

Future Problem Solving Program International (FPSPI) Scenario Writing Component



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 today. A winning scenario example is found on FPSPI's website www.fpspi.org at the Scenario Writing component tab.

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. In addition, 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. We look forward to your participation in the Scenario Writing component of the Future Problem Solving Program.

Who can participate in Scenario Writing?

Students may participate in Scenario Writing in three divisions: Junior (grades 4-6, or the equivalent), Middle (grades 7-9), and Senior (grades 10-12). For students who participate in the Global Issues Problem Solving component of FPSPI, Scenario Writing can serve as an excellent complement to their work on any of the topics. Scenario Writing is also an excellent offering for students who do not participate in other components of FPSPI; the creative writing involved may appeal to students who are not drawn to Global Issues Problem Solving (GIPS) or Community Problem Solving (CmPS). 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

- Treatment of Animals
- Disappearing Languages
- Recovering from Natural Disaster
- The Global Workplace
- Intellectual Property

Do students need to know the 6-step problem solving process for scenarios?

The six-step problem solving process is used in both the GIPS and CmPS 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, students should do some background reading and research on the topic they select for their story.

**Excerpt from *Once You Let the Eyes In*
Middle Division 1st Place 2015 International Champion**

The wall was a mosaic at the moment, each shard of glass its own unique block. Arranged as it was, Graham knew it could shift to an image of whichever or whomever, and yet he sat numbly, feeling a presence beyond the glass walls. He felt the scrutiny of the people, their million hungry eyes crawling all over his body. Looking for signs of distress, discomfort or annoyance, the people watched so that they could sit down for a session of morbid comedic indulgence, with him as the first- class entertainer.

Graham was thinking about the ways in which people let themselves become laughingstocks, or rejoice in the presence of one.

I guess people like the idea of showcasing their stupidity. Just look at us now.

In order to follow the trend of celebrating deliberate idiocy, the primitive reality tv show format was extended to the masses through social media. Now, no matter what the situation was, it was forever documented and shared. It was the new big thing: Contifoot, the Continuous Footage System forever documenting each of one's actions. Contifoot was the new way of living life through someone else's experiences.

Graham woke from the couch, and for the first time he could remember, he woke to his mother sitting beside his makeshift bed. He imagined the words she had for him, but nothing came close to what she actually thrust upon his groggy, irritated self:

“You finally did something! That night, we got more views than ever! Keep your mind spinning; you've finally found your role: the young rascal! With your sister as the pretty one, and you as the aggressive one, we have all our bases covered!”

With that same zeal, his mother went to assemble the new Contifoot system. Graham watched in horror as the witness and perpetrator of the terror to come was swiftly hung up on its track. The camera calibrated, refocused and narrowed its gaze on its new target.

Once we let those eyes in, they never turned away.

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.

How much help should I 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. See “Tips for Coaches” for more information.

How are scenarios evaluated?

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

How do I register for Scenario Writing?

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

When are scenario entries due?

Affiliates may use a “yearlong” option with two submissions or a “competitive only” 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 are 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.