



## 15<sup>th</sup> BULGARIAN CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION POETRY JUDGING CRITERIA

Grading poetry is even harder than grading prose. We have developed a separate set of categories for ranking the poetry entries to the BCWC.

|                           |             |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Creativity and innovation | 40%         |
| Theme and content         | 20%         |
| Form and structure        | 20%         |
| Imagery and language      | 10%         |
| <u>“Wow!” factor</u>      | <u>10%</u>  |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>             | <b>100%</b> |

These criteria are discussed at length below. For every 10% of the score, there is a corresponding question to be answered. Depending on how accurately these questions are answered a score between 0 and 10% should be given.

### The Judging Process

The students’ works will be judged in two separate categories – Prose and Poetry.

At the **preliminary level**, the works are divided among pairs of judges. The creative writing pieces are read and marked by a first judge. Only those entries that receive an overall rating of 70% or higher are passed on to a second judge. When all judging pairs are ready, the top 20 works (15 from Prose and 5 from Poetry) from each grade level will advance to the national judging based on the Total scores from each pair.

At the **national level**, the creative writing entries in each grade level are read and marked by two judges. In the Prose category, the top 3 works with the highest scores will be ranked first, second and third. If necessary, they can communicate and come up with a final decision on the top three entries. In the Poetry category, one pair of judges will read all 35 entries (5 for each grade level). Only one piece with the highest score from each grade will be announced as a winner. There will be four winners in each grade level – 3 in Prose and 1 in Poetry.

## DESCRIPTION OF CRITERIA

### **40 % - Creativity and innovation**

Evaluating creativity and innovation in poetry involves assessing how the poet uses original ideas, unique perspectives, and inventive techniques to create a distinctive work. Judges should consider the originality of ideas, uniqueness of perspective, inventive use of language, experimental form and structure, creative use of sound and rhythm. The overall impact should ensure that the poem is memorable, emotionally and intellectually engaging, and that the creative elements enhance its meaning and effectiveness.

- 10% - Does the poem present original ideas or themes that stand out from common or overused topics?
- 10% - Is the poem written from a unique or unconventional point of view?
- 10% - Does the poet use language in inventive ways, such as unusual combinations of words? Are there unexpected and creative uses of metaphor, simile, and imagery?
- 10% - Does this piece grab the reader's attention and keep him or her engaged?

### **20% - Theme and content**

Evaluating the theme and content in poetry involves looking at how the poem align with the given prompt and how well does it capture the essence of the topic. Judges should consider if the poem is clear and understandable or it suffers from ambiguity that detracts from its meaning. The assessment ensures that the poem tells a story and the narrative is engaging and well-developed, has a clear beginning, middle, and end, or a logical progression.

- 10% - Does the poem align with any given prompt or theme? How well does it capture the essence of the topic?
- 10% - If the poem tells a story, is the narrative engaging and well-developed?

### **20 % - Form and structure**

Evaluating the form and structure of poetry involves assessing how the poet uses various elements to enhance the poem's meaning, flow, and impact. Judges should consider the adherence to traditional forms, the effectiveness of any experimentation, the suitability of the form for the poem's content, and the purposeful use of structural elements like stanzas, line breaks, rhythm and rhyme. This thorough assessment ensures that the form and structure contribute meaningfully to the poem's overall effectiveness.

- 10% - Is the chosen form appropriate for the poem's content and theme? Does the form complement and enhance the meaning and emotional resonance of the poem?
- 10% - How is the poem divided into stanzas? Are the stanza breaks meaningful and effective? Are the line breaks purposeful, adding to the poem's rhythm, emphasis, or meaning?

### **10% - Imagery and language**

Evaluating the imagery and language in poetry involves looking at how effectively the poet uses descriptive and figurative language to create vivid images and convey deeper meanings. Judges should consider the vividness, relevance, originality, and consistency of the imagery, as well as the precision, musicality, and depth of the language. This thorough assessment ensures that the poem's visual and linguistic elements contribute meaningfully to its overall impact.

- 10% - Are the images in the poem vivid and evocative, allowing the reader to visualize scenes, objects, or emotions clearly? Are the words chosen precisely and effectively, enhancing the poem's meaning and impact?

### **10 % - "Wow!" factor**

These points/percents are given for exceptional creative writing pieces — those that display an incredible use of vocabulary, clever ideas or approaches to the topic, mature style, advanced English for the writer's grade level, and so on. This 10% is to be awarded only to pieces that truly impress the readers, and these entries should likely make it to the second reading session.

- (10%) Does this piece "wow" the reader for one reason or another?