Thank a Teacher Art Contest
Entry Guide FY27

About the Contest

The Thank a Teacher Art Contest - sponsored by the Virginia Lottery and in partnership with The Supply Room - is the creative element of the Thank a Teacher program. Since the contest launched in 2018, we have received nearly 12,000 entries from student artists across the Commonwealth. Each year, three winners receive a gift card, money for their school's art department, and each of their designs is featured on thank-you notes distributed by students, parents and the general public during National Teacher Appreciation Week in May. We're excited to continue to see students' creativity soar this year!

Eligibility

- Artwork must be completed by an elementary, middle or high school student enrolled in one of Virginia's K-12 public schools.
- Artist and guardian must be willing to have the artwork featured in print, and potentially by local or statewide news media.

Design and Selection Criteria

- Design size: 8.5x11 in. paper or digital.
- Acceptable: Drawing and painting mediums, using materials such as colored pencils, crayons, ink, pencil, oil pastel, water color and paint. Graphic design and construction paper artwork will be accepted as well.
- Not acceptable: Sculpture, 3-D models, cut and pasted artwork, recreations of existing artwork, folded artwork, plagiarized or trademarked images, or logos and TIF files.
- Selection criteria includes the following: originality, artistic spirit and overall impression/impact.

Submission Guidelines

- There is no limit to the number of entries each student may submit.
- Complete online submission form at www.thankateacherva.com.
- Photo/image attachment tips:
    - Scan or take a photo of the design using the high-resolution (HDR) setting of a smart phone or camera. Position the camera horizontally, so that it is the same direction as the artwork.
    - Ensure there is adequate lighting.
    - Upload photo/image of the design (large file size or actual size).
- Attachment file type requirements: JPEG, PDF or PNG
- MUST keep the original artwork.

Prize Structure

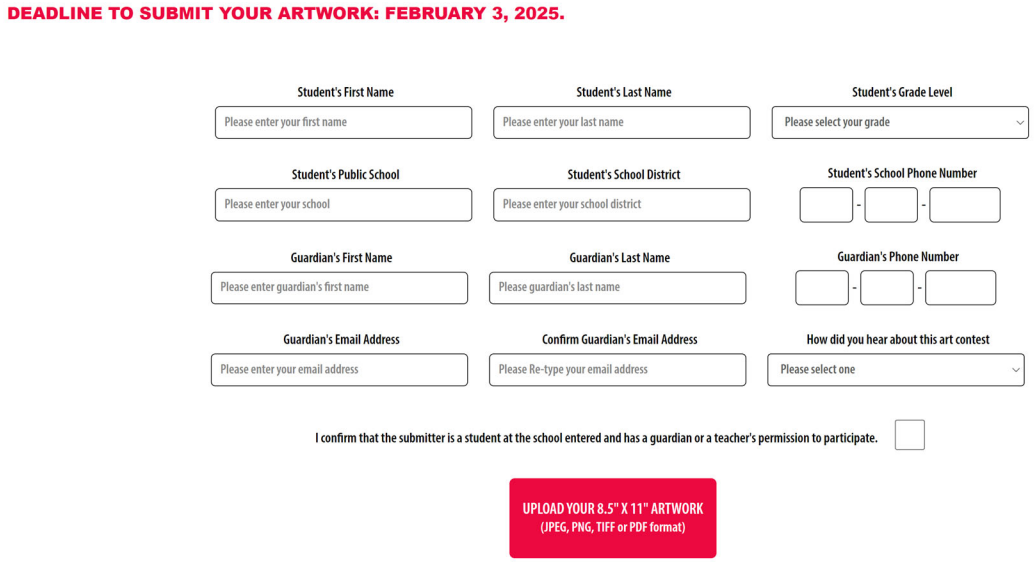
- School prize
    - Each public school (one elementary school, one middle school and one high school) where the contest winners are enrolled will receive $2,000 for their art department (Ex: This could be spent on any related supplies for the arts including traditional art, photography, pottery, 3-D design, etc.).
- Student prize

- Each student/winner will receive a monetary prize of $200 in the form of a Visa® gift card from the Virginia Lottery to use for art supplies.
    - Note: Prize money will only be awarded to the winning students with permission from a parent or guardian.
- In addition to the student and school prizes outlined above, all prizes will also include:
    - Each winning design featured on thousands of physical and virtual thank-you notes, distributed across the Commonwealth during the 2027 Thank a Teacher campaign (April-May).
    - Involvement in "winner reveal" news conference in 2027.

Contest Timeline

- Online submission period: October 12, 2026 – November 23, 2026
- Judging period: December 2026
- Winner announcements: TBD

Sample Online Submission Form



Contact Us

If you are having trouble submitting or have questions regarding your entry, please email Virginia Lottery Partners in Education JSeverance@valottery.com.