

2027 Creative Writing Applicant Guide

How to Apply:

To apply to the creative writing program, applicants will submit a **sample of previously written work and a new work created for this audition**. Writing submissions may be any combination of poetry, fiction, personal essay, and/or an excerpt from a longer work. The sample of previously written material should not exceed 750 words and the new work should not exceed 500 words. The new work must respond to the prompt described in the New Work Guidelines below, as well as include the two required elements: a locked door and an unexpected sound.

All submitted writing must be the applicant's own original work. Applicants may not use artificial intelligence (AI) or other software tools to generate, rewrite, or enhance their submissions. This includes AI-generated text, AI-assisted revisions, and tools that suggest new language, restructure sentences, or otherwise improve the creative content. Basic spelling and grammar checks are permitted, but applicants must make their own creative and editorial decisions. Because students will not have access to these tools during the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute at Quartz Mountain, it is important the audition process accurately reflects each applicant's independent writing abilities, creativity, and individual voice.

Writing Submission Requirements:

- Ensure there is no identifying information included in your writing submission. (Please leave your name off the document.)
- You may upload each component separately, but submissions must be typed, Times New Roman 12-point font, and saved as either .pdf or .doc. (.pdf is preferred; .doc is acceptable.) All prose submissions must be double-spaced. Label each file as their component name (e.g., New Work).
- Both previously written work and new work must have been written AFTER March 1 of prior year, and former OSAI students may not submit work written during OSAI. The new work must be written specifically in response to this year's audition prompt. Previously written material may not be revised or adapted to fulfill the new work requirement.
- All writing must be created and revised independently, without assistance from artificial intelligence (AI) or other software-based writing enhancement tools. Basic spellcheck and grammar checks are acceptable, but AI-generated content, suggested rewrites, and automated creative revisions are prohibited. This

requirement applies to both previously written work and the new work created specifically for the audition.

- Applicants are welcome to submit creative writing originally written in a language other than English, provided they also include an English translation:
 - Because evaluators assess all submissions using the same criteria, an English translation is required. Applicants may translate their own work or receive assistance from another person, provided the translation faithfully represents the original writing without adding, rewriting, or enhancing its creative content. Artificial intelligence (AI) and automated translation tools are not permitted. If someone else assisted with the translation, applicants should acknowledge that assistance in a brief contextual note, without including names or other identifying information.
 - Applicants may also include a brief note explaining the context of their work, such as identifying the original language or sharing background information that may help evaluators better understand the piece.
 - The word limits apply to the English translation; the original-language text and any brief contextual note do not count toward these limits.
 - *Please note: The OSAI creative writing program is taught primarily in English, and students should be prepared to participate in discussions, writing exercises, and workshops in English.*

New Work Prompt & Guidelines:

Write a poem, story, or personal essay that explores something intensely wanted—by you, by someone you know, or by a fictional character. This desire might be something you hope to achieve, something you are afraid to lose, something you wish you could change, or something you don't yet fully understand.

Explore why this desire matters, what stands in the way, and what pursuing it reveals about the person who wants it. Your piece does not need to offer a resolution or a clear answer.

Your writing must also incorporate both of the following elements:

- A locked door
- An unexpected sound

These elements do not need to be central to your writing, but they should be thoughtfully integrated into the piece rather than included as an afterthought.

Your new work submission should be one cohesive piece of writing, no longer than 500 words.



Writing Submission Tips:

Focus on quality over quantity. A thoughtfully crafted poem, short story, or personal essay is more compelling than a longer piece that hasn't been carefully developed. Make every word count, and pay attention to your language, imagery, structure, and individual voice.

Be creative and take risks! The evaluators are interested in your unique perspective and how you approach ideas, make artistic choices, and express yourself through writing.

Read the evaluation criteria below to better understand what the creative writing evaluators will be looking for in your submission.

Evaluation Criteria:

Inventiveness and Personal Voice – 40%

Is there originality and depth of concept? How well do the language, rhythm, and sound work to make advances in inventiveness and personal voice? Are there apparent advances beyond cliché, conventional formulae of situation, character and idea? Does the writing reflect an engagement with or awareness of literature, culture, or world affairs?

Technical – 40%

Is there well-crafted expression in language (denotative and connotative)? Does the applicant show an ability to use concrete language? Does the applicant avoid overreliance on vague or abstract language? Are departures from conventional sentence structure and spelling functional or simply signs of immaturity?

Potential – 20%

Could the applicant achieve excellence with appropriate training at OSAI? Does the applicant seem to show an artistic ability that may or may not yet be developed?

Read general information about our evaluation process here:

<https://oaiquartz.org/application-selection-process>