

# *The R. Joel Senter Sr. Memorial Prize*

*A Sherlock Holmes Essay Contest for  
4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Students*

**“The Adventure of the Red-Headed League”**

*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.

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### ***Special thanks to:***

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

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## **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](http://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, this gave them a network of Sherlockian friends far and wide. Doves 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 fifty-six 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 4<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> grade in the United States and Canada are eligible to participate in this contest. The contest is divided into three categories:

### 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> 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.**

### 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> 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.**

### 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> 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](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-6<sup>th</sup> grade classes and two-7<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:renkwitza@gmail.com), by **February 1<sup>st</sup>, 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](mailto:renkwitza@gmail.com).

Prizes: In each Category Prizes will include:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place – a Plaque and \$300 Cash Prize
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place - a Plaque and \$200 Cash Prize
- 3<sup>rd</sup> 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, critical reading questions, after reading, factual questions, and analytical questions sections are offered to help the Entrants think critically. Sponsors may encourage students to read them before they begin the story.*

### *Pre-Reading*

- Feel free to talk with someone about the story before you read it. Perhaps, 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?
- Learn the definitions of "dissolve" as a verb. It means more than just to be absorbed.
- The story occurs in 1890. Conduct an online image search of 1890 London. What do you notice about the city?
- 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?
- Other pre-reading activities could include:
  1. Create a time-line for the major events both in England and around the world for period spanning the 1870s-1920s.
  2. Research information related to the Sherlock Holmes stories.

### *During Reading*

If you have a photocopied version of *The Adventure of the Red-Headed League*, 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: Has anyone ever offered you an amazing opportunity, such as that offered to Jabez Wilson?

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. 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?

## *Critical Reading Questions*

When you are reading Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes mystery, try to look for information relating to the following questions. In addition, ask questions and make predictions about the story as you read. Seek out answers to your questions and make judgments about the way the story unfolds. Look up any vocabulary words you do not know and write down their definitions on note paper.

1. What is the point of view of this story? Who is the narrator?
2. Who are the main characters?
3. What is the setting of the story? Does the setting change at all?
4. What is the main conflict? How is it resolved?
5. Are there long paragraphs of description? What purpose do they serve?
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 Adventure of the Red-Headed League"**

1. Does the position offered by the Red-Headed League sound too good to be true? Why or why not?
2. Based on Jabez Wilson's account, do you think a crime is involved? Why or why not?
3. If there is a crime, what is it?
4. Why do you think Sherlock Holmes is so interested in Vincent Spaulding?
5. Why does Holmes get so excited by the description of Spaulding?
6. Do you see anything significant in the list of businesses behind the pawn shop?

## *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.

Sometimes, rereading a story can help you to understand it better. The first time that you read a story (particularly a mystery), you often read just to find out what happens. However, the second time you read a story, you often notice new things, discover new details and make new insights. Lovers of the Sherlock Holmes stories re-read the adventures many times and discover new ideas each time they do so. Rereading a story can help you really understand it.

After you have read the story, visualize it again. Think of the facts in the story. For example, "Who is Dr. Watson?" and "Where does Sherlock Holmes live?"

Summarize the story for yourself. Decide what was important.

In addition, begin to analyze the characters, plot, style, and other points of the story. For example, “What kind of man is Jabez Wilson?” “What technique did Arthur Conan Doyle use to make us feel nervous while Holmes and Watson waited in the basement of the bank?”

### ***Some Factual Questions for The Red-Headed League***

1. What season of the year does the story take place?
2. What does Dr. Watson find remarkable about Jabez Wilson?
3. How did Sherlock Holmes know that Wilson had been writing a lot?
4. What was special about Wilson’s tattoo that related it to China?
5. How old did members of the Red-Headed League have to be?
6. What is Jabez Wilson’s profession?
7. What is Vincent Spaulding’s supposed hobby?
8. How do Holmes and Watson react when Wilson finishes telling his story?
9. Who is Mr. Merryweather?
10. What is Mr. Merryweather’s profession?
11. How long do Holmes, Watson, and the others wait in the dark near the end of the story?
12. What was the first clue that began Holmes’s chain of reasoning that ultimately solved the case?

### ***Some Analytical Questions***

1. What makes Dr. Watson such a good “partner and helper” to Sherlock Holmes?
2. What makes Sherlock Holmes such a good detective?
3. What are Holmes’s methods?
4. Why is he a detective?
5. What made the invention of The Red-Headed League such a good scheme until Holmes was called in? (Hint: What character traits of Jabez Wilson, revealed early in the story, make him a person to play this on?)
6. What clues does Wilson provide to Holmes (and the reader) that Vincent Spaulding is not what he seems?
7. What do Sherlock Holmes and Peter Jones, the official detective from Scotland Yard, think of each other?
8. What are the most memorable scenes in the story, the ones you will remember for a long time?

## *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) that you are comfortable with 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. 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 introduce the main point of

your analysis. This is called the “thesis sentence.” The introductory paragraph should summarize the thesis, or argument that will be developed 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. 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 more general nature of 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 address one of the following pre-defined 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 Red-Headed League” 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. What are Sherlock Holmes’s methods for solving this mystery? Be sure to discuss not just what he says, but what he does.
5. Discuss ways in which Conan Doyle creates atmosphere in this story. Be sure to support your claims with examples of scenes from the text.

6. Holmes and Watson react to Jabez Wilson's account by laughing. How is "The Red-Headed League" a funny story?
7. Who are the cleverest people in this story and who are the least clever? Be sure to support your conclusions with examples.
8. Sherlock Holmes tells a lot about Jabez Wilson from looking at him. But you can tell even more from his actions. Write a character sketch of Jabez Wilson, with particular attention to how Vincent Spaulding was able to fool him.
9. You may choose to analyze a single character or compare/contrast two characters, including a discussion of motivation, behavior, attitudes, interaction with other characters, etc.
10. 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?
11. Analyze the use of imagery (colors, smells, textures, shapes, sounds, etc.) 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?
12. 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?
13. 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?
14. 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 pre-defined questions.

## *Glossary of Terms Used in the Story*

Billet – British slang term for a job or position

Breastpin – a piece of jewelry, in this case worn on a tie

Coster – someone who sells fruits and vegetables

Dark lantern – a kind of lantern with a shutter to hide the flame without blowing it out

Derbies – British slang term for handcuffs

Freemason – member of a secret society generally known as the Masonic Order

Hansom – a type of horse-drawn carriage for two people and a driver, drawn by one horse

Hoax – a story made up to fool people

Hunting crop – a short whip that is sometimes used as a weapon

*L'homme c'est rien – l'oeuvre c'est tout* – French, meaning the work is more important than the person

*Omne ignotum pro magnifico* – Latin, meaning the unknown is imagined to be better than it really is

Napoleons – French gold coins

Pawnbroker – someone who lends money in return for an object of value

Pea jacket – a heavy coat originally worn by sailors

Pound – a unit of money in England, worth \$4.95 in American currency at the time of this story

Rubber – the best two out of three games in a card game called whist

Smasher – British criminal slang term for someone counterfeits coins

Snuff – a tobacco product that is sniffed rather than smoked

Stout – overweight, heavy

Tenacious – determined or stubborn

## *Rubric to be Used in Judging the Contest*

	1	2	3	4	5	
	Experimenting	Emerging	Developing	Effective	Strong	Score
<b>Ideas</b>	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	
<b>Organization</b>	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	
<b>Voice</b>	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	
<b>Word Choice</b>	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	
<b>Sentence Fluency</b>	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 I 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	
<b>Conventions</b>	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	
<b>Presentation</b>	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 renkwitza@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: