

# Research Paper Critique Sheet

Contestant(s): \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Judges' Names: \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS TO JUDGES:** Please make sure you have read the "Instructions to Judges" sheet in your packet.

## RULES

Entry Limit: 1 research paper per school, with 1-2 authors

Length Limits: minimum 700 words, maximum 1000 words, not including title page and Works Cited

Write a research paper in English on an interesting German-Texan cultural and/or historical topic. The topic should not be commonly known: a particular person, family, place, building, business, area, group, settlement, organization, church, tradition, activity, practice, etc. The paper should contribute to a greater understanding of German-Texan history and/or culture. The entry must be typed and double-spaced and have internal documentation with proper in-text citation and a Works Cited page, as per MLA (Modern Language Association) guidelines. Follow the rules in the latest MLA Style Sheet, paying special attention to rules for entering Internet sources. **Use at least three sources, at least two of which must be non-Internet.** Digitally-archived sources originally published in hard copy may be counted as non-Internet sources. **Sources should include primary sources and secondary sources.** Primary sources are evidence in the form of artifacts, photos, letters, interviews, music, charts, illustrations, etc. with a direct connection to the era being studied. They may be personally documented by the contestant(s) (photos taken, interviews recorded) or found in personal collections, archives, libraries, museums, etc. Secondary sources are documents that discuss or analyze primary sources and topics – primarily other academic work.

The contestant's teacher must e-mail a copy of the paper, including the Works Cited, in a Microsoft Word-compatible format to the regional director by 11:59 p.m. on the Tuesday before the regional contest. All entries will be checked for plagiarism via turnitin.com or a similar service. On the day of contest, submit the following in a sealed 9 x 12 envelope to the designated room by 9:00 a.m.: (1) a hard copy of the paper and Works Cited with a title page including the name(s) of the contestant(s), the name of the teacher, the school and city, and the title of the paper; (2) a USB drive (labeled with name) that contains only the paper itself, the Works Cited, any visual material, and any digital recordings used as primary sources. All materials submitted will be returned on the afternoon of contest, but do not include irreplaceable items in your submission.

## CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

1. **Topic and Thesis Statement:** The paper includes an introduction establishing a topic and thesis statement related to German-Texan culture and/or history. The topic should be interesting and lend itself to a compelling thesis. If the topic is well-known, the paper should be deeply researched, include detailed and specific information that is not well-known, and provide the reader with new insight. (0-20 points)
2. **Organization and Style:** The paper is logically organized, develops the thesis, and includes a strong summarizing conclusion. Style and voice should be appropriate to an academic research paper, with an emphasis on clarity, but also show originality. (0-20 points)
3. **MLA Mechanics:** The format of the paper and citations adhere to MLA standards. (0-20 points)
4. **Quality of Information/Evidence of Sources:** The paper includes well-researched, detailed, and historically-accurate information derived from secondary sources and clearly supporting the paper's thesis. (0-20 points)
5. **Use of Primary Sources:** The paper includes at least one cited primary source (see Rules). Visual primary sources are reproduced in the paper, and audio primary sources are included on the USB drive. (0-20 points)

**TOTAL POINTS:** (100 possible) \_\_\_\_\_

**MORE COMMENTS TO HELP THE CONTESTANT (Write on the back if necessary.)**