

Andersen PTA Reflections 2026–2027

Family & Teacher Information

What is Reflections?

The National PTA Reflections Program is a nation-wide PTA Arts contest - students submit entries at their school, and then winners are sent up to higher levels of competition, all the way to the National level. Students incorporate an annual theme when they create their original art.

This year's theme is:

“What My Culture Means to Me”

This theme encourages students to explore their heritage, identity, and unique traditions through various arts categories, with the program officially launching this month.

Students are encouraged to think about what culture means in their own lives and use their creativity to share their ideas, experiences, traditions, values, family stories, and perspectives.

This theme celebrates exactly what makes our school communities so extraordinary: the rich, vibrant tapestry of cultures, traditions, and stories that each of our students and families brings through the door every single day. We believe this theme will spark meaningful conversations, inspire creative programming, and — most importantly — help every child feel seen, celebrated, and proud of who they are.

We can't wait to see how each of your schools makes this theme your own. Whether through cultural showcases, family heritage nights, classroom projects, or community storytelling events, the possibilities are truly endless, and we know your creativity will shine.

Art Categories

Students may participate in any of the following six categories:

- **Dance Choreography**
- **Film Production**
- **Literature**
- **Music Composition**
- **Photography**
- **Visual Arts**

Students may enter work in **multiple art categories**.

A student may submit more than one entry in a category **if permitted by the local PTA**.



Eligible Grade Divisions

Our school serves TK–6th grade, so students participate in the following divisions:

Division	Grades
Primary	Pre-K–2nd
Intermediate	3rd–5th
Accessible Artist	Pre-K–5th

The **Accessible Artist divisions** provide an opportunity for students who identify as having a disability to participate in Reflections.



Important Deadline

Student Submission Deadline

Thursday, October 15, 2026

All student entries must be submitted to our PTA by this date.

Please do not wait until the last day if your project is ready earlier!

[ONLINE ENTRY FORM](#)

[PRINTABLE ENTRY FORM](#)



What Makes an Entry Eligible?

Entries should:

- Be the **original work of one student**
- Be created specifically for the **2026–2027 Reflections program**
- Relate to the theme “**What My Culture Means to Me**”
- Follow the guidelines for the selected art category
- Include the required student information and permissions
- Include a **title**
- Include an **artist statement**
- Meet any category-specific technical requirements

Other people may appear in a student's artwork, film, photograph, dance, etc., but the creative work itself must be created by **one student**.

PowerPoint presentations are not accepted.



Artist Statement

Every entry needs an **artist statement**.

The artist statement is an important part of the judging process because judges consider both the artwork **and the student's explanation of how their work connects to the theme**.

Students should explain their inspiration and how their artwork communicates:

“What My Culture Means to Me”

The artist statement should be written in the student's own voice.



Copyright & Technology Guidelines

Copyrighted Materials

Copyrighted material may be included only when it is an incidental or smaller element of a larger work and is used to create a **completely new and different work of art**.

Students should not simply submit someone else's copyrighted artwork, music, photographs, writing, or other creative work.

Technology & Digital Tools

Digital technology may be used, but it **may not provide the primary design or concept** for an entry.

Students should provide a brief description of:

- What technology or software they used
- How they used it
- Any generative elements
- Any algorithmic techniques
- Any artificial intelligence used

If technology or AI was used in creating an entry, please make sure it is disclosed as required by the Reflections guidelines.



Digital Entries

Students participating in categories such as **Film Production** and other digital categories should follow the current California State PTA technical requirements.

For Film Production, accepted file formats may include:

- MP4
- MOV
- AVI

Please refer to the official category guidelines for complete technical requirements.

How Are Entries Judged?

Entries are reviewed by judges who consider the student's **artistic vision and interpretation of the theme**, not simply technical perfection.

Judges use a 100-point rubric:

Judging Category	Points
Interpretation of Theme	40
Artistic Merit / Creativity	30
Mastery of Medium	30
Total	100

Interpretation of Theme — 40 points

How closely does the artwork communicate “**What My Culture Means to Me?**”, considering both the artwork and artist statement?

Artistic Merit / Creativity — 30 points

How creative and original is the student's idea and presentation?

Mastery of Medium — 30 points

What level of skill does the student demonstrate in the basic principles and techniques of their chosen artistic discipline?

Judges are encouraged to focus on a well-developed concept and the student's artistic vision rather than simply technical ability.



Awards & Recognition

Our PTA may recognize students with:

Award of Excellence

Typically the first-place entry and the entry that advances to the next level.

Award of Merit

Typically the second-place entry.

Honorable Mention

Typically the third-place entry.

Participation Award

Recognition for students who participate in Reflections.

The number of awards given is determined by each PTA.

Typically, **only the Award of Excellence in each art category and grade division advances to the next level**, but advancement requirements are determined by the Council/District and may vary.



Celebrating Our Students

Reflections is about much more than winning.

We want to celebrate **all students who take the time to create, participate, and share their perspective**.

Participating students will be recognized, and we plan to celebrate their creativity and accomplishments as a school community.



Ideas for Exploring the Theme

The theme “**What My Culture Means to Me**” can be interpreted in many different ways.

Students might explore:

- Family traditions
- Food
- Music
- Language
- Celebrations
- Holidays
- Family stories
- Heritage
- Community
- Places that are meaningful to them
- Family values
- Customs
- Experiences that have shaped them
- What makes their family or community unique

There is no single definition of "culture." Students are encouraged to explore what the word means **to them**.



Official Reflections Resources

All official Reflections materials are available through California State PTA, including:

- Student Entry Form
- Virtual Entry Form
- Art Category Guidelines
- Reflections Review Packet
- Reflections Leader Checklist
- Promotional Materials
- National PTA's Start Your Program resources
- National PTA's Craft an Entry resources

For the most current rules and category-specific requirements, please refer to the official California State PTA Reflections materials.

[California State PTA — Reflections](#)



Questions?

Please reach out to our school's **PTA Reflections Chair Emi Rigby (emidunnrigby@gmail.com)** or PTA leadership with questions about participating, submitting artwork, or the program.