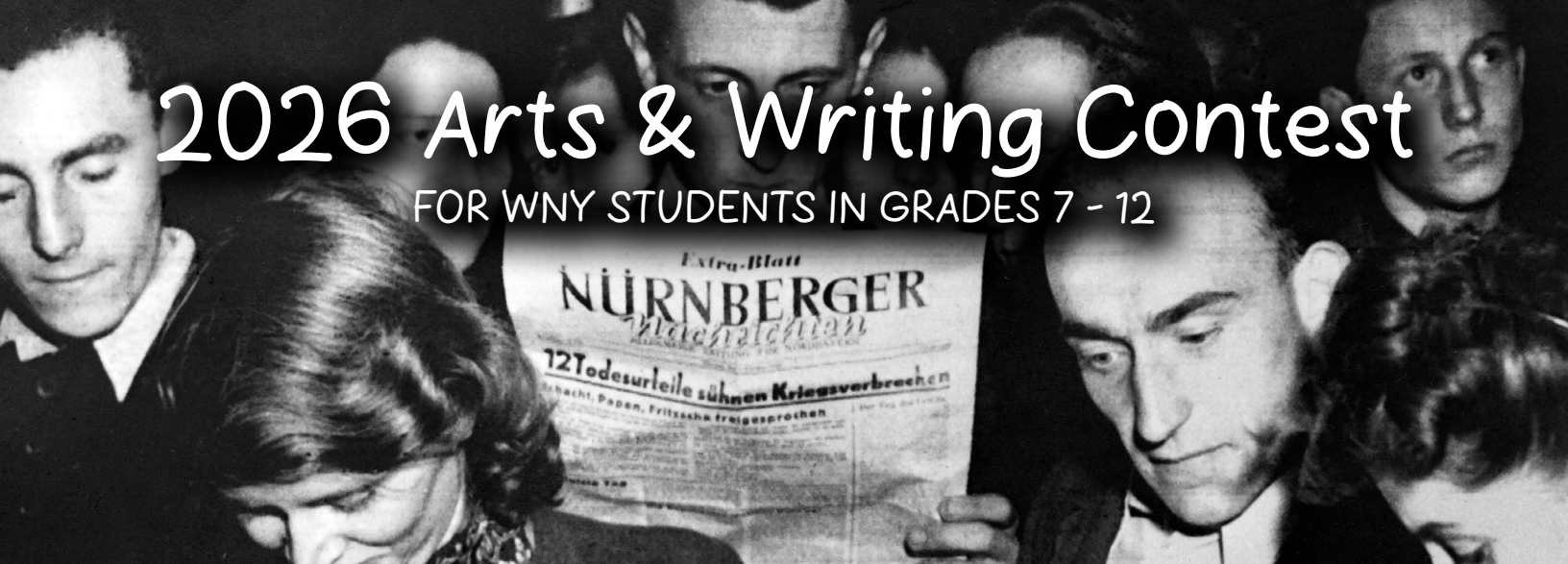


# 2026 Arts & Writing Contest

FOR WNY STUDENTS IN GRADES 7 - 12



## 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Nuremberg Trials

*Using this information and your own research, respond through art or writing to one the following prompts:*

- 1.) How can the lessons of the Nuremberg Trials - accountability, truth and moral courage - inspire each of us in our actions against injustice in our world today?*
- 2.) Research a hero who stood up for justice during the Holocaust. How did this hero's actions demonstrate a commitment to human rights and dignity?*

*(Moral Courage - the ability to act on one's ethical beliefs and values even in the face of potential negative consequences. It involves speaking up against injustice, challenging unethical behavior and doing what is right, even when it is unpopular or difficult.)*

*Entries due on Wednesday, April 15, 2026  
Apply at [bit.ly/2026ARTSANDWRITING](https://bit.ly/2026ARTSANDWRITING)  
Award Ceremony on May 18, 2026*



**Contest Generously Sponsored By**  
Eugene Finton Scholars Fund  
Mary Deane and Robert Freeland Award Foundation



**Questions?**

Contact Lauren Bloomberg  
[lauren@buffalojewishfederation.org](mailto:lauren@buffalojewishfederation.org)

 **Holocaust Education  
Resource Organization**  
of the  
Buffalo Jewish Federation

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### CRITERIA

- 1 All entries should focus on the theme. Students may respond to the overall theme/question.
- 2 All entries must be based on an informed understanding of the Holocaust (1933-45).
- 3 Students should gather information on the theme and do research on the Holocaust. Resources are widely available, including the following:
  - [hhrecny.org](http://hhrecny.org)
  - [echoesandreflections.org/unit-10](http://echoesandreflections.org/unit-10)
  - [nationalww2museum.org/war/topics/nuremberg-trials](http://nationalww2museum.org/war/topics/nuremberg-trials)
  - [encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-nuremberg-trials](http://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/the-nuremberg-trials)
  - [roberthjackson.org](http://roberthjackson.org)
  - [nuremberg.law.harvard.edu](http://nuremberg.law.harvard.edu)
  - [arolsen-archives.org](http://arolsen-archives.org)
  - [yadvashem.org](http://yadvashem.org)
  - [sfi.usc.edu](http://sfi.usc.edu)
  - [courtroom600.org](http://courtroom600.org)
- 4 All work must be that of the student artist/writer. Adult assistance must be limited to preparatory teaching, providing resource material, suggesting revisions, and editing works for technical errors.

APPLY ONLINE AT  
[BIT.LY/2026ARTSANDWRITING](https://bit.ly/2026ARTSANDWRITING)



### VISUAL ARTS COMPETITION

1. Entries can be painting, drawing, mixed media, sculpture, or photography.
2. Entries must be suitable for display - mounted, matted, and/or framed.
3. You must submit an artist statement (100 words maximum) in the space provided in the online application.
4. Student name, school and grade should be clearly written on the back of the submission.

### WRITING COMPETITION

1. Entries can be fiction or non-fiction writing, such as poetry, journal entries, editorials, letters, or short stories.
2. Writing entries (maximum of 750 words) will be submitted in the space provided in the online application.
3. All copyright-protected sources must be cited. This includes books, magazines, work of art and websites, among others.  
**A bibliography of sources must accompany all research entries, entered into the online application.**

### QUESTIONS?

CONTACT LAUREN BLOOMBERG

[LAUREN@BUFFALOJEWISHFEDERATION.ORG](mailto:LAUREN@BUFFALOJEWISHFEDERATION.ORG)

### DEADLINE AND SUBMISSIONS

1. The online application must be completed for all entries.  
[bit.ly/2026ARTSANDWRITING](https://bit.ly/2026ARTSANDWRITING)
2. All material must be submitted no later than April 15, 2026.
3. All writing submissions - 750 WORDS MAX - must be entered into the online application.
4. Visual Arts entries should be mailed or dropped off at the Jewish Community Center - 2640 North Forest Road, Getzville, NY 14068.  
Contact Lauren Bloomberg to arrange drop off.
5. All artist statements - 100 WORDS MAX - must be entered into the online application.

### AWARDS

#### Eugene Finton Scholars Award:

Prizes will be awarded in both the art and writing categories:

- First place for each grade, in each category, will be \$125
- Second place for each grade, in each category, will be \$100
- Third place for each grade, in each category, will be \$75

#### Mary Deane and Robert Freeland Award:

- Two Best of Show prizes of \$250 each - one in writing and one in art - will be given to the recipient's school to purchase Holocaust related materials.

Best of Show winners will have their work published in the July/August edition of The Jewish Journal.

Prizes will be awarded at a ceremony on May 18, 2026

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## INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

The Nuremberg Trials were a series of important court cases held after World War II between November 20, 1945 and ending in 1949. They were military court proceedings that brought leading members of Nazi Germany to justice for the horrific crimes they committed during the war. Taking place in Nuremberg, Germany, the trials marked the first time in history that an international court (the International Military Tribunal (IMT)) was created to hold leaders accountable for crimes against peace, war, and crimes against humanity. The IMT was established and jointly led by the four major Allied powers, the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and France. Beyond punishing the guilty, the trials sought to honor the memory of 6 million Jewish Holocaust victims and 5 million others who were murdered, dismantle Nazi ideology, and promote peace through justice. The trials helped establish rules for international law and human rights that are still followed today.

Why was Nuremberg, Germany chosen as the location of the trials?

1. **Symbolism:** Once the heart of the Nazi movement and the site of the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, which stripped Jews of their rights, it was a fitting location to mark the regime's downfall.
2. **Facilities:** The Palace of Justice survived the bombings, offering suitable courtrooms, offices, and jail cells.
3. **Accessibility:** Located in the American-occupied zone, Nuremberg provided convenient oversight and security for the Allies.
4. **Legal Tradition:** Nuremberg's historical role in German law made it a meaningful setting for these landmark trials.
5. **Practicality:** The courthouse's attached prison simplified the process of housing and transporting defendants.

### Structure of the Trials

The London Charter, signed on August 8, 1945, by the U.S., U.K., Soviet Union, and France, established the legal framework for the trials and outlined three categories of crimes:

1. **Crimes Against Peace** - Planning or waging aggressive wars.
2. **War Crimes** - Violations of the laws of war.
3. **Crimes Against Humanity** - Atrocities against civilians, including murder, extermination, enslavement, & deportation.

Judges from each of the four Allied powers presided over the first trial, which began on November 20, 1945.

### DEADLINE AND SUBMISSIONS

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# INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS CONT.

## Major Trials and Defendants

The first and most significant trial, known as the Trial of the Major War Criminals, involved 24 top Nazi leaders, including Hermann Göring, Rudolf Hess, and Joachim von Ribbentrop. Evidence included detailed records, survivor testimonies, and military documents. Of the 24 defendants, 12 were sentenced to death, three were acquitted, and the rest received prison terms. Göring died by suicide before his execution; Hess was sentenced to life in prison; and von Ribbentrop was executed. Other high-ranking officials, like Karl Dönitz and Albert Speer, received prison sentences of 10 and 20 years, respectively.

Several infamous Nazis escaped trial—either by suicide or evading capture. Adolf Hitler, Heinrich Himmler, and Joseph Goebbels all took their own lives before they could be brought to justice. Adolf Eichmann fled to Argentina but was later captured and tried in Israel. Martin Bormann was tried in absentia and sentenced to death, though he had already died by suicide. Josef Mengele, the Auschwitz doctor known for his brutal experiments, escaped to South America and lived under a false identity until his death in 1979.

In total, 199 people were tried across multiple subsequent proceedings focused on specific professions or groups, including doctors, industrialists, and military leaders. Of those, 161 were convicted and 37 sentenced to death.

## Legal and Ethical Legacy

The Nuremberg Trials established lasting principles that continue to shape international law:

- **Individual Accountability:** "Following orders" was no longer an acceptable defense for committing atrocities.
- **Recognition of Crimes Against Humanity:** These trials defined a new category of international crime.
- **Foundation for Future Courts:** Nuremberg laid the groundwork for institutions like the International Criminal Court (ICC) and later tribunals addressing genocides in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia.

Two important Americans, **Robert H. Jackson** and **Ben Ferencz** played pivotal roles in the pursuit of justice at the Nuremberg Trials:

### **Robert H. Jackson (1892-1954)**

Robert Jackson was born in 1892 in Pennsylvania and grew up in Frewsburg, NY. After graduating high school, Robert pursued an unconventional legal education, rather than earning a formal college or law degree. He apprenticed with attorneys and completed one year at Albany Law School before passing the bar exam at the age of 21. His talent quickly propelled him— he became US Solicitor General, Attorney General and then a Justice of the United States Supreme Court. In 1945, President Harry Truman appointed Jackson as Chief US Prosecutor at the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg. Jackson shaped the structure and principles of the trials and delivered a historic opening statement that set a new global standard: leaders could be held individually accountable for war crimes and crimes against humanity. His work at Nuremberg remains a landmark in international justice. Jackson described his work at Nuremberg as his most important work. Jackson is buried in Frewsburg, NY. In 2001, the Robert H. Jackson Center was established in Jamestown, NY, and serves as a home of exhibits on Jackson's life, collections of his writings and photos from the IMT. Judicial papers from Jackson's career are housed in the Library of Congress. The United States Federal Court House in Buffalo is named in honor of Jackson.

### **Ben Ferencz (1920-2023)**

Ben Ferencz was born in Transylvania and emigrated to New York when he was 10 months old. After graduating from Harvard Law School in 1943, he enlisted in the army where he fought in France under General Patton where he was later transferred to the War Crimes Branch of the army. After the war, Ferencz served as a Chief Prosecutor during the Nuremberg Trials. He was the youngest prosecutor and led the Einsatzgruppen case, securing convictions against Nazi death squad leaders and affirming individual accountability for genocide. In later years, he became a human rights activist, helped to create the Claims Conference, and worked to establish the International Criminal Court ([hhrecny.org](http://hhrecny.org)).

The Nuremberg Trials transformed the way the world understands justice and human rights. By holding individuals—not just nations—responsible for atrocities, they set powerful legal and moral precedents that continue to guide international efforts to prevent genocide and protect human dignity.

## **NYS Social Studies Standards [www.nysed.gov](http://www.nysed.gov)**

8.6c - Students will examine the Holocaust and explain the historical significance of the Nuremberg Trials.

10.5e - Students will examine the atrocities against the Armenians, examine the Ukrainian Holodomor and examine the Holocaust.

10.10a - Students will investigate and analyze the historical context of the Holocaust, Nuremberg Trials.

10.10b - Students will explore multinational treaties and international court systems that bind countries to adhere to international human rights.

11.8c - Students will examine the contributions of Supreme Court Justice Robert H. Jackson and his arguments made as Chief Prosecutor for the United States as the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials.