

PROMOTIONAL DESIGN



OVERVIEW

Applying leadership and 21st century skills, participants use computerized graphic communications layout and design skills in the production of a promotional resource.

The resource is based on the annual theme posted on the [TSA website](#) under *Themes & Problems*. Semifinalists demonstrate competency through participation in an on-site technical design challenge.

ELIGIBILITY

Three (3) individuals per state may participate.

TIME LIMITS

- A. Thirty (30)-minute set-up time before the on-site semifinal challenge.
- B. Two (2) hours to complete the on-site problem.

ATTIRE

TSA competition attire is required for this event.

PROCEDURE

PRE-CONFERENCE

- A. Participants review the TSA Honor Statement for Competitive Events found in the General Rules and listed in the individual competitive event rules.
- B. Participants review the annual theme posted on the [TSA website](#) under *Themes & Problems*.
- C. Participants prepare the promotional folder while observing the regulations.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

- A. Participants report at the time and place stated in the conference program to check in the standard 10" x 13" envelope containing the entry and related documentation.
- B. Entries are independently reviewed by the judges with neither students nor advisors present.
- C. A list of twelve (12) semifinalists (in random order) is posted.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

- A. Participants report to the event area at the time and place stated in the conference program for the on-site component of the event.
- B. Participants are provided with an on-site publishing problem.
- C. Participants will alert the coordinator when they are finished and submit their solution on a USB thumb drive in PDF format.
- D. Judges independently assess the entries.
- E. The top ten (10) finalists are announced during the awards ceremony.

REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Students will work to develop their leadership and 21st century skills in the process of preparing for and participating in this TSA competitive event. The development and application of those skills must be evident in their submission, demonstration, and/or communication pertaining to the entry.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

- A. Each entry must include a student-designed standard two-pocket folder which:
 - 1. may be produced by the participant or purchased from an office supply store.
 - 2. must be made of cardstock with a cover image (either printed directly to the cover or printed on a separate sheet of paper, then glued to it to simulate the look of the final project).
 - 3. must include two pockets. Business card slits are permitted, but not required.
 - 4. must include four (4) printed promotional publication items (chosen by the designer). The folder is not included as one of these four (4) items, but must also contain design elements that unify the entry.
 - 5. is identified using only the participant's identification number. Entries should not include any other identifying information.

- B. The entry, including the Promotional Folder with its contents as well as the accompanying documents, must be contained and submitted in a standard 10" x 13" envelope.
 - C. The printed items contained in the folder must follow the below guidelines:
 1. The printed items must be designed on 8½" x 11" paper (maximum size).
 2. Preprinted or designed paper may not be used.
 3. Clip art may be used, however, no templates may be used. Any clip art used in the designs must be documented in the Reference section of the portfolio.
 4. If it is determined that the product submitted is a template, the entry will be disqualified.
 5. Items that may be considered for the four (4) Promotional Folder items might include, but are not limited to: a pamphlet, post card, letter, or business card.
 6. The content of all items must be appropriate for viewing at the National TSA Conference. Any entry that includes images depicting sex, drugs, tobacco, alcohol, gangs, cults, etc., will be disqualified.
 7. The complete packet should demonstrate a unity of design that repeats throughout the portfolio.
 8. No permission is needed for the use of the TSA logo by affiliated chapters. Refer to the TSA Branding Guide on the [TSA website](#).
 - D. Documentation Portfolio (placed in the mailing envelope with Promotional Folder)
 1. Documentation materials (comprising "a portfolio") are required and must be secured in a [clear front report cover](#) with the following single-sided, 8½" x 11" pages, in this order:
 - a. Title page with the event title, the team identification number, the conference city and state, and the year; one (1) page
 - b. Table of contents; pages as needed
 - c. Interpretation of Theme; one (1) page
 - d. Description of the items included (this should include item type, screenshot(s) and/or pictures of item, intended audience and purpose, and procedure for creating the item); maximum of four (4) pages
 - e. Hardware and Software used; one (1) page
 - f. References (Both information and clip art must be documented); one (1) page
 - g. Student Copyright Checklist (see Forms Appendix); one (1) page
 - h. Photo/Film/Video Consent and Release Forms – if images involving individuals are used and minors require parental permission (see Photo/Film/Video Consent and Release Forms in Forms Appendix); pages as needed
 - E. All entries become the property of TSA and will not be returned after judging.
- ### SEMIFINAL ROUND
- A. Semifinalists supply their own computer hardware with USB port and software for the on-site portion of the event.
 1. A laptop computer is recommended. The laptop must be fully charged with enough battery for the duration of the semifinal round. A portable power bank (if desired) may be used.
 2. Any semifinalist who does not provide these items will not be allowed to compete in the on-site event.
 - B. Semifinalists must enter any necessary verification or authentication passwords prior to entering the competitive event area. National TSA will not provide Internet access or guarantee that a hot spot will work properly.
 - C. Clip art may be used.
 - D. No templates may be used.
 - E. All on-site work is developed, saved as a PDF file on a USB flash drive that is provided by the member, and submitted using only the participant's identification number.
 - F. Semifinalists leave the event room only with permission from the event coordinator.

- G. The on-site entry should be saved and submitted when the work is completed and/or when time elapses.
- H. All entries become the property of TSA and will not be returned after judging.

EVALUATION

PRELIMINARY ROUND

- A. The promotional folder cover and contents
- B. The documentation portfolio

SEMIFINAL ROUND

- A. The semifinalist problem

Refer to the official rating form for more information.

TSA HONOR STATEMENT

All work must be created and completed by individual competitors or teams. Plagiarism, the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) software, copyright violation, cheating, and falsification of information are prohibited. Participants may NOT use any generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Google Gemini, GitHub Copilot, etc.). Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage will not be tolerated. Competitors at any level of TSA competition understand and agree to abide by the TSA Honor Statement.

If it is determined that a student violated the TSA Honor Statement, a rules violation of twenty percent (20%) will be incurred.

STEM INTEGRATION

This event aligns with the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) educational standards.

LEADERSHIP AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

This event provides opportunity for students to build and develop leadership and 21st century skills including but not limited to – Communication, Collaboration/Social Skills, Initiative, Problem Solving/Risk Taking, Critical Thinking, Perseverance/Grit, Creativity, Relationship Building/Teamwork, Dependability/Integrity, and Flexibility/Adaptability

CAREERS RELATED TO THIS EVENT

This competition has connections to one (1) or more of the careers below:

- Advertising executive
- Graphic designer
- Marketing manager
- Printer
- Public relations manager

PROMOTIONAL DESIGN

2025 & 2026 OFFICIAL RATING FORM HIGH SCHOOL

Judges: Using minimal (1-4 points), adequate (5-8 points), or exemplary (9-10 points) performance levels as a guideline in the rating form, record the scores earned for the event criteria in the column spaces to the right. The X1 or X2 notation in the criteria column is a multiplier factor for determining the points earned. (Example: an "adequate" score of 7 for an X1 criterion = 7 points; an "adequate" score of 7 for an X2 criterion = 14 points.) A score of zero (0) is acceptable if the minimal performance for any criterion is not met.

Go/No Go Specifications

- Before judging the entry, ensure that the items below are present; indicate presence with a check mark in the box.
- If an item is missing, leave the box next to the item blank and place a check mark in the box labeled ENTRY NOT EVALUATED.
- If a check mark is placed in the ENTRY NOT EVALUATED box, the entry is not to be judged.

- ☐ Entry is submitted in a standard 10" x 13" envelope
- ☐ Promotional Folder Cover with four (4) printed items is submitted in the envelope
- ☐ Documentation Portfolio is submitted in the envelope
- ☐ No obvious templates are present in the entry
- ☐ ENTRY NOT EVALUATED

PRELIMINARY PROMOTIONAL FOLDER COVER (Cover Graphic) (30 points)				Record scores in the column spaces below.
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance	
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points	
First Impressions (sharp, clean edges of graphics and fonts; entry is clear of smudges, smears, pencil or other extraneous marks) (X1)	The design is messy and/or damaged and leaves an unfavorable impression; the design has little connection in conveying the design challenge	The design has a general connection to the challenge; the design is neat with adequate attention to detail.	The design is eye-catching and compelling and effectively addresses the theme.	
Use of Color (X1)	The graphic has less than three (3) colors; colors used clash or distract from the graphic.	The graphic has three (3) colors, and they generally work well together.	The effective choice of colors creates an appealing graphic.	
Fonts (readable, have eye appeal, appropriate dimension and placement) (X1)	Font choice, size, and placement are ineffective in creating an aesthetically pleasing design.	Font choice and size are appropriate and incorporated somewhat effectively in the design.	Font choice and size are appropriate, and the location of text is effectively incorporated in the aesthetics of the design.	
PRELIMINARY PROMOTIONAL FOLDER COVER SUBTOTAL (30 points)				

PRELIMINARY PROMOTIONAL FOLDER CONTENTS (50 points)				Record scores in the column spaces below.
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance	
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points	
Unity of Design (X1)	The complete packet has little obvious unity of design throughout the included items.	The complete packet demonstrates a general sense of unity of design throughout the included items.	The complete packet demonstrates an obvious unity of design that repeats throughout the included items.	
Incorporation of Graphic Design Principles (alignment, contrast, unity, white space, balance, and proportion) (X1)	Graphic products incorporate or embody few, if any, of the design principles.	Graphic products are somewhat pleasing but may be missing one (1) or two (2) design principles; the products have a layout that is generally aesthetically pleasing.	Graphic products are clearly unique and aesthetically pleasing, with all graphic design principles incorporated in the overall design and layout.	
Graphic Images (X1)	Images have little connection to the essence of the challenge; logo(s) are poorly placed or of poor quality.	Images have general connections to the challenge; logo(s) are present.	Images are appropriate and effectively address the challenge; logo(s) are present and appropriately placed.	
Use of Color (X1)	Graphic has less than three (3) colors; colors used clash or distract from the graphic.	Graphic has three (3) colors, and they generally work well together.	The effective choice of colors creates an appealing graphic.	
Fonts (readable, have eye appeal, appropriate dimension and placement) (X1)	Font choice, text size, and placement are ineffective in creating an aesthetically pleasing design.	Font choice is appropriate and incorporated somewhat effectively in the design.	Font choice and size are appropriate, and the location of text is effectively incorporated in the aesthetics of the design.	
PRELIMINARY PROMOTIONAL FOLDER CONTENTS SUBTOTAL (50 points)				

PRELIMINARY DOCUMENTATION PORTFOLIO (40 points)				Record scores in the column spaces below.
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance	
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points	
Portfolio Components (X1)	Portfolio is unorganized and/or is missing three (3) or more components.	Portfolio has most components and is generally organized per the order of the event guide listing; it has sufficient content.	All components are included in the portfolio; content and organization per the order of the event guide listing are excellent.	
Demonstration of Theme (X1)	Documentation does not show a clearly defined interpretation of the given theme	Documentation demonstrates an average interpretation of the given theme.	Documentation demonstrates an exceptional interpretation of the theme.	
Appropriateness of Graphic Products (X1)	Graphic products have little connection to the intent of the folder's target audience.	Graphic products are appropriate to the intended audience and have generally useful content.	Graphic products clearly connect with the intention of the promotional packet and its intended audience, providing useful, related content	
Grammar/Spelling (X1)	Many misspelled words are present, and grammar is poor.	Spelling and grammar are mostly correct.	Proper grammar and spelling are evident.	
PRELIMINARY DOCUMENTATION PORTFOLIO SUBTOTAL (40 points)				

PROMOTIONAL DESIGN

Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points for the above sections) must be initialed by the judge, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right.

Indicate the rule violated: _____

PRELIMINARY SUBTOTAL (120 points)

SEMIFINAL PROBLEM (40 points)

CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points
Layout and Design (X1)	The design inadequately incorporates the design principles of alignment, consistency, contrast, unity, or white space.	The design incorporates most design principles; overall layout is generally aesthetically pleasing.	An aesthetically pleasing design is provided, with all design principles incorporated in the layout and design.
Solution to Project (X1)	Three (3) or more attributes of the solution's criteria are missing; leadership and/or 21 st century skills are not evident.	Most attributes of the solution's criteria are included; leadership and/or 21 st century skills are somewhat evident.	All attributes of the solution's criteria are evident; leadership and/or 21 st century skills are clearly evident.
Effectiveness (X1)	The solution inadequately conveys the intended message, and/or it contains unrelated text/graphics.	The solution conveys the intended message appropriately, and it uses text and/or graphics generally well.	The solution's message is easily understood and interpreted, with exceptional use of related graphics and text.
Originality (X1)	The finished product is ordinary, plain, and unimaginative in design.	The finished product shows some effort to be imaginative and original.	The final product is truly unique and shows creativity.

Record scores
in the column
spaces below.

SEMIFINAL PROBLEM SUBTOTAL (40 points)

Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points for the above sections) must be initialed by the judge, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right.

Indicate the rule violated: _____

SEMIFINAL SUBTOTAL (40 points)

To arrive at the TOTAL score, add any subtotals and subtract rules violation points, as necessary.

TOTAL (160 points)

Comments:

I certify these results to be true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

JUDGE

Printed name: _____ Signature: _____

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EVENT COORDINATOR INSTRUCTIONS

PERSONNEL

- A. Event coordinator
- B. Judges:
 1. Preliminary round, two (2) or more
 2. Semifinal round, two (2) or more

MATERIALS

- A. Coordinator's packet, containing:
 1. Event guidelines, one (1) copy for the coordinator and for each judge
 2. TSA Event Coordinator Report
 3. Stick-on labels for entries, as needed
- B. One (1) copy on an on-site problem for each member and one (1) copy for each judge
- C. Stopwatch
- D. One (1) laptop to judge the semifinalists submissions on a USB. Laptop must be capable of opening and viewing a PDF from a USB.

RESPONSIBILITIES

AT THE CONFERENCE

- A. Attend the mandatory coordinator's meeting at the designated time and location.
- B. Report to the CRC room and check the contents of the coordinator's packet.
- C. Review the event guidelines and check to see that enough judges/assistants have been scheduled.
- D. Inspect the area or room in which the event is to be held for appropriate set-up, including room size, chairs, tables, outlets, etc. Notify the event manager of any potential problems.
- E. At least one (1) hour before the event is to begin, meet with judges and assistants to review time limits, procedures, regulations, evaluation, and all other details related to the event. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the event begins.
- F. Ensure the judges have access to the online judging system.

EVENT CHECK-IN

- A. Check in the entries at the time and place stated in the conference program.
- B. Participants check in a standard 10" x 13" envelope containing the entry and required forms. Contents are not removed from the envelope at check-in.
- C. Late entries are considered on a case-by-case basis and only when the delay is caused by events beyond participant control.
- D. In order to compete, participants must be on the entry list or must have CRC approval.
- E. If check-in is on the first day of the conference, requirements for attire do NOT apply during check-in.
- F. Place an entry number in the upper right-hand corner of the portfolio.
- G. Secure the entries in the designated area.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

- A. Judges independently evaluate each entry.
- B. Decisions about rules violations must be discussed and verified with the judges, event coordinator, and CRC manager to determine either:
 1. To deduct twenty percent (20%) of the total possible points in this round or
 2. To disqualify the entry

The event coordinator, judges, and CRC manager must initial either of these actions on the rating form.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

- A. Inspect the area(s) in which the on-site activity is being held for appropriate set-up, including room size, chairs, tables, outlets, etc. Notify the event manager of any potential problems.
- B. At least one (1) hour before the event is to begin, meet with your judges for the on-site activity to review time limits, procedures, regulations, evaluation, and all other details related to the event. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the event begins.

- C. Semifinalists report for the on-site problem.
- D. Begin the event at the scheduled time by closing the doors and checking the entry list.
 - 1. All semifinalists and judges should be in the room at this time.
 - 2. Semifinalists not present may be disqualified.
- E. Judges monitor the participants during the on-site activity.
- F. Monitor the judges as they individually judge the semifinal solutions.
- G. Discuss rule violations (e.g. 20% deduction, disqualification) and have all relevant parties initial the rating form.
- H. If necessary, manage security and the removal of materials from the event area.