Tips for Scenario Coaches

General
- Creative ideas and good writing are both important in scenario writing.
- When submitting for the competitive round, the "Scenario Writing Rules 2015-2016" should be followed carefully (1,500 words, typed, related to one of annual topics, title on the first page of the scenario, etc.).

Topics: Students should review each of the five topics to determine which topic sparks the most interest.
- If available, review the Future Scenes to elicit ideas.
- Generate imagined futures for the topics.

Research: Students read as much material on their chosen topic as they need to understand the various facets of the topic.
- The suggested reading lists, readings students find in the library, or the appropriate chapters from the *Readings, Research, and Resources* publication are all useful materials for understanding the topic.
- Students can take notes on facts which may be useful in their writing, as well as impressions or ideas they get while reading the materials.

Problem Solving Model: Students familiar with the 6-step problem solving model should use a shortened version to help them clarify their thinking on the topic, as well as provide sources for a scenario theme.
- Scenario Writing can be considered a "seventh step" in the FPS process.
- A suggested shortened version of the process includes 6-8 challenges for Step 1, an Underlying Problem for Step 2, and 6-8 solution ideas for Step 3.
- Outcomes and scenarios might result from students' findings in using the problem solving model.

Characterization: Scenario writers should identify a central, identifiable, sustained character(s) - animate or inanimate.
- 1-2 main characters are usually enough for a scenario.
- Character development should take place throughout the events of the scenario.

**Futuristic Elements:** Scenarios should read as though the future is the present.
- A strong portrayal of futuristic trends and predictions should be evident.
- Lengthy explanations and descriptions of technology and social trends can interfere with the flow of the scenario and take up valuable words needed for plat development.

Post-Writing: Peer review should be provided for writers to discuss and improve their writing.

The student's work must be original; however, each student's story may be read by an adult who will discuss the story with the student or provide written feedback.

- Appropriate assistance from adults and/or peers include:
  - noting strengths - word choice; strong visual image; etc.
  - asking questions that occur
    - (Why did the spaceship land in the middle of the city? What happened to the rest of the travelers, who only showed up in the first paragraph? Etc.)
  - making general suggestions for improvement
    - (More visual description might give us a clearer image. You might want to let us know what she is thinking. Needs more futuristic details. Etc.)

- It should be up to the scenario writer to determine what revisions to make in response to questions and suggestions.

- All authors may have adult guidance to correct spelling, punctuation, and glaring grammar mistakes so that the copy submitted is as error free as possible.

- Utilizing the Scenario Writing score sheet is an excellent reference to use with students.

- Grammarly.com or other similar websites can assist with editing and also check for plagiarism.
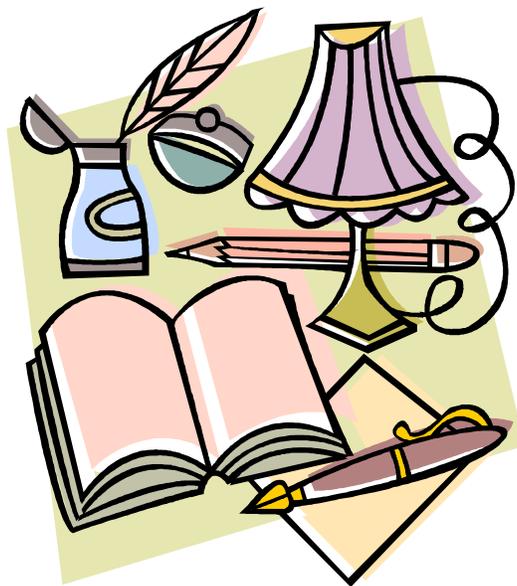
Tips for Scenario Authors

General
- Creative ideas *and* good writing are both important in FPSPI Scenario Writing.
- When submitting for the competitive round, the "Scenario Writing Rules 2015-2016" should be followed carefully (1,500 words, typed, related to one of annual topics, title on the first page of the scenario, etc.).

- **Pre-Writing**
  - Read and gather information in *Readings, Research, and Resources; Omni*; *Futurist*; *Discover*, etc.
  - Use creative problem solving generating tools to come up with a title that captures the essence of your scenario.
  - Write an outline and rough draft of your scenario.
  - Use key words or phrases to indicate the selected topic and the time period in which your scenario is set.

Technique
- A narrative, dialogue, diary, journal, and letter are among appropriate formats for writing a scenario.
- Conflict, adventure, suspense, humor (satire, parody) can be used in the development of the scenario.
- First or third person perspective works best in scenario writing.
- Dialogue can be incorporated, if it is appropriate to do so.
- To give background information, dialogue and/or thoughts in a sentence or two work best. Blocks of flashback may be too long for 1,500 words.
- Remember - show, don't tell!
  - <u>Telling</u>: He got out of bed and sat at his desk to start the day.
  - <u>Showing</u>: Gradually, he rubbed the sleep from his eyes and shuffled out of bed, pulling on a worn corduroy robe before settling at his desk to start the day.

Character(s)
- Use a minimum number of characters, animate or inanimate (usually 1–2 protagonists).
- Introduce main character(s) as soon as possible.
- Place the lead character directly into the situation developed in the scenario.
- Demonstrate how things have changed and how the main character is affected.
- If conflict is a central part of the story, lead to the point where the character(s) has a chance to "win, lose or draw" to set up a moment of suspense.

Creative and Futuristic Thinking

- Incorporate creativity into your writing – use inventive, innovative, original, resourceful ideas.
- Incorporate futuristic thinking into your writing – portray futuristic information and trends. (It is fun to explain how inventions affect our future lives, but don't "overgadgetize.")

Idea Development

- Involve the audience (readers) immediately in the introductory paragraph.
- Develop the idea of the scenario to point out positive social and cultural aspects or the consequences of doing without them.
- Form the climax as a logical outgrowth of the story line or character development.
- Provide a resolution to any conflict developed in the scenario.
- Provide a conclusion. Be sure to end; don't just stop without giving the reader something to think about.

Style/Voice

- Demonstrate a consistent voice/tone throughout the scenario.
- Exhibit the author's personal touch through vivid, colorful description that gives the writing life and spirit.
- Vary the sentence structure and use interesting vocabulary.
- Be aware of your audience. Involve readers by writing to elicit an emotional response from them.

Mechanics/Structure

- Use appropriate grammar, effective sentence structure, and conventions to enhance meaning.
- Use effective organizational strategies and appropriate transitional elements.

Post-Writing

- Edit, edit, edit!
- Proofread and ask the following questions: Is the scenario whole, unified, coherent? Are paragraphs/sections clear, unified, coherent?
- Check grammar, spelling, omissions, repetitions, verb tenses, word usage, etc.