Submission Guidelines
Flash Fiction Collection 2021

Entry Fee: NONE!!

Entry Requirements:
- Membership in the Nebraska Writers Guild is **not** required.
- Fiction only. See "Content" and "Entries Defined" below.
- All entries must be in English and may not be translations.

How to Enter:
- Open the [Google entry form](#) by clicking this hyperlink (the form will be available starting May 9).
- Fill out the form and upload your files.

Previously Published Work:
We do not accept previously published work. This includes self-publishing and online publishing.

Simultaneous Submissions:
- Simultaneous submissions are accepted.
- Please let us know that an entry has also been submitted elsewhere.
- If an entry is accepted by another publication, you must withdraw it from our collection immediately.

Entries Defined:
One story of no more than 1000 words constitutes a single entry.
You may enter up to three stories.

Content:
Mature content and questionable language should be appropriate and not excessive or gratuitous in nature. We are unlikely to accept explicit content. ***Content which supports or attempts to spread racism or other intolerance will not be accepted.***

Formatting:
While there are no disqualifying formatting rules, please be aware of the following and adjust your entries appropriately.
- **Acceptable File Formats:** If you can upload it to Google, we'll take it.
- Each story must be in a separate file.
- **Copy Formatting:**
  - Do not add extra returns between paragraphs.
  - Do not use tabs or spaces to indent paragraphs (set a first-line indent instead).

- If you need a visual break between sections, please add a line of asterisks (* * *) or some other symbol so the break is easy to distinguish and understand.
- Use *only one space* after periods and colons. (This is publishing industry standard and is a good habit to get into for everything you write for publication.)
- No illustrations, images, or emoticons please.
- ***Do not include the author's name in the file.*** *Any entries including the author's name **IN THE FILE** **will be disqualified**.*
  (Please Note: Google will append your name to your file names when you upload them. You have no control over this, and we will fix them before submitting them to the judges.)

How Stories are Chosen:
All stories are judged "blind" (anonymously) by our panel of evaluators. Each story is evaluated based on a set of criteria (see page 3) and scored accordingly. Scores from all judges are averaged, and stories meeting a predetermined score are qualified for publication. We have a limited number of pages to fill, so if too many stories qualify, stories are then selected based on entry date (so enter early!).

Proofreading:
- Accepted entries will be proofread and suggested changes will be sent to the author. If the author does not respond by the date given, *all suggested changes will be made*.
- Proofreading references will be the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th ed., and the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary Online*.
- While the accepted entries will be proofread, the NWG is not responsible for any errors occurring in the original file that happen to get printed.

NOTES:
- Entries can only be withdrawn in the case of simultaneous submissions (see above).
- No revisions will be allowed after an entry is received.

Submission Dates: May 9–June 5, 2021

Anticipated Publication Date: September 1, 2021

Questions: nwgflashfiction@gmail.com

*If you have any questions about the guidelines, **please ask before you submit**!*

The following article features some guidelines for writing flash fiction. The elements listed below are what your stories will be judged against.

Elements of Flash Fiction

Even though flash fiction is very short, it should still tell a story, have interesting characters, and thoroughly engage readers. The essential elements of flash fiction may vary somewhat depending on who you ask, but just about everyone agrees on the list below. The general consensus is that flash fiction needs to have impact—a lot of it. The elements below will help you achieve just that.

Elements of flash fiction include:

1. **A Focused Plot** — Despite the length of flash fiction, the stories must still feature a discernible plot or, at the very least, a discernible *purpose*, and that plot must be sharply focused. There is simply no time for rambling plots and subplots. Pick a purpose and laser-focus on it.
2. **Strong Characters** — You don't have much time for character development and description, so your characters (and there should be *very few of them*) must be immediately interesting and distinct.
3. **Rich Language** — Again, you can't waste words making lengthy descriptions or beating about the bush. Using imagery, metaphor, and symbolism will help build amazing worlds and characters and get across complex ideas and themes without gobbling up precious space. Colorful, rich, poetic language is the flash fiction writer's best friend!
4. **Conflict** — As with any story, conflict is key. Conflict creates the opportunity for growth and change. Plus it keeps readers interested. Conflict can be internal or external, real or imagined, but it absolutely must be there.
5. **Solid Ending** — Many flash stories end with a twist, which is always fun for readers. But while a surprise ending is not required, a *damn good ending* is essential. Your ending should leave readers thinking, perhaps even wanting more. After all the work you did on the other four elements, don't skimp on your chance to make a lasting impression.

Read more about how to write flash fiction:

https://indiesunlimited.com/2015/05/28/five-flash-fiction-elements/

https://www.masterclass.com/articles/writing-101-what-is-flash-fiction-learn-how-to-write-flash-fiction-in-7-steps#3-characteristics-of-flash-fiction

https://writersedit.com/fiction-writing/the-ultimate-guide-to-flash-fiction-and-how-to-write-your-own/

https://self-publishingschool.com/flash-fiction/