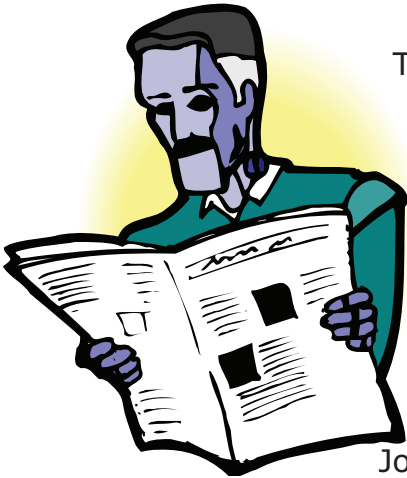


What is the Pulitzer Prize?



The Pulitzer Prize is an American prize for special achievements in newspaper journalism, literature, and musical composition. Established by Joseph Pulitzer, a Hungarian-American publisher, the award is administered by Columbia University in New York City.

Joseph Pulitzer was a journalist and newspaper publisher. When he died in the year 1911, he left money to Columbia University (estimated at \$500,000). Part of this money was used to found the journalism school at the university. The rest was used as awards for the prize recipients. The prizes are now awarded each April. Some notable winners include Harper Lee, Ernest Hemingway, Robert Frost, Toni Morrison and John F. Kennedy.

The Pulitzer prizes are awarded annually, and there are usually twenty-one winners. Every year, more than 2,400 entries are submitted. Elite panels of 102 judges - who serve on 20 separate juries - are asked to make three nominations for each category. They decide the winners after careful consideration. The twenty-one category definitions include categories like National Reporting, Local Reporting, Criticism, Editorial Cartooning, Feature Photography, Public Service, and Investigative Reporting. Fiction, Poetry, and Biography are also some examples of categories.

The number of prizes awarded each year varies, because if the judges do not feel that there is a winner that suits their high standards, they simply do not award the prize in that category.

A gold medal is very prestigious and is given to the winner in Public Service. Cash awards of \$10,000, as well as fellowships valuing \$7500 are also awarded. For most winners, the prestige of becoming a Pulitzer Prize winner is the greatest reward of all.

The Pulitzer Prize is given at a small but prestigious ceremony on Columbia University campus. The board is turned down offers to turn it into a celebrity-driven gala.

Pulitzer is quoted as saying "Put it before them briefly so they will read it, clearly so they will appreciate it, picturesquely so they will remember it and, above all, accurately so they will be guided by its light."

Name: _____ Date: _____

Multiple Choice Questions

Circle the correct answer.

1. Joseph Pulitzer was of what descent?
 - a. Irish
 - b. French
 - c. Canadian
 - d. Hungarian

2. Every year, more than _____ entries are submitted to the Pulitzer Prize:
 - a. 2400
 - b. 2800
 - c. 3200
 - d. 3600

3. How many judges help decide on the Pulitzer Prize winners?
 - a. 50
 - b. 102
 - c. 200
 - d. 21

4. The Pulitzer Prize is associated with:
 - a. Columbia University
 - b. Harvard University
 - c. University of George Washington
 - d. McGill University

5. The Pulitzer Prize is awarded for outstanding achievements in:
 - a. Movies & Television
 - b. Newspaper journalism, literature, and music
 - c. Acting
 - d. Painting & Artistic Endeavors

6. Some Pulitzer Prize winners win cash gifts of:
 - a. \$10,000
 - b. \$100,000
 - c. \$15,000
 - d. \$20,000

7. Which one of the following people did *not* win a Pulitzer Prize?
 - a. Toni Morrison
 - b. Madonna
 - c. John F. Kennedy
 - d. Harper Lee

Name: _____ Date: _____

Short Answer Questions

1. List three categories that are mentioned in the reading for which someone could win a Pulitzer Prize.
2. Why might there be less Pulitzer Prizes awarded one year than another?
3. Read the quotation from Joseph Pulitzer. What do you think he was trying to say?
4. Why do you think the Pulitzer Prize has not turned into a media frenzy – a big awards show like the Oscars or the Grammys?
5. What might the winner of the Public Service category win?
6. When Joseph Pulitzer left money to Columbia University, what were two things the money was used for?
7. In what city is Columbia University?
8. Pretend you are a journalist and write a short article about a recent event in your community – an article that you hope will win the Pulitzer Prize for Local Reporting!

ANSWER KEY:

Multiple Choice:

1. D
2. A
3. B
4. A
5. B
6. A
7. B

Short Answer:

1. Any three of the following: National Reporting, Local Reporting, Criticism, Editorial Cartooning, Feature Photography, Public Service, Investigative Reporting, Fiction, Poetry, and Biography.
2. The number of prizes awarded often varies, because the judges only give out prizes if the piece truly meets their high standards. If no entries meet their standards, they do not give a prize.
3. Individual Response.
4. Individual Response. Example: They want to awards ceremony to remain small so that it does not turn into a media driven awards banquet, and thus maintains its educational merit.
5. A gold medal.
6. The money was used to establish a School of Journalism and fund the Pulitzer Prizes.
7. New York City.
8. Individual Response.