

PHOTOGRAPHY is the process of creating an image. By focusing on objects using various lenses, filters and light sources, photographers may demonstrate the use of photographic techniques conventionally or digitally. *Collages and collections of photos are not accepted.*



To Portray Your Original Artwork

- **Consider the following accepted forms of photography:** a single photo, panoramic, photomontage (one print of multiple original photos), a multiple exposure, negative sandwich or photogram and original black-and-white and color images.
- **Avoid the following unacceptable forms of photography:** entries with added graphics and/or non-photographic elements (e.g., lettering, icons), collages and collections of photos, original film (negatives or transparencies) and multidimensional pieces.
- **To show a clear relation of the photo to the theme,** use objects, lighting and the location.

Image Quality Tips

- **Find Good Lighting:** Natural light is your best friend! Take photos near windows or outside during the day. If light is too strong, use a sheer curtain or a white sheet to soften the light and reduce harsh shadows
- **Use Multiple Light Sources:** Combine different light sources, like lamps and overhead lights, to create a balanced and well-lit scene. Avoid using just one light source, which can create unflattering shadows.
- **Keep Steady:** Hold your camera or phone with both hands to avoid blurry pictures. You can also use a tripod if you have one.
- **Focus on Your Subject:** Make sure your main subject is in focus. Tap on the screen of your phone or use your camera to focus if needed.
- **Try Different Angles:** Experiment with different angles and perspectives to make your photo more interesting.
- **Edit Your Photos:** Use simple editing apps to adjust brightness, contrast, and colors. You can also crop your photo to remove any unwanted parts. Add filters sparingly. Use edits to enhance your photo, not change it completely.
- **Check the Details:** Zoom in to make sure everything looks good and there are no unwanted spots or blurs.

- **Avoid compression:** Minimize the use of compression when saving your images, as this can reduce quality. Save files in formats like PNG or TIFF for better quality.
- **Resize with care:** If you need to resize an image, do so carefully to avoid losing quality. Use tools that allow you to maintain the original aspect ratio and resolution.
- **Sizing and quality:** Before finalizing your image, check its properties to ensure its quality and that it meets sizing needs: at least 640x960 pixels and 300 dpi resolution. Most editing software allows you to view and adjust these settings easily.

DIGITAL TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY

Digital technology and/or software may not provide the primary design and/or concept, but can be used to develop, enhance and/or present an entry. Entries may not be exclusively created with generative tools (e.g., AI) and/or composed exclusively of elements generated or provided by the technology platform.

Accepted:

- A sound library generated performance of student's original composed score.
- Use of audio editing platforms to mix, enhance or completely transform original audio.

Not Accepted:

- Algorithmic composition techniques in music submissions.
- Use of templates, formulas, etc. provided by a platform/technology.

Guidelines

- **Describe Use of Technology:** If digital technology is used, *entrants must use the "Additional Details" field to provide a brief description* of the tools and method used in the creation process, including any generative elements (10 to 50 words).
- **Verify Prohibited Technology:** Check if your state PTA prohibits the use of any digital platforms and/or methods (i.e., artificial intelligence).

Overall Entry Guidelines



These are basic guidelines that all Reflections entries must meet to be eligible on the national level. *Additional state and/or local program requirements may apply.*

Each entry must be new artwork inspired by the current year's theme are accepted.

- **Theme-Inspired:** Engage with the theme and create inspired artwork. This is critical to success in Reflections.
- **New Artwork:** Do not “recycle” artwork by submitting a piece created for other purposes (e.g., homework not related to Reflections; art used in another competition).

Each entry must be the original work of one student only.

- **Individual Originality:** Reflections is designed to encourage and recognize individual creativity, artistic assistance from friends, family and/or teachers is not allowed.
- **No Group Submissions:** Only one student will be awarded for each entry.
- **Artwork Details:** Titles or artist statements must be the student's own words and interpretations of the theme.
- **Creative Choices:** Decisions in the creative process must be made and/or directed by the student. If support is required, it should be limited and appropriate to the student's grade and needs.

Each entry must contain a title and an artist statement.

- **Word Count:** Artist's statement must include at least 10 words and not exceed 100 words.
- **Be Creative and Unique:** Each entry submitted in Reflections must have a unique title and artist statement specific to that submission. Learn more about crafting a title and artist statement in the section below.

Each entry using digital technology/software in creation process must consider the following:

- **Enhance:** Technology/software *may be used to* develop, enhance and/or present an entry.
- **Original Use:** Technology/software *may not be use to* provide the primary design and/or concept.
- **Use Description:** Entrants must use the “Additional Details” field on their entry form to briefly describe the tools and method used in the creation process, including any generative elements (10 to 50 words).