sheet. A Sponsor may assist the Entrant in formatting the pages.

8. A rubric identifying the criteria by which essays will be judged is included in this booklet. Sponsors and Entrants are encouraged to review the rubric before beginning their essays.
9. Teachers may only sponsor up to three (3) Entrants per classroom per Essay Contest Category for judging. For Example: If a teacher teaches two-6th grade classes and two-7th grade classes, he or she may sponsor three entrants per class, for a maximum of 12 entrants.
10. Parents may sponsor an essay for each of their children in any Essay Contest Category.
11. Entrants may email their own essays, or they may be emailed by the Entrant's Sponsor on the Entrant's behalf.
12. Essays must be emailed and received by the Beacon Society, in care of Art Renkwitz at renkwitza@gmail.com, by **February 1st, 2020** to be eligible for the prizes. Essays may be submitted at any time during the contest period and need not wait until the end of the contest period.
13. Essays received by Beacon Society will not be returned to the Entrant or the Sponsor.
14. If you have additional questions, please email Art Renkwitz at renkwitza@gmail.com.

Prizes: In each Category Prizes will include:

- 1st Place – a Plaque and \$300 Cash Prize
- 2nd Place - a Plaque and \$200 Cash Prize
- 3rd Place - a Plaque and \$100 Cash Prize

The winners will be announced shortly after the contest deadline. If possible, the Beacon Society will have a member of the Society present the Senter Prizes at the contest winners' schools. If an in-person presentation is not possible, the Senter Prizes will be mailed to the winners.

*The Sponsor should read this entire document before reviewing with the Entrant. The Sponsor should then review with the Entrant what suggestions/questions would be most helpful for the Entrant to incorporate in their approach to writing their Essay. The suggestions/questions are not a checklist from which the Entrant must complete each element.

A Reader's Guide

The following pre-reading, during reading, reading questions, after reading, and factual question are offered to the help the Entrants think critically. Sponsors may encourage Entrants to read them before they begin the story.

Pre-Reading Activities

- Feel free to talk with someone about the story before you read it. Perhaps, your Sponsor, a friend or your parent can read the story as well.
- Think about what you already might know about the subject. Have you read any Sherlock Holmes stories before? Have you read any other mysteries?
- If you want, make predictions about what you think the story might be about. What do you think will happen?
- Skim through the text. Can you identify the setting, characters, and events of the story from just a few words that jumped out at you?

During Reading

If you have a photocopied version of *The Greek Interpreter*, feel free to write your thoughts next to the text, so you can keep notes.

Write down your curiosities and confusions. What are you wondering about? What is especially puzzling?

While you are reading the story, try to think about similar experiences that you may have had. For example: Have you ever met someone you never suspected even existed, as Dr. Watson met Mycroft Holmes?

Ask yourself questions about the people, places, and events in the story. Do they make sense? Are they believable? Try to analyze things that happen in the story. Why do the characters behave the way they do? Why do particular events occur the way they do?

Visualize the story. Think of how it could be made into a movie or television episode. How would you stage the events in the story? What do you think the characters look like? Who might play the various roles? What do the settings in the story look like?

Make predictions while you are reading the story. What do you think will happen next? Does the plot follow the predictions you are making?

Reading Questions

When you are reading Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes mystery, try to look for information relating to the following questions. Seek out answers to your questions and make judgments about the way the story unfolds. Look up any terms that might be peculiar to 1893, the year this story first appeared.

1. What is the point of view of this story? Who is the narrator?
2. Is this more of a mystery or an adventure? What is the difference?
3. Who are the main characters? Do the descriptions of them help you visualize what they must have looked like and how they spoke or reacted?
4. What is the setting of the story? What locations in London and what foreign locations are mentioned?
5. Are the descriptions of the action in the story well told? How might they have been?
6. Are there important objects in the story? Are they symbolic in any way?
7. Are there any unexpected or surprising events?
8. Identify at least two themes that emerge from the story.

Critical Questions for "The Greek Interpreter"

Carefully think about these questions about the story and make notes on each of them.

1. Why did Sherlock Holmes keep the existence of his brother Mycroft a secret?
2. What does keeping such a secret suggest about the relationship between Holmes and Watson?
3. After observing the interaction between Sherlock Holmes and his brother, what ideas do you have about their relationship, either when they were young or as adults?
4. What do you think about the observational powers of the two Holmes brothers? Would they work as well in modern times?
5. Do you believe everything about Mycroft Holmes' account of how he met Mr. Melas, or do you suspect he might be holding something back? Does Mycroft's occupation influence your thinking on this issue?
6. What do you think about the methods Sherlock Holmes and his brother employed in pursuing this case? Were they effective and well-planned? What would you have done differently?
7. The kidnapers were after some sort of "property." What might that property have been?
8. What did Holmes and Watson accomplish? Are they the real heroes of this story?
9. How do you imagine the events associated with the climax of this adventure? What might have happened to Sophy Kratides?
10. Is the conclusion satisfactory, or does it leave unanswered questions about the case?

After Reading

The following ‘After Reading’ suggestions should only be read **AFTER** the Entrant has read the story. These suggestions are intended to help the Entrants take note of specific information that is clearly stated in the text and to promote analytical thinking.

After a day or so, re-read the story. Sometimes, doing so makes for a better understanding or gives the reader new insights. Those who love and study Sherlock Holmes stories re-read the adventures many times and discover new perspectives each time they do so.

Summarize the story for yourself. Decide what was important.

In addition, begin to analyze the characters. For example: What makes Sherlock Holmes and his brother Mycroft unique? What role does Dr. Watson play? What kind of man is Mr. Melas? Is he brave or cowardly, or something in-between? How does he compare to Latimer, Kemp, Paul Kratides, or Sophy? What does that nervous giggling tell you about Wilson Kemp?

Research references to life at that time as compared to how we live life today. For instance: What time was “tea” usually served at that time, and what was served besides just tea? Since Myscroft belonged to a “club,” what was meant by a club for gentlemen at this time? How is this different from a club you might join in high school?

Some Factual Questions for “The Greek Interpreter”

Attention to the facts about this adventure can help understand not only the storyline, but also the characters, the plot, and the themes. Do any of the answers to these questions reveal something unusual or new about *The Greek Interpreter*?

1. What season of the year does the story take place?
2. What are we told about Sherlock Holmes’ ancestors, including his parents?
3. What was Mycroft’s routine, and what was the name of his club?
4. How did Mycroft differ physically from his brother Sherlock?
5. How exactly did Mr. Melas make a living?
6. What weapon did Latimer use to threaten Mr. Melas in the cab?
7. How did Melas describe Latimer’s voice and Kemp’s manner?
8. How did Mr. Melas get the true story from Paul Kratides?
9. Where did Mycroft search for information about the Kratides?
10. Who answered the newspaper advertisement for information?
11. What was the name of the house where Sophy was being held, and where was that house located?
12. What delayed Holmes and Watson going to that house? Who from Scotland Yard went with them?
13. What had been used to kill Paul Kratides?
14. How did Holmes and Watson learn about the fate of Sophy and her captors, Latimer and Kemp?

Essay Writing Tips

The following are standard rules and are consistent with the rubric that will be used to judge the essays.

Thinking About Your Essay

Feel free to be creative. Read the essay questions below and select one that you find interesting, challenging, and worth writing about. Use a prewriting strategy (web, bulleted list, graphic organizer, etc.) to gather and organize ideas for your answer, as well as details from the story that suggest your interpretations are strong.

Before you start to write your essay, focus on:

- The Role or perspective from which you want to write the essay
- The Audience you want to address
- The Format in which to write
- The Topic about which to write
- A Strong Verb that suggests the purpose of the writing (such as persuade, analyze, create, predict or compare)

First, you can list your choices for each of these categories. Then, write a paragraph that identifies the role from which you want to write the essay, who you want to pretend your audience is, what format you are going to use, what impact you want your essay to have, and what your topic is going to be.

For example:

You are Dr. Watson (Role). You want to write a letter (Format) to Sherlock Holmes (Audience) analyzing (Strong Verb) your friendship (Topic).

Of course, the audience could simply be the Beacon Society.

Before you start writing, ask yourself what you know about the role you adopt and the audience you are writing for. Think about the approach you will use to support your opinion. What sort of detail from the story would grab your audience's attention?

The Traditional Structural Rules

If you choose to write a straight forward analytical essay, write about the story using a formal tone. Try to not use “I” in your essay. Do not write a plot summary or a biography of Conan Doyle. You should try to cite the text or use details, examples, quotations, and paraphrases to support your views.

The essay should include an introductory paragraph, main body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.

The introduction should set up the general discussion of your subject. It should lead to a very specific statement of your main point. It is often recommended that essays begin with a "grabber," such as raising a surprising point or a challenging claim that will “grab” the reader’s attention and introduces the main point of your analysis. This is called the “thesis sentence.” The introduction paragraph should summarize what your thesis, or argument is going to be in the main body paragraphs of your essay.

Each main body paragraph should discuss a single idea, reason, or example that supports your argument or thesis. Each paragraph should begin with a clear topic sentence (a summary that describes the main point of the paragraph) and as much information as is necessary to explain your argument. Try to use details, references, examples, and citations from the story to make your thesis clear and your arguments convincing. All of the points raised in your body paragraph should support your main thesis.

You should begin your conclusion paragraph with a restatement of your main thesis. However, do not just repeat your thesis sentence. Discuss why you think that your thesis is important to the understanding of the story. Since this is the last piece of the essay that the reader will read, think about the idea or feeling that you want to leave your reader with. The conclusion should be specific in contrast to the introduction.

Make sure that you show how your ideas in the main body paragraphs are related to each other. These “transitions” connect your arguments to one another. Use either or both the last sentence of one paragraph and/or the first sentence (the topic sentence) of the next to show how the two ideas are related. Sometimes it is helpful to think about how the ideas compare or contrast. For example, does one paragraph discuss one fact and the second paragraph discuss a fact of greater significance. Do they contrast? Are they being seen from different character’s perspectives?

Make sure that you have a transition from the last body paragraph to your conclusion paragraph. Sometimes, it is suggested to sum up the third body paragraph with some reminders of your other paragraphs. Don't restate the topics fully because you will do that in the conclusion paragraph.

Essay Questions

Sponsors should discuss the Essay Questions with the Entrant and agree on one or more of the questions on which to target their essay.

Once again, Entrants may experiment with point of view, role, audience, format, etc. in writing their essays.

We recommend that Entrants consider one of the following questions in their essays:

1. Do you think that the short story form is particularly suited to detective fiction? Explain your answer with references to this story.
2. Most detective stories begin with the crime, which the detective then solves. How is the structure of *The Greek Interpreter* different? In your explanation, tell how that difference makes this an interesting story.
3. Sherlock Holmes makes a lot of deductions in the story. What is their purpose? Is he just showing off, or does he have deeper reason? Which deductions help to solve the mystery?
4. Discuss ways in which Conan Doyle creates atmosphere in this story. Be sure to support your claims with examples of scenes from the text.
5. Who are the cleverest people in this story and who are the least clever? Be sure to support your conclusions with examples.
6. Characterize the contributions of Mycroft Holmes to the story? What impression do you get of Mycroft?

Writing the Essay

The above sections on the reading approach, the critical questions, the post-reading approach, and the factual questions should provide a unique approach to an essay about *The Greek Interpreter*. If the Entrant has a well-defined aspect of the story that they prefer to address, they may write the essay on that issue, after discussing the aspect with their Sponsor. The following are simply some additional suggestions to help the Entrant think about the essay.

- You may choose to analyze a single character or compare/contrast two characters, including a discussion of motivation, behavior, attitudes, interaction with other characters.
- Are there any important symbols in the story? What are the specific symbols? Are these symbols part of a pattern that points toward a theme?
- Analyze the use of imagery (colors, smells, textures, shapes, sounds) in the story. To what senses do these images appeal (sight, smell, touch, and hearing)? How do they enhance our pleasure and understanding of the story?
- Discuss the point of view of the narrative. Why did Conan Doyle choose this angle? How does it affect the reader's response? How would the story change if told from a different point of view?
- Discuss how the setting of the story contributes to it. How does it support or conflict with the character's behavior or the conflict in the story? Does it set a mood?
- What is the central conflict in the story? (But be careful not to write a plot summary.) Show how its resolution illustrates the author's purpose. Analyze the theme of the story. Is there a "universal truth" that Conan Doyle was attempting to convey through the adventure?

Entrants will be judged on the quality of their essays, not on whether they choose or do not choose one of the suggested questions.

Rubric to be Used in Judging the Contest

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Score |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|-------|
| | Experimenting | Emerging | Developing | Effective | Strong | |
| Ideas | Searching for a topic; Limited information; Vague details; Random thoughts | Hints at topic; Reader left with many unanswered questions; Sporadic details; Glimmer of Main Point | General topic defined; Reasonably clear ideas; Details present but not precise; Shows some specifics | Topic fairly narrowed; new ways of thinking about topic attempted; Credible details with some support; Writer understands topic | Narrow and manageable topic; Clear, focused, and answers readers' questions; Relevant and accurate details; Shows insight into topic | |
| Organization | No lead or conclusion; Sequencing not present; No awareness of pacing; Hard to follow | Ineffective lead & conclusion; Some sequencing apparent; Pacing awkward; Some attempt at structure | Routine lead & conclusion; Mainly logical sequencing; Pacing generally under control; Common structures detract from content | Effective lead & conclusion; Sequencing works well; Well controlled pacing; Smooth flow | Inviting introduction and satisfying conclusion; Masterful sequencing; Artful pacing used for stylistic effect; Structure showcases the central ideas of theme | |
| Voice | No concern for audience; Lifeless & mechanical; Flat or inappropriate; Purpose not present | Occasionally aware of audience; General statements require reader interpretation; Tries to engage reader; Hints at purpose | Occasionally intrigues the reader; Pleasing, yet "safe;" Writer/reader connection fades in and out; Purpose inconsistent | Interesting and informative; Pleasing, takes risks; Engages reader most of the time; Purpose consistent | Compelling and engaging; Takes effective risks; reflects interest in and commitment to topic; Purpose is clear and powerful | |
| Word Choice | Vocabulary is limited; Simple words used incorrectly; No figurative language; Words do not convey meaning | Generally correct words, no spice; Language is functional ; Attempts interesting words; Words convey general meaning | Some active verbs and precise nouns; A moment or two of sparkle; Experiments with figurative language; Words begin to enhance meaning | Effective and creative verbs and nouns; Wording mostly correct; Figurative language is effective; Words and phrases work well | Specific and accurate verbs and nouns; Wording is natural, effective, and correct; Verbs and nouns add depth; Figurative language enhance and clarify; Striking words and phrases | |
| Sentence Fluency | Choppy, rambling, or incomplete; No "sentence sense;" Oral reading not possible; Repetitive beginnings | Some simple sentences; Occasional connecting word use; Oral reading difficult; Attempts variation in sentence beginnings | Attempts compound and complex sentences; Sentences usually connect; Parts invite oral reading; Sentences begin in different ways | Begins to have easy flow and rhythm; Strong and varied structure; Oral reading encourages expression in places; Sentences well crafted | Polished rhythm, cadence, and flow; Creative use of sentence length and structure; Invites expressive reading; Sentences enhance meaning | |
| Conventions | Spelling errors impede readability; Incorrect Punctuation & capitalization; Many grammar errors; Lack of paragraphing | Spelling errors on easy words; Errors on basic punctuation & capitalization; Some usage & grammar errors; Occasional use of paragraphing | Spelling generally correct on basic words; Routine punctuation & capitalization; Grammar errors infrequent; Consistent paragraphing | Few spelling errors even on difficult words; Consistent use of punctuation & capitalization; Grammar and usage correct; Paragraphing stylistically effective | Spelling correct even on more difficult words; Accurate & creative use of punctuation & capitalization; Grammar and usage contribute to clarity and style; Sound and creative paragraphing | |
| Presentation | Random spacing or lack of spacing; Poor use of white space; Overall appearance unacceptable | Some thought given to spacing; Attempts margins/headers; Overall appearance is distracting | Attempts consistent spacing; Margins/headers effective; Overall appearance is acceptable | Spacing improves clarity; Experiments with graphic elements; Overall appearance shows balance and proportion | Good balance of space and text; Effectively integrates graphic elements; Overall appearance is pleasing | |

The R. Joel Senter Sr. Memorial Prize

COVER SHEET/ENTRY FORM

This Cover Sheet/Entry Form should be the first sheet accompanying the essay. Essays received by the Beacon Society without this cover sheet will not be read and will not be eligible for prizes. The information provided will only be used in relation to this essay contest.

Essays must be emailed and received by the Beacon Society, in care of Art Renkwitz at renkowitz@gmail.com by February 1st, 2020 to be eligible for prizes. Essays may be submitted at any time during the contest and need not wait until the end of the contest period.

Entrant

Name:

Grade level:

Age:

Home Address:

Phone number:

Email Address

School Name and Address (home-schooled entrants may just indicate such):

Sponsor

Name:

Home Address:

Phone Number:

Email Address :