

2026-2027 COMBINING VOICES: LITERARY COMPETITION FACT SHEET

Twenty-Seventh Annual Combining Voices Literary Competition and Field Trip Opportunity

Combining Voices is a special literary competition and tour opportunity designed for students in grades 4 through 12. The program encourages participants to respond visually and verbally to preselected paintings from the Morris Museum's permanent collection. While students do not have to visit the museum to enter the competition, experiencing the objects firsthand is highly recommended.

Help us encourage and celebrate the community's young authors by urging them to participate in the competition.

Literary Competition Fact Sheet

When is the competition?

Entries will be accepted September 1, 2026–March 15, 2027.

Who can enter?

The competition is open to Georgia and South Carolina students in grades 4–12 in public, private, or homeschool programs.

What can students enter?

Student authors can submit either a short story (one thousand words or less) or a poem (between four and fifty lines) inspired by one of five preselected paintings from the Morris Museum's permanent collection. One entry per student.

What can students win?

Monetary prizes will be awarded to a winner from each school category (Elementary, Middle, and High School) in the two genres.

Do students have to visit the museum to enter?

No. Although we offer a tour designed to enhance the students' understanding of art and literature, participants do not need to visit the museum to enter the competition. However, experiencing the objects firsthand is strongly recommended. Digital reproductions of the selected artworks are available online. Additionally, students are encouraged to go to the museum with their families. The five preselected pieces are identified in the galleries.

What is the Combining Voices field trip opportunity?

Offered September 1, 2026–March 15, 2027, the Combining Voices Tour teaches students how to correlate art and literature and how to verbally respond to paintings. Led by experienced docents, participants analyze paintings, discuss literature concepts, and complete targeted writing activities. An optional hands-on art activity or writing workshop designed to enhance the tour experience is available upon request. Tours last 45 minutes.

How much is the field trip and activity?

Tours are free to all public school students. Private and homeschool students are \$2.00 each. The optional 45-minute hands-on activity is free for all students. Call 706-828-3867 to book your field trip.

Where are the competition guidelines and forms?

Competition guidelines and entry forms can be found online. Copies are also available at the museum's front desk.

When are entries due?

Submit entries between September 1, 2026–March 15, 2027. Entries must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. on March 15, 2027.

How do I submit an entry?

- **One** entry per student.
- Entries must be original and previously unpublished works inspired by one of the preselected paintings.

- Short stories must be no longer than one thousand words; poems must be between four and fifty lines.
- All entries must be submitted using the electronic submission form found at <https://www.themorris.org/learn/students/#combining-voices> .
- Include the title of the poem or story and the image that inspired the entry.

Submit your submissions using the electronic submission form at
<https://www.themorris.org/learn/students/#combining-voices>.

If you have any questions, contact Curator of Education John McBrayer-Howe at john.mcbrayer@themorris.org, Education Programs Manager Marian Hawk at marian.hawk@themorris.org, or 706-828-3865.

Winners will be notified in April. An awards ceremony will be held in May.

Members of the Authors Club of Augusta have prepared a tip sheet that will aid students in their writing on the website. Also available is How to Have An Artful Conversation, a guide for looking at art for non-art teachers.