

Scenario Writing Overview



What is Scenario Writing?

Scenario Writing is an individual competition in which students develop short stories related to one of five FPS topics for the year. The story (1500 words or less) is set at least 20 years in the future and is an imagined, but logical, outcome of actions or events taking place in the world. More information can be found on FPSPI's website, <http://www.fpspi.org/scenario-writing/>.

Why Scenario Writing?

To prepare students for the challenges of the 21st century, Future Problem Solving Program International teaches students to think critically, creatively, and futuristically. The Scenario Writing component of FPSPI strives to help students enlarge, enrich, and make more accurate their images of the future while honing their creative writing skills. Scenario Writing personalizes the ever-growing perspective a student has on the future. Also, participation provides opportunities for students to meet and exceed educational standards as they refine their writing skills. A rubric-based authentic evaluation is provided, giving students tools for continuous growth.

Who can participate in Scenario Writing?

Students may participate in Scenario Writing in three divisions as determined according to the grades as identified within the US school system: Junior (grades 4-6), Middle (grades 7-9), and Senior (grades 10-12). For students who participate in the Global Issues Problem Solving (GIPS) or Scenario Performance components of FPSPI, Scenario Writing can serve as an excellent complement to their work on any of the topics. Scenario Writing can be used as a stand-alone activity by an FPS coach, an English teacher, a parent, or any instructor with students who are interested in creative writing. Students who are enthusiastic about stories of the future may be interested in the Scenario Performance component, which is an oral story telling experience.

Scenario Topics

- International Travel
- Sleep Patterns
- Gamification
- Living in Poverty
- De-Extinction

Do students need to know the six-step problem-solving process for scenarios?

The six-step problem-solving process is used in both the Global Issues Problem Solving and Community Problem Solving components. Although knowing the process can help students to think about the future and organize a story line, it is not a prerequisite for Scenario Writing. Since scenarios must relate to one of the topics, it is imperative that students do some background reading and research on the topic they select for their story.

Excerpt from Haha Naru Daichi: Motherly Land
2019 Junior Division 1st Place

Sunlight shone luminously on the *tenmoku* bowls filled with 3D printed *Amazake* on the long table in the Japanese Cabinet room on the fifth floor of *Kantei*. Tiny ripples emanated rapidly with increasing frequency on the surfaces of the steaming beverages. “How long will these earthquakes last? In this year, 2061, the number of earthquakes has far surpassed what we have seen in the previous decade,” the Japanese Prime Minister remarked, with a grim expression on his face, looking nervously at the statistics on the ZLED displays.

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“Overpowering electromagnetic radiation,” mumbled the professor, his eyes looking piercingly at the drone models observing the ocean floor. “You cannot always rely on digital techniques as the electronics can be overpowered by electromagnetic radiation. Can you plug in a Richter scale to an electric outlet so we can hear the earth?” asked the professor inquisitively. The group looked at each other, astonished by his question, as the Richter Scale had not been used since 1970 and its next-generation device, the Moment Magnitude Scale, had also not been used since 2030. “We currently use OCEANDRONE_IX to give us accurate readings of the seismic activity. Electric outlets are all retired because everything is wireless now,” answered the Cabinet Secretary, feeling his pulse quicken, angered at the notion that the newest technology wouldn’t be enough.

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As billowing clouds of smoke emerged from the air, the Cabinet Secretary conveyed all the reports and begged the professor to come with him to a safer place before he left. The professor shook his head. “To advise a nation, I have to listen to the sounds of Mother Earth. I hope Haha Naru Daichi hears me.”

How can I get started with my students?

The best way for you and your students to become acquainted with scenarios is to read published scenarios. See “Scenario Writing Essential Publications” for support materials available for purchase from FPSPI at www.fpspimart.org.

How much help should a coach give?

The student’s writing must be original. As a coach, you may provide direct instruction on creative writing, read the student’s work, ask questions that occur to you as a reader, and make general suggestions for improvement. Authors may receive assistance to correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. Peer revision is a beneficial process.

How are scenarios evaluated?

Scenarios are read and scored by experienced evaluators who consider the following elements: creative thinking, futuristic thinking, idea development, style/voice, character development, mechanics/structure, and topic related research. Authentic evaluation and feedback are provided. See “Evaluation Guidelines for International Scenario Writing Competition” for more information.

How does one register for Scenario Writing?

Each Affiliate Program of FPSPI determines its processes and fees for registration and entries.

In Affiliates where the Scenario Writing component is not currently offered, participation is available through FPSPI. www.fpspi.org/fps-mentoring

When are scenario entries due?

Affiliates may use a “yearlong” option with two submissions or a “competitive” option with a single submission. With the yearlong option, the first submission is noncompetitive and provides written feedback to guide improvement of the story. Check with your Affiliate Director for options and due dates.

Is there another level of competition?

Winning stories in 1st through 3rd place of each division at the Affiliate level may be entered into the International Scenario Writing Competition. All first-place Affiliate winners and all International winners 1st-5th are eligible to

compete in the Scenario Writing Team Competition at the International Conference in June.