

2019 SEJONG WRITING COMPETITION

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

DEADLINE MARCH 31, 2019 (11:59 PM CDT)

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 regardless of ethnic background.

ESSAY CATEGORY – ADULT DIVISION (AGE 30 AND YOUNGER)

Topic: “O. Cuniculi” (2009) by Hye-Young Pyun (full text available from our website)

Pyun Hye-young is among a group of new “international” Korean women writers whose work is characterized by its exploration of the darker aspects of contemporary society. “O. Cuniculi” is a very representative Pyun story, which can be read on many levels as allegory, psychological realism, social criticism, and even surrealism. What is it about the story that you find most powerful, and what insight does the story provide into Korean society (or society in general)?

ESSAY CATEGORY – SENIOR DIVISION (GRADE 12 AND YOUNGER)

Topic: *An Appointment with His Brother* (1994) by Yi Mun-yol (full text available from our website)

Although it was written in 1994, Yi Mun-yol’s *An Appointment with His Brother* is still highly relevant today. What does the novella say about the complex issue of reunification and the potential problems it raises for both North and South? What does it reveal about North Korea that may be different from what people might imagine from the media coverage of the country?

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.

- Write an interpretation of a folk tale of your choice. Why do you think it was created? Which character do you relate to best?
- If you could change one of these folk tales, what would you change and why?

SIJO POETRY CATEGORY - PRE-COLLEGE DIVISION (AGE 18 AND YOUNGER) & ADULT DIVISION (AGE 19 AND OLDER)

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 teaching guides for sijo – please visit our website. **Only one entry per applicant is permitted.**

PRIZES: Winning entries may be published in the *Korea Times Chicago*, the *Korean Quarterly*, or *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)
- Adult sijo division: First (\$1,000) Second (\$750) Third (\$500)
- Pre-college sijo division: 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 CDT, March 31, 2019. Applications and entries must be submitted through our online submission system. Teacher accounts may also be created to monitor and submit student applications.

Please visit our website at www.sejongculturalsociety.org/writing or email us at writing@sejongculturalsociety.org.