Reflections Ready!

Inspire creativity and run a successful Reflections arts program at your school.

Lisa Snowiss

California State PTA Reflections Chair 2017 - 2021

Thirty-Third District PTA Fall Officers Training

33rdpta.org

Saturday, August 9, 2025
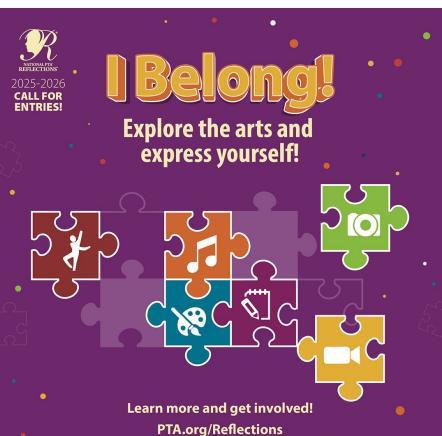
REFLECTIONS Most Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Reflections important?
What is the due date?
How is the theme selected?
My student's art didn't win (and it is the BEST), so why?
How are we going to do Reflections this year?
Virtual? Physical? Hybrid?

PTA REFLECTIONS

Thirty-Third District PTA Fall Officers Training

I Belong!
Explore the arts and express yourself!

2025-2026 CALL FOR ENTRIES!

Learn more and get involved!
PTA.org/Reflections
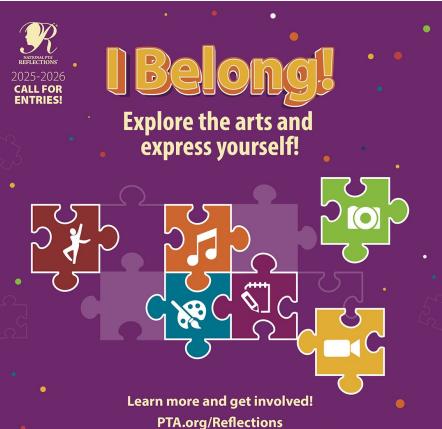
ABOUT REFLECTIONS

- **The National PTA Reflections Program was created in 1969 and more than 10 MILLION STUDENTS have participated.**

- **PTA Reflections is a nationally acclaimed STUDENT RECOGNITION PROGRAM to encourage artistic creativity in the classroom and at home.**

- **PTA Reflections welcomes ALL GRADES and ABILITIES to explore and be involved in the arts.**

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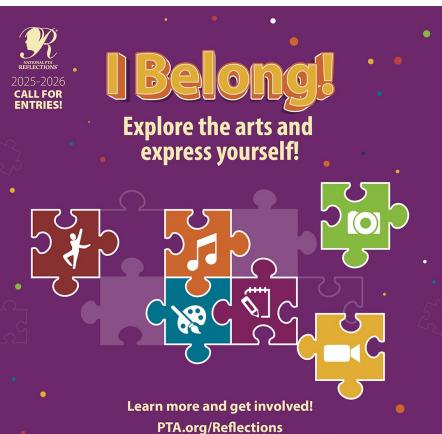
REFLECTIONS PROMISE

To **help all students** explore

their own thoughts, feelings, and ideas,

develop artistic literacy, increase confidence, and

find a love for learning that will help them become

more successful in school and in life.

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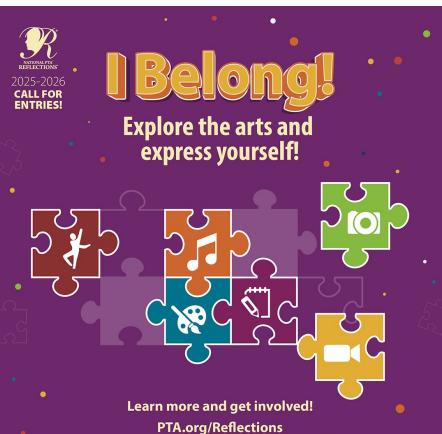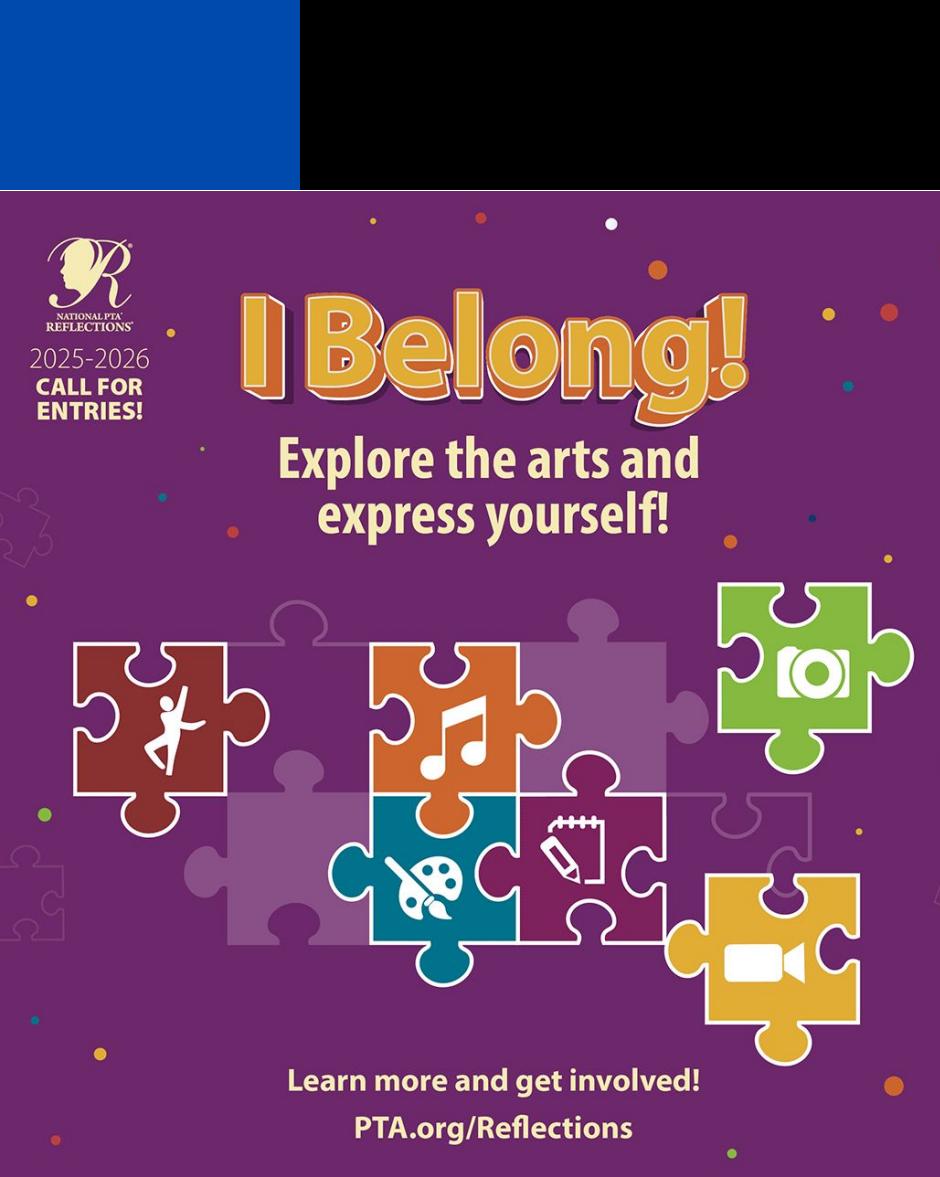
REFLECTIONS THEME

An annual theme is determined by the National PTA Reflections **Theme Search Contest.**

This years theme was selected 2 years ago.

The 2025-2026 Reflections theme is

"I Belong!"

submitted by Ben Morgan from Lewis and Clark Middle School PTSA in Boise, Idaho.

Students may enter their theme ideas on the California State PTA Reflections website from **September 1 through November 1.**

The State PTA Reflections committee submits 5 themes to represent California at the National PTA Reflections theme selection.

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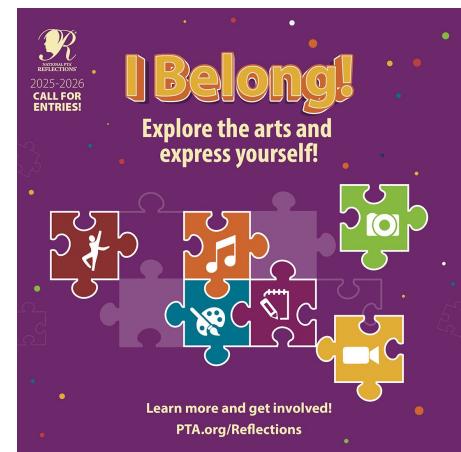
REFLECTIONS CATEGORIES

Choose the **Arts Categories** to offer at your school

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

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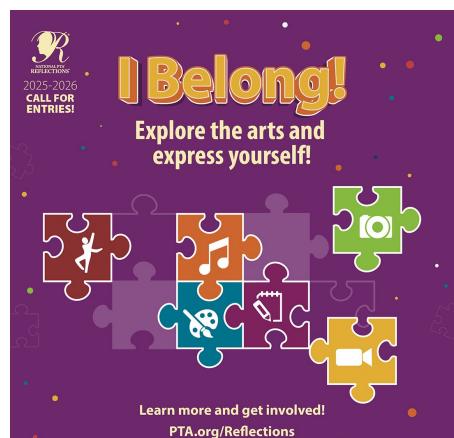
REFLECTIONS DIVISIONS

- Determine which grade divisions your school can host
- Only students who attend your school site may participate
- For example, an Elementary School PTA cannot host the High School Grade Division
- Elementary schools TK-6 can host Middle School Divisions & Accessible Artist

Primary | Grades Pre-K - 2nd

Intermediate | Grades: 3 - 5

Middle School | Grades 6 - 8

High School | Grades 9 - 12

Accessible Arts

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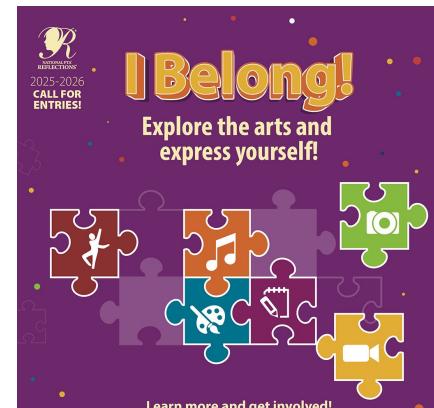
Learn more and get involved!
PTA.org/Reflections

Clarified & Update Guidelines

Materials were updated to **provide consistent and clearer guidance around the use of technology and copyright materials in entries:**

- **Use of Copyright Materials**: Guidelines were clarified to explain that, while permitted in certain categories, copyrighted material in an entry must be incidental and/or is a smaller element of a whole and used to create a completely new and different work of art.

- **Use of Technology**: Guidelines were clarified to emphasize that digital technology may not provide the primary design and/or concept for an entry and to indicate that entrants must provide a brief description how they used the technology/software, including any generative elements (e.g., algorithmic techniques, artificial intelligence).

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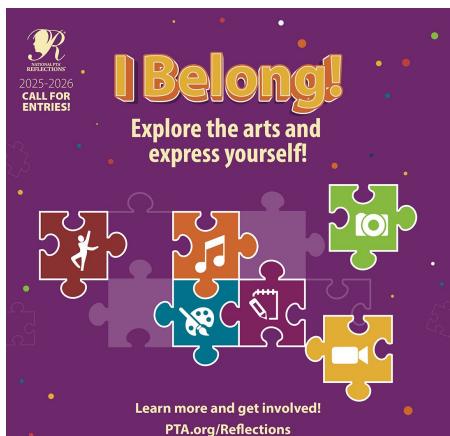
Clarified & Update Guidelines

The category-specific guidelines and student entry packet/form reflect these changes. In addition, the category-specific guidelines also reflect language adjustments, especially the following:

- **Visual Arts**: Category-specific guidelines now specify "digital art and graphics (drawings/paintings/ illustration)," rather than "computer-generated images".
- **Literature**: Category-specific guidelines now specify dictation is permissible based on the student being able, rather than their age.
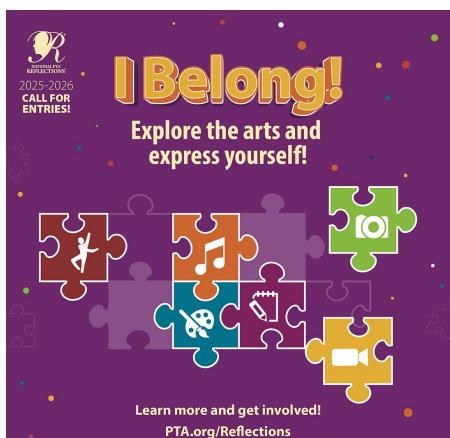
Division Title - Reminder
Accessible Arts Division

This change is in response to concern around the term "special", based on feedback gathered from participants, volunteers, and partner non-profit organizations and recognizes the importance of evolving how we talk about disability to align with and be more inclusive of people with disabilities.

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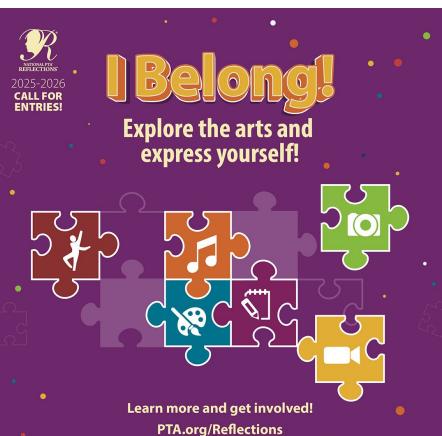
HARD WAY? OR EASY WAY?

ALL OF THE REFLECTIONS MATERIALS -

STUDENT ENTRY PACKET

CATEGORY GUIDELINES

PROMOTION GRAPHICS

➡️ LOCAL LEADERS GUIDE ⬅️

ARE ALL ON THE CALIFORNIA STATE PTA REFLECTIONS PAGE!

CAPTA.ORG/REFLECTIONS

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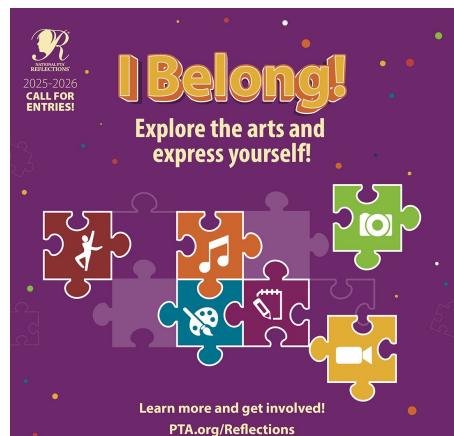
IGNITE YOUR PROGRAM

1. GETTING STARTED
2. PROMOTE REFLECTIONS
3. REVIEW SUBMISSIONS
4. CELEBRATE AND RECOGNIZE PARTICIPANTS
5. WRAP UP AND EVALUATE

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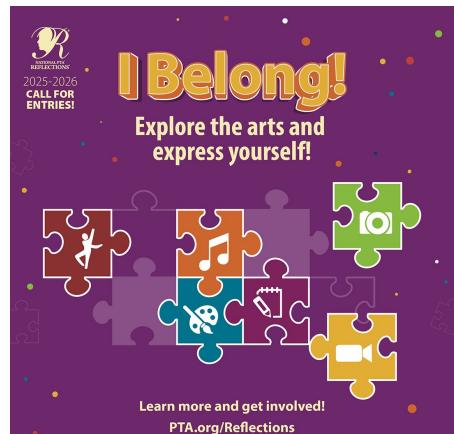
PROPOSE THE PROGRAM TO YOUR SCHOOL

- ASK PTA BOARD

- CREATE A BUDGET

- ASK PRINCIPAL FOR PERMISSION AND ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT

- GET TEACHER INVOLVEMENT BY WORKING THE THEME INTO CLASSROOM CURRICULUM (IE: SOCIAL STUDIES DISCUSSION, LITERATURE, ART)
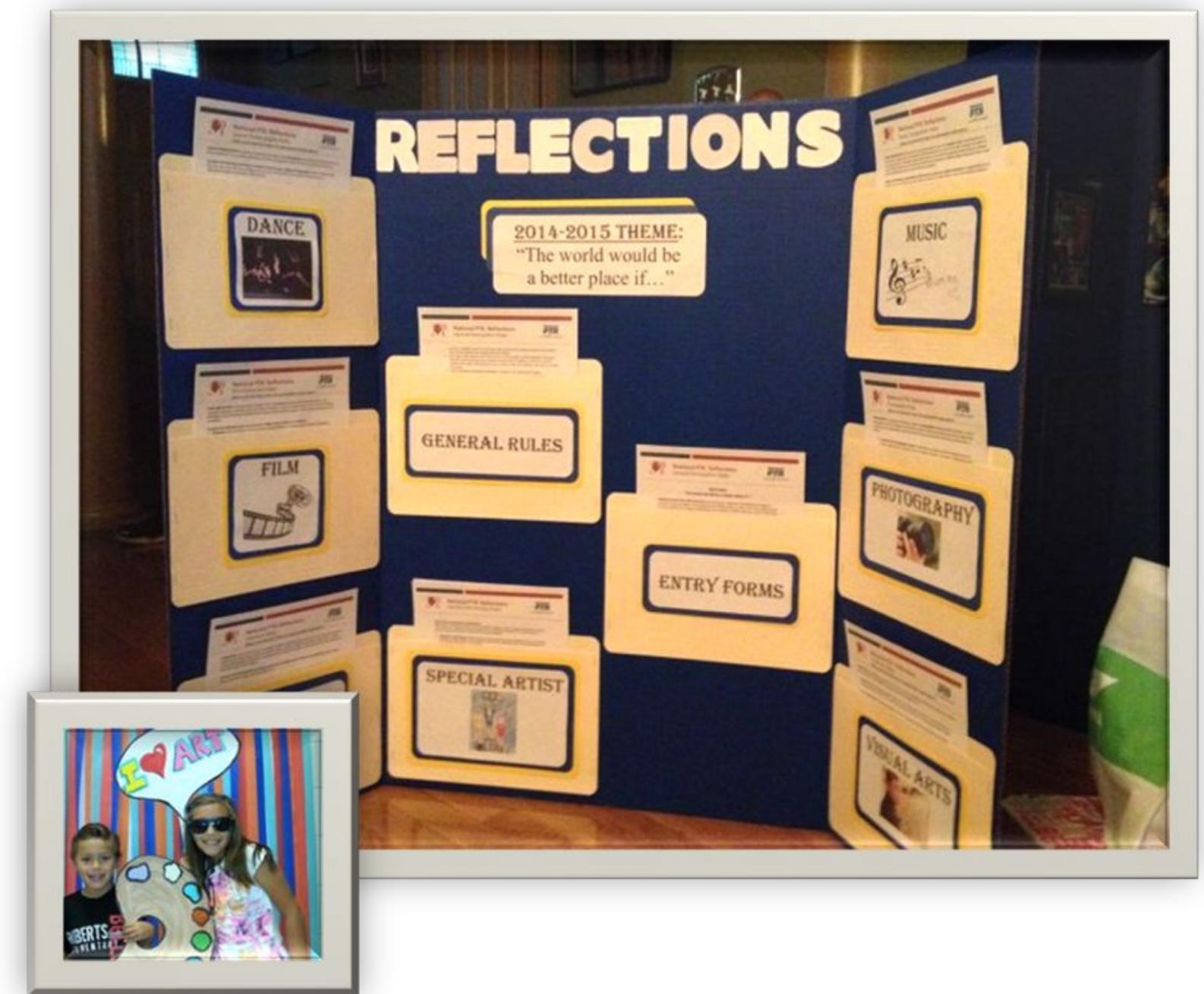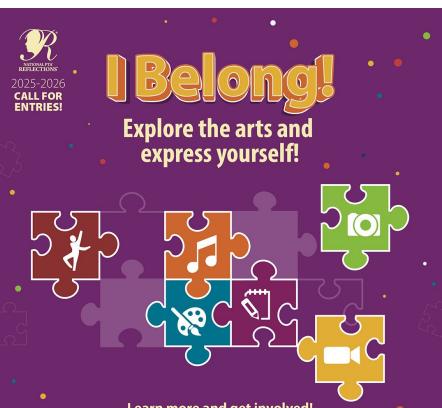
PTA REFLECTIONS

SUGGESTED DUE DATES

- **Unit Due Date EARLY OCTOBER 2025 (SUGGESTED)**
- **Council Due Date OCTOBER 31, 2025 (SUGGESTED)**
- **District Due Date DECEMBER 1, 2025 (FIXED)**
- **State Due Date JANUARY 9, 2026 (FIXED)**

** Plan for 2-3 weeks before due dates for reviewing of each group to send to Council/District
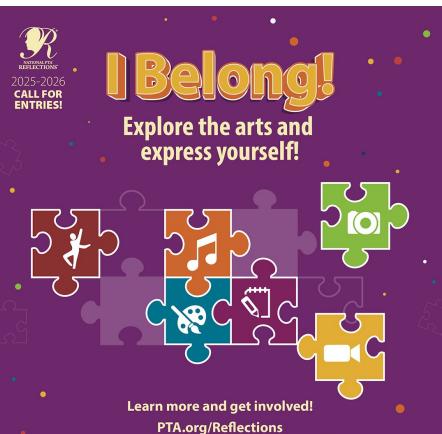
ORGANIZE AND PLAN AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM

- PTA LEADER CHECKLIST– CUSTOMIZABLE
- RECRUIT A COMMITTEE & VOLUNTEERS
- RECRUIT COMMUNITY ARTS PROFESSIONALS (AS VOLUNTEERS AND/OR REVIEWERS)
- READ LOCAL LEADERS GUIDE AND GUIDELINES.
- READ THE GUIDELINES AGAIN!

Step 1. Start the Arts
- Register your PTA at PTA.org/Reflections.
- Confirm that your local PTA is in good standing with the state PTA and eligible to participate.
- Make sure the Reflections program is included in your PTA's program budget for the school year.
- Visit your state PTA website for program registration information and materials.

Step 2. Organize and Plan Your Program
- Recruit your committee/volunteers and engage school personnel and community members for additional support.
- Recruit creative professionals to judge student artwork.
- Determine which arts categories and grade divisions your PTA will offer. New program leaders may consider getting started with one or more arts category and division.
- Establish a timeline for the following activities.

Step 3. Promote Reflections
- Distribute program rules and student entry form.
- Promote artwork submission deadline and instructions.

Step 4. Organize Artwork for Judging
- Collect and organize artwork by category and division. Check entries for qualification.
- Facilitate judging and support judges as needed.
- Collect judges' scores and rank entries. Assign awards and prepare artwork for exhibition.

Step 5. Celebrate and Recognize Your Participants
- Announce awardees to the whole school community.
- Host a Reflections Celebration Event to showcase student work and distribute certificates/awards.
- Offer state and national opportunities for student recognition by sending your finalists to the next judging round. *See State PTA's Leader Guide for details.*

Step 6. Wrap Up

PTA REFLECTIONS

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REGISTRATION IS OPTIONAL BUT ENCOURAGED

PTA.ORG/REFLECTIONS

SCROLL DOWN TO: "REGISTER HERE"

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PROMOTE REFLECTIONS

ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM

It's Quiz Time

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PHOTOGRAPHY

A

B

Mom's Hand

Which one can be submitted?

ANY CATEGORY

A

B

Which one can be submitted?

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FILM PRODUCTION

A

B

Mom's
Hand

Which one can be submitted?

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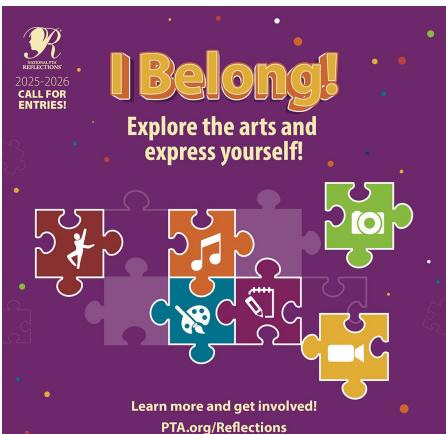
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ANY CATEGORY

A

B

Which one can be submitted?

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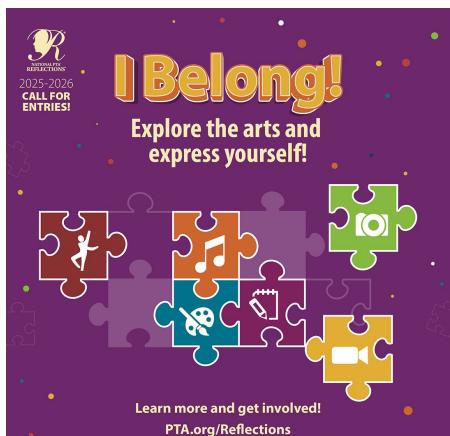
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MUSIC COMPOSITION

A
MUSIC NOTATION

B
WRITTEN REFLECTIVE STATEMENT THAT PROVIDES A MUSICALLY TECHNICAL EXPLANATION

What must be submitted?
A or B or Both or Either

Middle and High Divisions Vs Other Divisions

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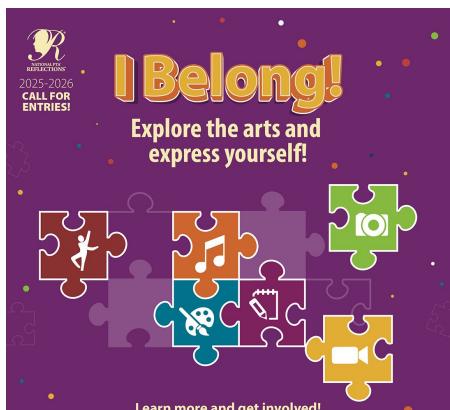
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REFLECTIVE STATEMENT

A Reflective Statement would address questions such as the following:

- WHAT CREATIVE AND MUSICAL DECISIONS DID THE STUDENT MAKE TO ACHIEVE THE FINAL VERSION OF THE PIECE?

- HOW WERE THE MUSICAL ELEMENTS DEVELOPED?

- WHAT EQUIPMENT WAS USED (IF ANY)?

- WHAT SOUNDS AND/OR MUSICAL IDEAS WERE USED TO REPRESENT CERTAIN IDEAS OR EMOTIONS?

- HOW WERE THE STUDENT'S CREATIVE AND MUSICAL DECISIONS INFLUENCED BY THEIR EXPERTISE, CONTEXT, AND EXPRESSIVE INTENT?
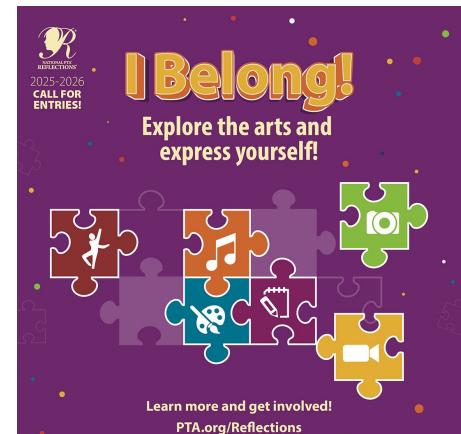
LITERATURE

A
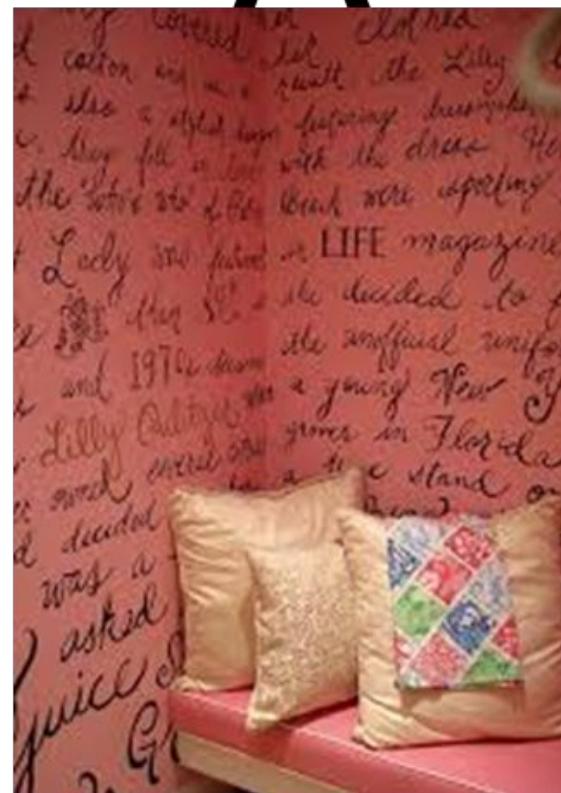
B

My family moved to a new house last year. I was very sad to leave my old house. On the day we moved, I ran right up to my new bedroom. Then, I looked out the back window. The backyard was beautiful! A giant oak tree and a pond were in my yard! I was so surprised, and definitely not sad any more!

Which one can be submitted?

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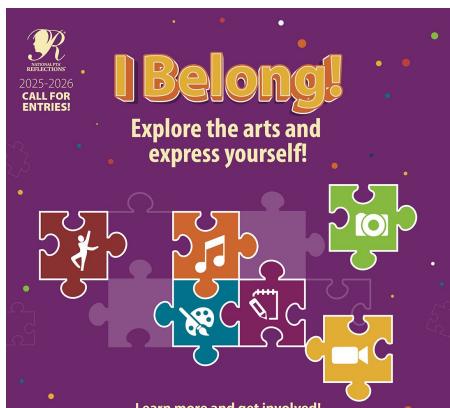
PTA REFLECTIONS

VISUAL ARTS

A

B

Which one can be submitted?

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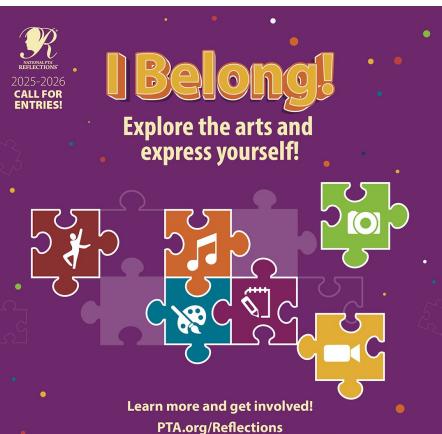
VISUAL ARTS OR PHOTOGRAPHY?

What art category is this?
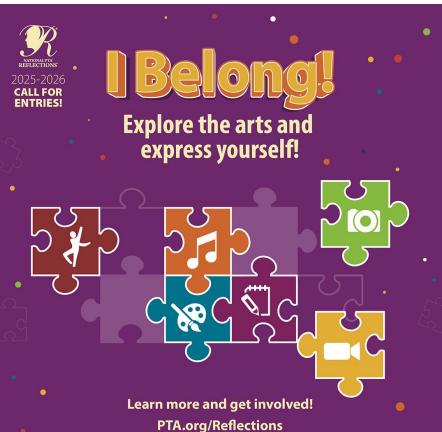
DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY AND FILM PRODUCTION

A
MP4

B
MOV

C
AVI

Which one can be submitted?
A only, B only, C only or Any

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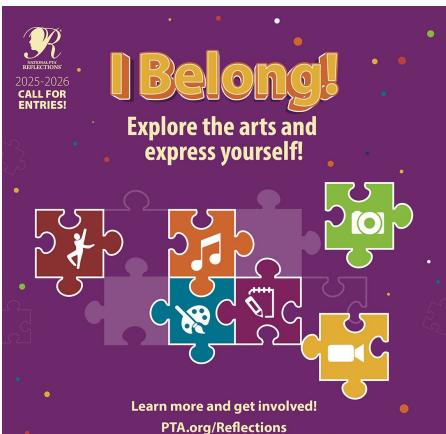
KNOW THE GUIDELINES

- STUDENT ENTRY FORMS must be FILLED OUT COMPLETELY, HAVE A TITLE and REQUIRE AN ARTIST STATEMENT!
- Students may submit entries in more than one art category and more than one entry in a single art category - but this is up to the school
- Artwork **MUST BE ORIGINAL** and created for the purpose of this program and this year's theme
- Only **ONE STUDENT** may create the work and be recognized as the award recipient, but other students may appear in the artwork itself
- GENERAL PARTICIPATION, SPECIFIC ARTS CATEGORY, AND ACCESSIBLE ARTS DIVISION GUIDELINES MUST BE FOLLOWED!
- Students should use **ARTIST STATEMENT** to express how their submission relates to the theme.

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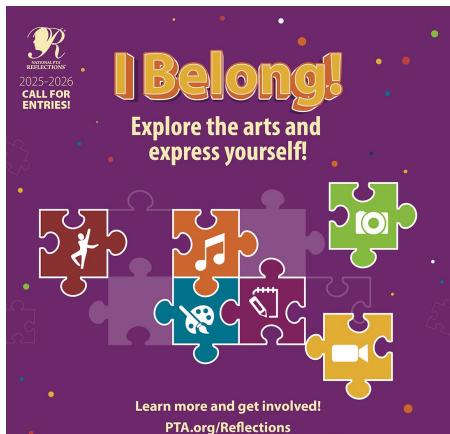
REVIEWING aka Judging

ORGANIZE ARTWORK FOR REVIEWING

1. CHECK-IN ENTRIES
2. REVIEW ARTWORK & ENTRY FORMS FOR QUALIFICATION
3. SORT BY CATEGORY & AGE DIVISION
4. PREPARE SCORECARDS
5. ASSIGN ENTRIES TO REVIEWERS

AWARD LEVELS
Award of Excellence, Award of Merit, Honorable Mention & Participation

REVIEWING RUBRIC

Interpretation of Theme	How closely the artwork communicates the theme, based on the artwork itself and the artist statement	40 pts
Artistic Merit/ Creativity	How creative and original the artwork is in its conception of the theme and its presentation	30 pts
Mastery of Medium	The level of skill demonstrated in the basic principles/techniques of the artistic discipline	30 pts

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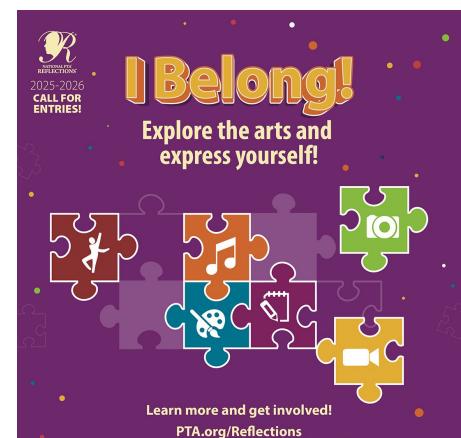
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REVIEWING ENTRIES

- Chairs should not be a reviewer!
- **BLIND JUDGING** is required!
- Reviewers should focus on
  - A well-developed concept rather than technique
  - How the student uses artistic vision to portray theme
- Judges must see the artist's statement to make their decision

PTA REFLECTIONS

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COMMON REASONS FOR INELIGIBILITY

- Local PTA is not in good standing with the State PTA

- Submission prepared by more than one student

- Submission prepared by other than the student

- Submission entered in wrong category

- Submission entered in wrong division

CELEBRATE AND RECOGNIZE ALL PARTICIPANTS

- DOUBLE CHECK SPELLING OF NAMES.

- PLAN A REFLECTIONS CELEBRATION EVENT.

- SHARE EVENT WITH MEDIA AND ALL FAMILIES AT YOUR SCHOOL, NOT JUST PARTICIPANTS.

- PRESENT CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION AND OTHER AWARDS. AVAILABLE AT THE PTA STORE.

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AWARDS

- **AWARD OF EXCELLENCE (1ST PLACE)**
  - THE VERY BEST ENTRIES, FULFILLS ALL 3 CRITERIA
  - ADVANCES TO NEXT JUDGING LEVEL.
- **AWARD OF MERIT (2ND PLACE)**
- **HONORABLE MENTION (3RD PLACE)**
- **PARTICIPATION AWARD**

BE SURE TO RECOGNIZE ALL STUDENTS FOR THEIR EFFORT AND CREATION!

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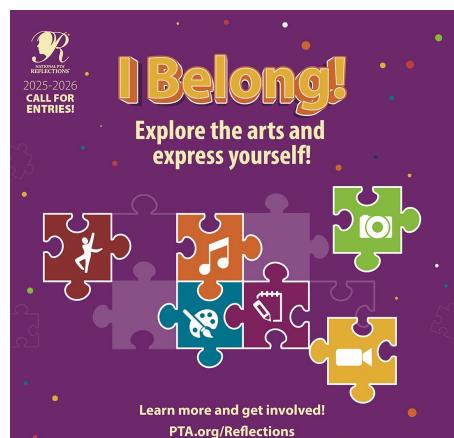
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HOW MANY AWARDS MAY BE GIVEN OUT?

THE NUMBER OF AWARDS YOU DECIDE TO GIVE OUT IS UP TO EACH SPECIFIC PTA.

TYPICALLY, ONLY THE TOP SCORED PIECE FROM EACH ARTS CATEGORY AND AGE DIVISION ADVANCES TO THE NEXT LEVEL - YOUR COUNCIL/DISTRICT – CHECK WITH THEM TO VERIFY.

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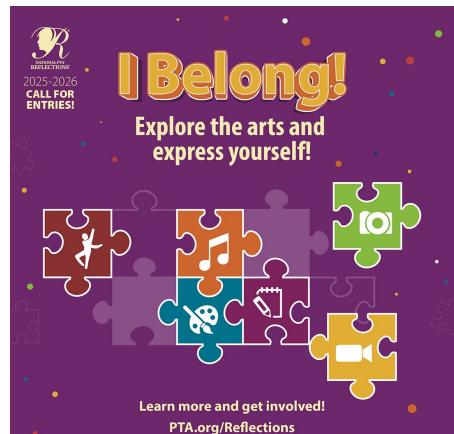
PREPARING ENTRIES FOR THE NEXT LEVEL - SCHOOLS

- Check all paperwork carefully!

- Check that entry forms are complete and legible.

- Check that entries have a title and artist's statement. These are requirements!

- Do you have copies of everything advancing to the next level?

- Were the entries carefully handled?

- An artist portfolio is strongly recommended for transport!

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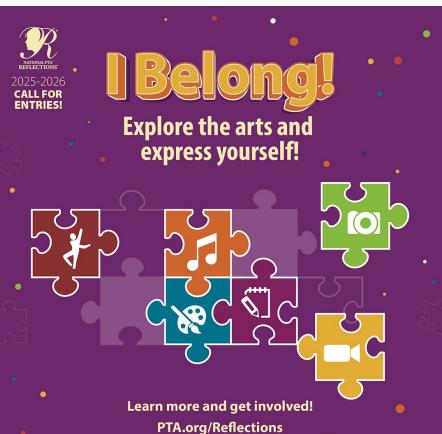
WRAP UP AND EVALUATE

- SUBMIT LOCAL PTA UNIT PARTICIPATION FORM WITH ADVANCING ART TO COUNCIL/DISTRICT

- SEND THANK YOU NOTES TO SCHOOL STAFF, COMMUNITY PARTNERS, PTA VOLUNTEERS AND JUDGES.

- FINISH PROGRAM EVALUATION.

- RETURN NON-ADVANCING WORK TO ARTISTS.

- CREATE NOTES/INFORMATION FOR NEXT COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

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THEME SEARCH
Opens on September 1st and closes on November 1st, 2025

PTA REFLECTIONS

2025-2026 Reflections Links:

Reflections information on the
California State PTA website
https://capta.org/programs-events/reflections/:

Reflections Resources
on the Leader's website
https://leaders.capta.org/programs/reflections/reflections-resources/:
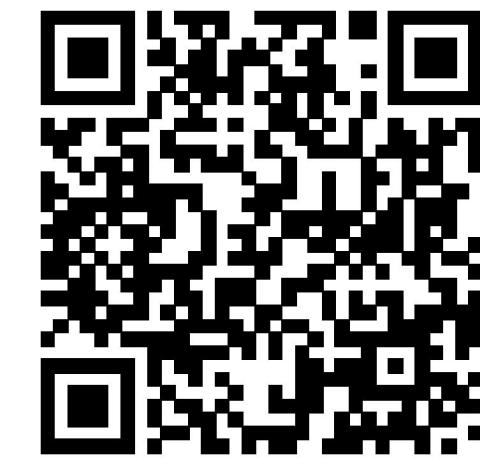
Guidelines by Category,
Participation Forms,
Post Reflections Materials,
National PTA & Local Leader's Guide
https://capta.org/resource/participant-forms/:

Virtual Form
ONLY FOR SCHOOL CHAIRS
https://docs.google.com/forms/u/4/d/1nEfT35dPM6NOGTrIiJ79UTjzIlzN95niop1b-y1nfEI/copy

Reflections Powerpoint slides:

Student Packet with
All Guidelines:

Thirty-Third District PTA Fall Officers Training

WHO YA GONNA CONTACT?

First – your local school reflections chair or school PTA President

Next - If you are in a Council, then contact your Council Reflections chair or your Council President

If that doesn't work, then contact your

Thirty-Third District PTA Reflections Chair –

Kimberly Quihuis at: Reflections@33rdpta.org

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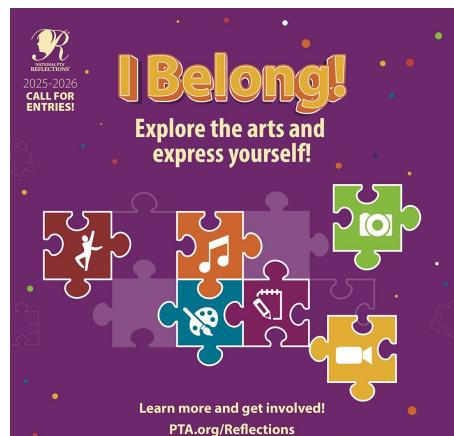
QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU FOR COMING TO THIS WORKSHOP AND GETTING EXCITED ABOUT REFLECTIONS 2025-2026! WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL BE INSPIRED TO START A PROGRAM AT YOUR SCHOOL OR CONTINUE TO BUILD YOUR PROGRAM.

PTA REFLECTIONS

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