



2016 SEJONG WRITING COMPETITION

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE KOREA INSTITUTE, HARVARD UNIVERSITY
AND THE LITERATURE TRANSLATION INSTITUTE OF KOREA

DEADLINE FEBRUARY 29, 2016 (11:59 PM CST)

MISSION: The Sejong Writing Competition aims to introduce young adults to Korean culture through literature and poetry.

ELIGIBILITY: Open to all residents of the US and Canada age 25 and younger regardless of ethnic background.

ESSAY CATEGORY – ADULT DIVISION (AGE 25 AND YOUNGER)

Topic: “The Glass Shield” (2008) by Kim Chunghyök (also romanized as Kim Jung-hyuk). Full text available from our website. “The Glass Shield” is one of Kim’s signature stories for its unusual tone and attitude but also for its confrontation of a major theme: What is art? It would be easy to classify the story as a postmodern one and not apply standard rules to it, but the story is also very traditional. Describe how Kim uses both traditional and unexpected approaches to addressing the central theme of the story.

ESSAY CATEGORY – SENIOR DIVISION (GRADE 12 AND YOUNGER)

Topic: “Waxen Wings” (1999) by Ha Söngnan (also romanized as Ha Seong-nan). Full text available from our website. “Waxen Wings” seems to be a story about the repeated failures in the life of its protagonist. By American standards the story is probably a tragedy, but it does not follow the typical structure for that form. Is the story a tragedy? What is the underlying structure of “Waxen Wings,” and how does the use of the second person as the point of view change your reading of the story?

ESSAY CATEGORY – JUNIOR DIVISION (GRADE 8 AND YOUNGER)

Korea has a rich tradition of storytelling, and its folk tales reflect important aspects of its history and culture.

Topics (choose one): Each topic refers to the list of Korean folktales found on our website.

- Select one folk tale from the list and explain your interpretation of the story. Why do you think it was created?
- If you could change one of these folk tales, what would you change and why?
- Which Korean folk tale character do you relate to best? Why? Would you make the same decisions as that character?

SIJO POETRY CATEGORY (ONE DIVISION OPEN TO STUDENTS GRADE 12 AND YOUNGER)

The sijo is a traditional three-line Korean poetic form organized technically and thematically by line and syllable count. Using the sijo form, write one poem in English on a topic of your choice. For examples of sijo, more information, and teaching materials – including a teaching guide for sijo – please visit our website. Only one entry per student is permitted.

PRIZES: Winning entries may be published in the *Korea Times Chicago*, the *Korean Quarterly*, and *Azalea: A Journal of Korean Literature and Culture*, published by the Korea Institute at Harvard University.

- Adult essay division: First (\$1,000) Second (\$750) Third (\$500)
- Senior essay division: First (\$500) Second (\$400) Third (\$300)
- Junior essay division: First (\$300) Second (\$200) Third (\$100)
- Sijo poetry category: First (\$500) Second (\$400) Third (\$300)
- Friends of Pacific Rim Award for selected essays and sijo (\$50 each)

GUIDELINES: All entries must be written in English, and only one essay and one sijo per applicant are permitted. A full list of guidelines and rules can be found on our website.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 11:59pm CST, February 29, 2016. Applications and entries must be submitted through our online submission system. Teacher accounts may also be created to monitor and submit student applications.