



20th Annual Polk County Schools Video Awards



Judging Rubric for Category 10: Short Film

Videos entered in this category showcase a short film of no longer than 10 minutes duration. Such films may be totally original or may be spoofs or satires of known television shows or movies, what the film industry calls homage. Judging criteria are as follows:

Script & Continuity (25 points)

Filmmaking is storytelling and a well-written script is invaluable in telling your story. Even though visuals will tell the story more powerfully than words ever will, most of the time those visuals, as well as the acting taking place within them, are based on the script. Filmgoers who want to know what happens next or care about any of the film's characters are drawn into movies by the script, which needs to have plausible story lines, solid continuity, and realistic dialogue.

Acting (25 points)

Hollywood has known for years about the drawing attraction of its stars. Filmgoers like a good story for sure, but people will turn out by the millions to see a picture that stars Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts even if they don't know what the picture is about. Schools should choose the actors in their short films carefully because not everyone can perform naturally and believably in front of a camera. When we see good acting, we think for those two hours in the theater that Jamie Fox doesn't act like Ray Charles but actually is Ray Charles.

Entertainment Value (25 points)

There is no universal agreement on just what entertains people because we all bring different tastes and experiences to the theater. Nevertheless, your movie will not be successful if it does not entertain a majority of the people who see it because entertainment is the name of the game, at least in this category and in this contest. Movies entertain in a myriad of ways, sometimes with great story lines, sometimes with passionate romances, sometimes with edge-of-your-seat suspense, sometimes with fantastical imaginary worlds, sometimes with dazzling special effects, and sometimes with some combination of the above or some other hook. The bottom line, however, is that a good movie should entertain more than just the friends and family members of those who made it.

Technical Merit (25 points)

Judges will award up to five points apiece for each of the following technical elements:

- A. Sound clarity and volume,
- B. Tripod-steady but often creative camera work, including proper framing and sufficient lead room, nose room, and headroom
- C. Appropriate lighting, including the avoidance of silhouettes
- D. Editing smoothness
- E. Special effects