

Graphic Design Guidelines

All entries must be created by the student(s). Submissions should reflect their original work and not simply feature students as actors or subjects.

Objective

To encourage the use of new technology for creating original digital artwork, including but not limited to illustrations, logos, posters, collages, book jackets, silk screen layouts, original "canvas" artwork, album art, postcards, magazine covers, website graphics, original animated GIFs, or trademarks.

Graphic Design: Communicating visually using elements like images, color, shapes, and typography (arrangement of letters and text) to convey messages and ideas effectively.

1. Projects must adhere to all General Contest Rules listed on the TLA website.
2. Projects must be the original creative property of the student designer.
3. Commercially-created clip art, copyrighted trademarks, logos, or photographic images may only be used if they are combined with your own original content as part of a creative project – not on their own.
4. Entries must be provided as a single composite file in a standard format, such as .gif, .png, or .jpg.
5. **Statement of Purpose:** Write a brief statement in which you explain the purpose, inspiration, and process behind your work. Share what you aimed to communicate and how you approached creating your piece.

"I made this ___ because ___..." ; "I used the tool(s) ___..." ; "I did best on the part where ___..."
6. If artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used at any stage of the project, disclose their use by including the following statement:

"I used AI tools for specific aspects of this project, including: (Please list specific examples, such as getting ideas, checking grammar, creating designs, etc.). All AI-generated content was created under my direct guidance and supervision. I made all final decisions myself, and the project shows my own ideas and work."
7. Projects must credit copyrighted materials/sources including images, music, video clips, text, and AI tools. No specific citation style is required, but credits must be clear and complete.

Include:

- Source name/title
- Origin (website, author, platform, etc.)
- Link (if available)

8. Entries submitted in a language other than English must include an English translation, transcript, or captions when applicable. This ensures that judges are able to fully understand and fairly evaluate the work.
9. **Submissions that cannot be viewed or opened due to permission restrictions or access issues will be disqualified.** To ensure submissions are accessible, it is strongly recommended that each project be tested by sharing it with individuals outside the submitting school or organization to ensure it can be accessed without issue.

By submitting an entry to the Texas Youth Creators Awards (TYCA), participants grant the Texas Library Association (TLA) and the TYCA Committee permission to share their work on the TYCA website, in online media, and in other promotional materials. Submitted projects may be used to showcase student creativity and promote the TYCA program.

Judging Criteria

Projects must be appropriate for school and public presentations. Entries will be judged on:

1. Style/Visual Appeal
2. Clarity/Readability
3. Creativity/Originality
4. Usability/Organization
5. List of tools used - including AI tools
6. Statement of Purpose

See the rubric below for detailed judging criteria.

Texas Youth Creators Awards - Graphic Design Judging Rubric

Category	Excellent (4 pts)	Proficient (3 pts)	Developing (2 pts)	Needs Improvement (1 pt)
Style/ Visual Appeal	Visually striking and cohesive; strong, effective use of color, layout, and design elements.	Appealing design with effective use of visual elements; mostly cohesive.	Some visual interest but lacks overall cohesion or polish.	Cluttered or unbalanced; lacks visual appeal or attention to design.
Clarity/ Readability	Message is crystal clear; typography and layout enhance understanding.	Message is mostly clear; readable with minor issues.	Message is somewhat clear but layout or text choices hinder readability.	Hard to understand or read; poor layout or font choices.
Creativity/ Originality	Concept is highly original and imaginative; demonstrates unique thinking.	Creative concept with some unique elements.	Some creativity present; relies on common or familiar ideas.	Lacks originality; concept feels copied or uninspired.
Usability/ Organization	Design is well-structured and appropriate for its intended purpose (e.g. poster, logo)	Organized and mostly usable; serves its intended purpose with minor flaws.	Some structural issues; purpose or audience not clearly addressed.	Unclear structure; design does not serve a clear purpose.
Use of Tools & Materials	A well-documented list of tools and materials used is provided. The project effectively integrates technology or materials to enhance the final product.	The project includes a list of tools and materials with good use of available resources.	Tools and materials are listed, but integration could be improved.	Missing or incomplete list of tools and materials; weak integration into the project.
Citations	All copyrighted sources (images, music, video, text, AI tools) are credited with name/title, origin, and link (if available). Clear and easy to match to content.	Most sources credited; minor details missing for 1–2 items. Generally clear and match content.	Some materials credited but several incomplete or unclear; missing multiple required details.	Sources are not cited, or citations are largely absent.

Texas Youth Creators Awards - Graphic Design Judging Rubric

Category	Excellent (4 pts)	Proficient (3 pts)	Developing (2 pts)	Needs Improvement (1 pt)
Statement of Purpose	Clearly explains the purpose, inspiration, and creative process behind the work. Insightfully communicates the message and artistic approach.	Describes the intent and creative process with reasonable clarity; provides some insight into message or approach.	Provides a general explanation of the work, but lacks depth or clarity in purpose and process.	Incomplete, vague, or missing explanation of purpose and process; lacks reflection on creative choices.