

# BCPS Magnet Programs

## Centralized Assessments – Literary Art

### 2024-2025 Assessment Guidelines

#### Table of Contents

General Rules and Processes – 1

Assessment Overview – 2

Assessment Components and Self-Evaluation – 2

Preparing for the Assessment - 3

#### Eligibility

**Applications must be submitted on or before 1 p.m. on Friday, November 3, 2023.** Applications can be accessed from the [BCPS Magnet Programs' Web site \(www.tinyurl.com/BCPSMagnet\)](http://www.tinyurl.com/BCPSMagnet) beginning at 12:00 noon on Tuesday, September 12, 2023. Late applications are not processed.

Applicants must attend and complete the assessment for the program to which they applied. Failure to do so will disqualify the applicant; and admission into the magnet program will be denied.

Applicants may only assess for the program(s) to which they applied. Assessments completed for a program not selected on the application will not be scored.

Documented testing accommodations, as appropriate to the assessment, will be provided. Education plans for students not currently attending a BCPS school must be submitted with the magnet application.

#### Assessment Scheduling

Assessments must be scheduled through the online application system when the application is submitted.

***Failure to attend an assessment and submit virtual requirements WILL result in disqualification.***

If there are scheduling conflicts with other magnet assessments, parents must contact the Magnet Programs' office by no later than November 8, 2023.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to:

- ensure the applicant attends the assessment on the scheduled date and time.
- ensure the applicant brings the required materials to the assessment.
- contact the schools immediately if an unforeseen illness or emergency occurs.

**Unforeseen Illness or Emergency:** If the applicant cannot attend or complete the scheduled assessment due to an unforeseen illness or emergency, **please immediately contact BCPS Magnet Programs at (443) 809-4127.** Please be aware that assessments will not be rescheduled without documentation verifying the illness or emergency. Documentation must be provided to the school within 72 hours of the illness or emergency.

**Inclement Weather:** If school activities are cancelled due to inclement weather, magnet assessments will be postponed. Postponed assessments will occur on the designated inclement weather date. All emergency closing and cancellation information will be posted on the BCPS automated information line, (443) 809-5555. Closings and cancellation announcements may also be made through local media.

#### Academic Integrity

By taking the BCPS magnet assessments, applicants agree NOT to participate in any of the following activities. Violation of this agreement may result in disqualification:

- Submitting, copying, or attempting to copy another's work, including plagiarizing another's words or ideas
- Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials and/or technology
- Falsifying information in an academic exercise
- Assisting another in academic dishonesty

# BCPS Magnet Programs

## Centralized Assessments – Literary Arts

### Assessment Overview

**Magnet Coordinator(s):** Magnet@bcps.org (443) 809-4127

**Assessment Date(s):** Saturday, December 9, 2023 @ 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Applicants must arrive 30 minutes prior to assessment start time

*Inclement Weather Date: Monday, December 11, 2023 (5 - 7 p.m.)*

*Assessments are by appointment only. Assessments must be scheduled by Nov. 8, 2023.*

**Virtual Submission Deadline:** Saturday, December 9, 2023 @ 11:59 p.m.

See Preparing for the Assessment section

**Assessment Duration:** 1 1/2 hour

**Assessment Description:** Applicants will respond to three writing prompts at a school-based assessment, as well as submit a writer's portfolio online.

Students applying to Literary Arts at one, two, or three schools only need to schedule one appointment. The results from that assessment will be applied to each school where Literary Arts was selected on the application.

All Literary Arts assessments will be held at Loch Raven Technical Academy (8101 LaSalle Rd., Towson 21286)

### On-Site Registration

- **Arrival:** Applicants should arrive 30 minutes prior to the appointment time at Loch Raven Technical Academy (8101 LaSalle Rd., Towson 21286). Students who arrive after their appointment time may not be admitted to the assessment.
- **Accompaniment Information:** Parents are asked to drop off applicants and return at the conclusion of the assessment. There is no seating available in the school for parents.
- **What to Bring (see Preparing for the Assessment below for details):**
  - All materials will be provided

### Assessment Components & Self Evaluation

Evaluation Component	Point Values
Creative Writing	Up to 25 pts
Critique	Up to 25 pts
Informative Writing	Up to 25 pts
Portfolio	Up to 25 pts
<b>TOTAL</b>	Up to 100 pts

# BCPS Magnet Programs Centralized Assessments – Literary Arts

## Preparing for the Assessment

Applicants will respond to three writing prompts at a school-based assessment, as well as submit a writer's portfolio online.

### Writing At Assessment (Creating, Critique, Informative):

Reading and writing are important practices for Literary Arts students. Applicants should plan to incorporate reading and writing every day to broaden their skills and prepare for the assessment.

On the day of the assessment, applicants will demonstrate their talent for the expression of ideas through the written word, their passion for literature, and the ability to work for long periods of time independently by completing two writing tasks, reflecting Creative and Informative genres for the assessment. They will also complete a Critique of a given writing sample. Writing samples should not be prepared ahead of time; prompts will be given the day of the assessment.

**Creative Writing:** Applicants will read and respond to a prompt that will give them an opportunity to demonstrate their talents as creative writers. For more information about writing a Creative Essay, please see the [Oxford-Royale article](https://www.oxford-royale.com/articles/techniques-creative-writing-improve-essays/) (<https://www.oxford-royale.com/articles/techniques-creative-writing-improve-essays/>).

**Critique:** Students will read a short writing sample, then respond to questions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the piece. For more information about writing a Critique Essay, please see the [Burlington Writer's Workshop article](https://burlingtonwritersworkshop.com/2022/04/22/11-ways-to-give-feedback-during-a-workshop/) (<https://burlingtonwritersworkshop.com/2022/04/22/11-ways-to-give-feedback-during-a-workshop/>) and the [Hobby Lark article](https://hobbylark.com/writing/feedback-in-writing-groups) (<https://hobbylark.com/writing/feedback-in-writing-groups>).

**Informative Writing:** Applicants will read and respond to a prompt that will give them an opportunity to write about their literary influences. For more information about writing an Informative Essay, please see the [EssayPro.com article](https://essaypro.com/blog/informative-essay) (<https://essaypro.com/blog/informative-essay>).

### Portfolio

**Portfolio Submission Deadline:** Saturday, December 9, 2023 @ 11:59 pm

**Portfolio Submission Link:**

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdXeG-7UVR-6QTOvNyywwHGXPiLCTitNLkC3kFGHkFuWgVbg/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdXeG-7UVR-6QTOvNyywwHGXPiLCTitNLkC3kFGHkFuWgVbg/viewform?usp=sf_link)

Students will submit a portfolio of 5 writing samples online by the deadline.

- One (1) sample must represent the student's best piece of creative writing from the past year. This may be fiction, creative nonfiction, script, poetry, or excerpts from longer works. Students should not submit academic essays or works of journalism.
  - Work must be labeled at the top of the document as "Independent Writing".
- The remaining four (4) works must be new writing responding to the prompts included in the Portfolio Prompts section below. A different prompt should be used for each work.
  - Writing prompt must be included at the top of the writing sample.
- Please be aware, for any portfolio works over three pages, only the first three pages will be read and evaluated.

## BCPS Magnet Programs

### Centralized Assessments – Literary Arts

#### Submission Directions

- Samples must be typed in Times New Roman 12-point font and double spaced.
- Files should be created in a word processing program, such as Microsoft Word, then uploaded. Files must be .doc, .docx, or .pdf and no more than 1MB each.
- Files must be named "LastName\_FirstName\_1-4". For instance, the first portfolio work by Joe Smith would be named "Smith\_Joe\_1", the second portfolio work would be "Smith\_Joe\_2", etc. The Independent Work must be labeled, "Last\_First\_Independent".
- Students must use the Google Form link to submit their portfolio by the submission deadline. Failure to submit the portfolio by the deadline will result in disqualification. The form will be open Nov. 6, 2023 – Dec. 9, 2023 at 11:59 p.m.
- Students must use a Google or BCPS account to log in to the Google Form.
- **Students will only be allowed to submit once.**
- For technical issues or questions, applicants should contact the Magnet Programs' office at magnet@bcps.org.

#### Portfolio Prompts

*Prompts taken in part from here: <https://www.pw.org/writing-prompts-exercises>*

1. In his poem "Self-Portrait at Twenty," Gregory Orr demonstrates the short, personal lyric he's known for and captures a moment in time in his life. Rather than include details about what occurred when he was twenty, Orr presents a series of stark, detailed images that create a sense of foreboding for what the year had in store for him. The poem begins with the lines: "I stood inside myself / like a dead tree or a tower." Then, later in the poem, he writes: "Because my tongue / spoke harshly, I said: / Make it dust." Take inspiration from Orr's poem and write a self-portrait poem that captures what you felt at a specific age. Try to avoid revealing narrative details and instead, use your sense of imagery to allow the reader into your state of mind.
2. In "When I See Stars in the Night Sky," Joy Priest writes an ode to the late iconic singer Whitney Houston, tethering her memory to the stars in the sky. "It's 1988            Her head /            Thrown back against a black backdrop    She is the only thing / glowing            So distant            from us in the universe," writes Priest. The poem then moves into the personal connection the speaker has with the singer. "I love myself / because of her," writes Priest. Inspired by this poem, write an ode to your favorite musician placing them, as Priest does, in a specific moment in time.
3. Make a list of objects. One thing should be from your desk, one from your closet, one a body part, one a thing you covet that belongs to someone else, one enormous, one slippery, and at least one that makes an odd or evocative sound. Now, describe each using a simile. Do this twice for each one. Using as many of the similes as you can, write a poem with a title such as "Checklist to Survive a Nuclear Winter" or "Things That Have Nothing To Do With Grief."
4. "You must accept the door is never shut. / You're always free to leave at any time, / though the hostage will remain, no matter what," writes Erin Belieu in "Instructions for the Hostage," from her fifth poetry collection, *Come-Hither Honeycomb*, published in February by Copper Canyon Press. In this villanelle—a strict poetic form wherein the first and third lines of the poem are repeated throughout—the terms of the metaphorical hostage scenario underpinning the poem are recontextualized, their meaning deepened as the reader learns that the speaker is both captor and hostage. In this way, the hostage scenario could be applied to any number of situations in which one is complicit in a kind of self-entrapment. Think of a time when you stood in your own way of progress, then write a poem in which you offer instructions to show that the door was never shut.
5. Choose three people who you know well and write a detailed character description of each one. Now change the gender, name, and a few physical traits of each one. Begin a story with all three characters standing in the rain outside of a house on fire.

## **BCPS Magnet Programs**

### **Centralized Assessments – Literary Arts**

6. Write a story in which the central relationship is between a human and a machine. The machine can be a common household item, such as a toaster, or something imagined and altogether more sinister.
7. In a scene from Mary Gaitskill's novel *Veronica*, the protagonist reflects on an innocent moment from her childhood: "When I was a young child, my mother told me that love is what makes the flowers grow. I pictured love inside the flowers, opening their petals and guiding their roots down to suck the earth." This week write a story based on a myth told to you as a child, whether it be storks delivering babies, the tooth fairy trading money for teeth, or that chewing gum would stay in your stomach for seven years if you swallowed it.
8. Record-breaking global temperatures continue to rise in recent years. In a recent CNN report, Jennifer Francis, a senior scientist at Woodwell Climate Research Center, estimated that these temperatures are the warmest "probably going back at least 100,000 years." How do you think extreme heat could affect the way we go about our daily lives and treat one another? Write a story in which a group of characters is forced to deal with a difficult decision on the hottest day of the year. Do they become more exasperated and desperate because of the heat?
9. National Best Friend Day is an unofficial holiday celebrated on June 8 in the United States and Canada. The holiday has no official designation nor any real origin; in fact, according to a 2015 Washington Post article, this hashtag holiday likely began with the website EarthCalendar.net, which takes submissions to catalog "lesser-known holidays." National Best Friend Day eventually caught the eye of morning TV shows, flower delivery services, and even the American Kennel Club which helped bring it to the mainstream. In honor of this invented holiday, write an essay about the best friends who have come into your life. From your childhood recess buddy to your work bestie, try to communicate what makes each one distinctly special.
10. In a video featured in the Poets & Writers Theater, Hilton Als reads from his essay "Tristes Tropiques," which appears in his book *White Girls* (McSweeney's, 2014), recounting the story of how he was named after his mother's best friend's child who died at birth. "The minute I was born I was not just myself, but the memory of someone else," reads Als. How did you get your name? Write an essay that tells the story behind your name. Examine the metaphorical and historical meanings of your name and allow your feelings to carry you through the essay's unfolding.
11. Write an essay about a small part of the country or the world with which you are intimately familiar. Focus first on the landscape, wildlife, and architecture: What flora and fauna are native to the area? What do the houses and centers of town look like? Then introduce the people: What do they look like? What do they do for a living? Incorporate dialogue into this section, including words, phrases, and colloquialisms that are specific to the area. Using as much detail as possible, bring the place and its language to life.
12. Think back to the closet of your youth, and write an essay about what was inside. Let the contents of the closet become a metaphor for who you were as a child, who you might have wished to be, and who you have become.