

Research

Category Rules

This is a mail-in category. All mail in entries must be sent (postmarked) to the KMOAS by **January 15**. No late entries will be accepted. These entries should be sent to the Middle Kingdom Minister of Arts and Sciences. **THE KMOAS RECOMMENDS THAT YOU EMAIL YOUR ENTRY**. Any updates or changes to this deadline will be published in the Middle Kingdom newsletter, *The Pale*. Post mail entries are accepted, but will be scanned in and delivered via email to judges. This category is eligible for Regional Faires.

Special rules: This category has several special rules which need to be reviewed carefully.

- The entry must be a research paper written in an acceptable format for a term paper or thesis. Research notes written in an attractive style or a newspaper article are not acceptable. Entrants in this category should consult a current term paper or thesis stylebook (i.e., APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.) before creating an entry.
- **Any evidence of plagiarism disqualifies the entry from the fair and the entry will be referred to the KMOAS.**
- Length Limit: 30 **double-spaced** typed pages, not including illustrations, title page, and any appendices.
- Any paper having more than one author must be entered by all the people involved in its writing.

Documentation (Score: 0-4 points)

The purpose of this section is to rate the provability of the entrant's research. Consideration of the quality of the sources and citation used is rated in this section.

- 0 No discussion on resources. No bibliography/works cited provided.
- 1 Minimal information consisting of time, place and style. Limited discussion of resources; source material is of a general nature. No critical sources are used.
- 2 Acceptable discussion of resources and bibliography, following a single standardized format; use of generalized sources with no emphasis on primary and/or scholarly resources.
- 3 A good balance of resources, providing primary and/or scholarly sources. These sources should support each other and provide a well developed paper, formatted in easy-to-read style and consistent in design.
- 4 In-depth and extensive documentation that provides a good balance of resources. Primary (if available) and/or scholarly resources are emphasized and backed up with a significant selection of other resources. Appendices included in documentation help provide further pertinent information to subject and time period.

Research (Score in place of Materials and Methods: 0-4 points)

The purpose of this section is to evaluate HOW the entrant reaches a thesis and his/her capability of supporting this thesis. Take into consideration the analysis of information gathered, the experimentation (weighing information and making educated decisions on how to use it), and the handling of their resources.

- 0 The breadth of knowledge of subject not evident in paper. Thesis unclear. If face-to-face judging is available, it adds very little information.
- 1 Minimal information consisting of time, place, and style. Very little interpretation of resources or educated opinion based upon them. Thesis somewhat clear, but under-supported. Face-to-face judging adds some background information.

- 2 **Either** the thesis is clear and to the point, **or** the support in the document focuses on single topic that could indicate a thesis. Some arguments are fleshed out more than others; the paper feels imbalanced. If face-to-face judging is available, it provides a limited further understanding of the resources.
- 3 Thesis is clear and to the point with supporting arguments focused on the thesis. The body provides an understanding of sources and how they support the thesis. If face-to-face judging is available, the entrant can demonstrate a grasp of the research.
- 4 As in #3, plus the paper clearly presents in-depth and extensive understanding of the topic and sources, with arguments that clearly help the reader understand the connect the dots from thesis to conclusion. If face-to-face judging is available, it adds further emphasis on the research and indicates a keen grasp of the information and the resources available. The entrant can discuss it easily and with active engagement with the research.

Scope (Score: 0-6 points for each bullet item)

Rank the **ambition**, not the success, of the entry for each of the following elements.

- Size of the paper: Did the author stay within the 30-page limit (30 pages of text, **not** including photographs, tables, bibliography, or appendices)? Does it seem too short?
- Scope of the research: How much research is available? How easy was it to find? Was there a need to evaluate multiple sources and vet them according to other scholarly works available?
- Complexity of the subject matter: A paper that focuses and explores a focused topic should score better than a paper with broad-sweeping generalizations. The complexity should be about the breadth of the paper, not necessarily whether it focuses on a single topic. What methodology is used?

Skill (Score: 0-6 points for each bullet item)

How well is the entry written? This section is entirely about the execution of the writing of the paper. Rank the **success** of the entry for each of the following elements.

- Structure of the paper: Did the author use a single format/style? How does the paper rate for readability?
- Concept flow: Is the paper well organized? Did the author develop a thesis and use well constructed arguments to prove it? Is there a conclusion? How clear is the paper? Is it easy to identify, follow, and analyze the author's point of view, or is it a data dump?
- Level of detail: Is the level of detail appropriate to the size and scope of research?
- Language: Rate the use of grammar, punctuation, spelling, word choice, and sentence structure.

Ingenuity (Score: 0-4 points)

Judge the ingenuity of the entry. Was the entrant resourceful and inventive in the approach to creating their entry? Does the entry reflect the entrant's vision of period context? Is original thought, contemplation, interpretation, and vision evident according to the entrant's period?

Judge's Observation (Score: 0-6 points)

Rank the entry as a whole. How well do all the separately judged parts fit together? The entry's overall effect is judged in this section. This is the only section of the criteria where the judges may allow their personality, private opinions, and personal preferences to influence scoring.