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# HJH&SW WRITING CONTEST JUDGING CRITERIA

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The winning entries will be determined by a panel of up to four judges selected and approved by the HJH&SW Editorial Board and scored on three categories – form, content, and impact. A fifth judge will be asked to review the manuscript if there is significant difference in the scores by the four judges. Authors will be anonymous to the judges. Undergraduates, graduate-level students, and post-graduate level applicants will be judged separately.

## COMPOSITION (30 points)

Composition is the structural part of the manuscript - the "bones" upon which the manuscript hangs.

- **GRAMMAR** (10) Correct spelling, proper punctuation, appropriate sentence structure. Applicants are urged to proofread their manuscripts and to ask for additional proofreading assistance.
- **ORGANIZATION** (10) Organization refers to the pattern of ideas expressed by the applicant, usually top to bottom in an article of limited length. Manuscripts should incorporate standard elements including a title page, abstract, introduction with background and problem statement, methods, findings, discussion, and conclusions. Disorganized manuscripts earn no points.
- **CRAFTSMANSHIP** (10) Creative word use, reasonable paragraphing, appropriate mechanics, article flow.

## CONTENT (50 points)

Content covers the substance of the original research. The author must demonstrate preparation toward the stated goals and study objectives.

- **ABSTRACT** (5): Highlights the essence of the author's work. It should emphasize the importance of the findings and briefly list the approach used for gathering data and the conclusions drawn.
- **INTRODUCTION** (10): Describes the purpose of the article and the study rationale. *Does the author provide a brief and balanced review of the published literature in support of the main ideas of the study?*  
*Are the study objectives and research problem stated and clearly understood?*

- **METHODS** (10): Describes the experiments, models, theories, and procedures. *Is the experimental design appropriate? Is sufficient detail provided on the sampling design, data collection, and data analysis to allow other researchers to reproduce the results?*
- **RESULTS** (10): Objectively presents key findings, without interpretation, in an orderly and logical sequence. *Are the results presented in a way that guides readers through the findings? Do the results appropriately address the hypothesis, or answer questions stated in the Introduction?*
- **DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS** (15): Discusses the significance of the results and demonstrates critical reflection. *Are the findings in agreement with what others have shown? If not, do they suggest an alternative explanation or perhaps an unforeseen design flaw? Do the conclusions provide a new understanding of the problem investigated? What are the study limitations and next steps?*

## IMPACT (20 points)

Impact is the overall impression of the work. It gives latitude to the variety of opinions reflected in the judges.

- **INITIAL IMPRESSION** (5) The judges must have the impression that the study appropriately addresses the stated research goals and objectives. *Does the study contribute significant new information about the subject of the study? Is there scientific merit to the work completed? Do the findings impact the work of others? Is the work innovative, relevant, or useful?*
- **PERSONAL REACTION** (15) This is the category for the judge's personal opinions and subjective feelings about the manuscript. (For example, a judge who has a strong positive reaction to a submission may give it 15 points, whereas a judge who has a strong negative reaction may give it 0 points. A judge may give 7 or 8 points for a neutral reaction.)

\*Criteria are adapted from the E. Kuttner Language Learning Essay Contest: [http://halthome.org/?page\\_id=112](http://halthome.org/?page_id=112)