

## 2025 Writing Competition Rules and Regulations

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™ Trailblazer Committee is excited to announce the fifth year of our Writing Competition. We are committed to helping the youth of Texas transform their future by becoming enthusiastic readers, writers, and thinkers.

The Writing Competition consists of two categories, Essay and Poetry. Please read the details below, and join us for this exciting opportunity to be a student author for the 2025 Rodeo season!

### Who Is Eligible?

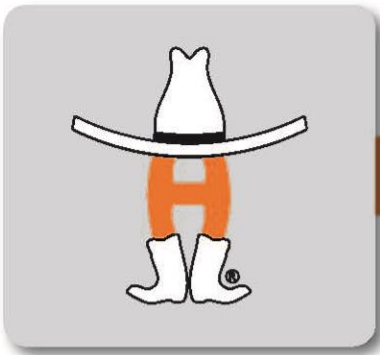
Any Texas resident enrolled in the **fourth grade** at the time of entry.

### Categories & Prompt

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Trailblazer Committee will once again accept entries for both Essay and Poetry. We are delighted to announce the 2025 season Writing Competition prompt: **My Colorful Lasso**.

*You're a wrangler with a magic lasso that can turn anything it touches into vibrant, brilliant colors. One day, you and your horse ride to a rodeo that's looking a little dull and gray. Write a story or poem about how you use your magic lasso to brighten up the rodeo. Here are some ideas you might think about while writing your story/poem:*

- What colorful changes do you create around the rodeo?
- How does your horse and lasso help you?
- Describe the fun and excitement as the rodeo transforms into a dazzling display of vibrant colors!
- Or, use your own wild imagination to describe your colorful adventure.



# Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo™

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## How to Apply

- Entry forms must be submitted to the [Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Writing Competition Portal](#). The entry portal will open by October 14, 2024.
- A signed Entry Form and Release of Liability must be submitted with your entry.
- Entry deadline is **November 5, 2024**.
- There is no entry fee.

## Awards

- Each student author entering the competition will receive a Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Certificate of Participation delivered to the email address provided in the portal.
- The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo will announce the award winners on **January 15, 2025**.
- First place, second place, and third place in each category will receive a belt buckle.
- A Trailblazer's Choice winner will be chosen in each category and receive a belt buckle.

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

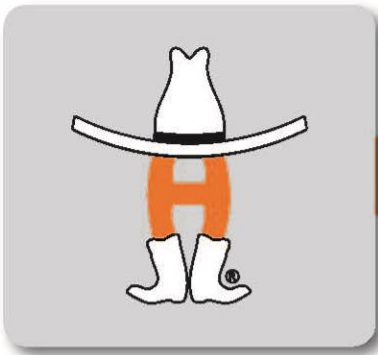
Please read the rules and regulations carefully and direct any questions to the contact listed at the end of this section.

### **Eligibility**

The student author must be a Texas resident or attend a school in Texas and be enrolled in the fourth grade at the time of entry.

### **Categories**

The two categories for the competition are Essay and Poetry, and the student author can participate in only one of the categories. Please check the category you wish to enter on the Entry Form & Release of Liability (Entry Form).



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## Essay and Poetry Rules

### Essay

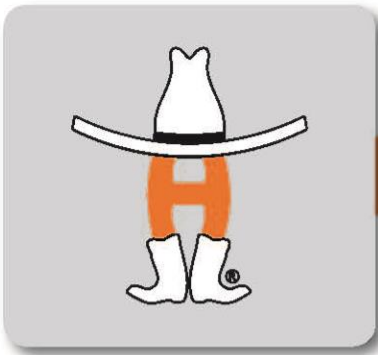
- Must be written in English.
- Must have a minimum of 100 words.
- Must not exceed a maximum of 350 words.
- Word count includes “a,” “an,” and “the,” but not the words on non-story pages such as the title page.
- If handwritten, must be legible.
- If typed, must be double spaced.
- **IMPORTANT** - please **ONLY include the entrant’s initials on the document**. Do not include their full name.
- Word document format is preferred.

### Poetry

- Must be written in English.
- Must have a minimum of 50 words.
- Must not exceed a maximum of 150 words.
- Word count includes “a,” “an,” and “the,” but not the words on non-story pages such as the title page.
- If handwritten, must be legible.
- If typed, must be double spaced.
- **IMPORTANT** - please **ONLY include the entrant’s initials on the document**. Do not include their full name.
- Word document format is preferred.

### Application

- Entry forms must be submitted to the [Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo Writing Competition Portal](#). **The entry portal will open by October 14, 2024.**
- A signed Entry Form and Release of Liability must be submitted for the entry to be valid.
- The entry deadline is **November 5, 2024**.
- There is no entry fee.
- Each Entry Form must include the student author’s name, school district, teacher’s name, school name, school phone and mailing address, and parent or legal guardian’s name and signature.



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- Incorrect or incomplete information on the Entry Form may result in disqualification of the entry or a delay in issuing awards.
- Submission of an Entry Form means the student author understands that the judge's decision is final and agrees to abide by the rules and regulations of the Writing Competition.
- The Rodeo has the right to limit entries. Entries will be dated as received and entries received first will have priority. All entries are considered accepted unless the student author is notified otherwise by the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

## **Judging**

The Rodeo will select qualified judges for each competition category. Any questions about the judging criteria may be directed to the Writing Competition email listed under Contacts at the end of this document.

Judging will be based on the following categories:

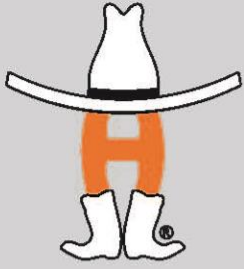
- Ideas & Techniques
- Voice
- Language Conventions
- Presentation

There will be two double blind rounds of judging before advancing to the finals. All entries will be judged in the first round. A subset of entries will be judged in the second round based on the first round scores. The top 20 entries will advance to the final round.

Judges' decisions are final, and protests will not be considered. Results will be published on the [Rodeo's website](#) on **Wednesday, January 15, 2025**.

## **Other Considerations**

The student author, teacher and parent or legal guardian understand, that as a condition of participation in the Writing Competition, they are granting the Rodeo permission to promote (via website, social media, and the like) and display the entry; to photograph, film, or otherwise record the entry or entries; and, to reproduce the entry or entries in whole, in part or composite.



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The student author and parent or legal guardian waive and release any and all rights to inspect and/or approve the final product, and they release, discharge, and hold the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo harmless from any liability by virtue of the use of the entry or entries and/or images.

While the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo takes every precaution to ensure the integrity of the entries, the Rodeo and the Trailblazer Committee are not responsible for loss of entries.

All works must be original works by the entrant, in English. Entries with copyright or licensing infringement will not be accepted. If there is any reproduction, in whole or in part, of a registered trademark or work of another individual, the Rodeo reserves the right to disqualify the entry. Plagiarism will also result in disqualification as will any writing generated by computer software and/or artificial intelligence. Entries will be screened using a software to detect plagiarism and artificial intelligence before any awards are given out.

The Rodeo is a family-oriented event. We reserve the right to disqualify any entry that, in the Rodeo's sole judgment, is deemed inappropriate for family reading, is controversial, or in poor taste prior to judging.

The Rodeo will not be liable for entries made in error and will not re-open judging to accommodate such entries.

All entries will become property of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo.

All entries must be written by the individual listed as the student author on the Entry Form.

Entries that do not comply with all competition rules will be disqualified.

## Contacts

If you have any questions about the Writing Competition, please email us at the address below.

[WritingCompetition@hlsr.com](mailto:WritingCompetition@hlsr.com)