

Washington FPS

FROM THE AD'S DESK
JANUARY 2021



These video links both relate to the QP topic: Human Environmental Impact.

Hello,

Happy New Year!

I am looking forward to hearing about the progression of the students' understanding of the future problem solving process as they research the next two topics: Human Environmental Impact and Personalized Medicine.

This month is a busy month with a number of deadlines approaching. CmPS progress reports are due on January 11, Scenario Writing is due on January 18, and the GIPS qualifying problem is due on January 29.

Coaches, it is extremely important that you follow the [Proctoring Instructions](#) for the QP. They can be found under Resources for Coaches on the wafps.org website, and more information about these instructions were in the December newsletter. Adhering to these guidelines will allow for all students to compete in a fair and equitable way.

The video links above will offer your students some points to think on as they research the topic for the qualifying problem—Human Environmental Impact. They both do a good job of explaining the interrelatedness of humans and the environment, and although the video on the right is less visually stimulating, the presenter is quite eloquent, very British, and suitably entertaining as he makes his points.

Thank you to those of you who donated this past year with either a direct cash donation or the donation of your time as an evaluator. The Board sincerely appreciates your donations and your support of our Washington State Future Problem Solving students.

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TIPS FOR WRITING EFFECTIVE SCENARIOS

Coaches, many of your students may have already written their scenarios; however, now's a great time for students to do more editing. Here are some tips that may help them.

1. **Grab your Reader:** To write an effective scenario, you first must capture your reader's attention immediately. If you don't force the reader to want to read your story in the first few sentences, you have not done your job. If you have spent 500 words leading up to the main event, rethink your story, start again and begin your scenario right where the first important encounter occurs.
2. **Create Relevant Characters:** Make your scenarios as real as possible. A scenario is essentially a story with characters and situations. Allow your reader to feel an emotional connection to the protagonist as the story develops.
3. **Create a logical connection to the topic:** A well-written scenario should allow the reader to feel that the story fits into one of the annual topics. A scenario usually poses problem situations for the protagonist to respond to. Thus, an effective scenario leads the reader to believe that the protagonist has the necessary skills to overcome the situation you have created.
4. **Think futuristically:** A scenario will only work if it doesn't feel like it is happening today. Think about how your character is reacting to the situation and say to yourself, "*Could this happen now?*" or "*What could I change so this is less likely to sound like it could happen today?*"
5. **Use Informal and Conversational Language:** It is generally a good idea to use conversational and informal language while writing scenarios. Readers can easily relate to the conversational style and find it easier to engage with the story.
6. **Use Interesting Interactivities:** Another useful tip to make the scenarios interesting and effective is to use as many interactivities as possible. Don't tell what happened to the protagonist, describe how he/she feels as it happens. Don't say the walls were ugly, describe how they feel or smell as the characters interact with them.
7. **Make the ending spectacular:** leave the reader feeling exhausted or exhilarated after the character has survived your scenario. Is your character emotionally drained? Do you feel that the protagonist really became involved in the action?
8. **Use vivid vocabulary:** As you edit your story, look at each word or sentence and decide if every word is essential. Take out redundant phrases. Add rich emotional words and phrases. Take out any phrases that do not enhance the story.
9. **Edit your story.** Then read it and edit it again. Leave it for 24 hours and then edit it again.

SCENARIO WRITING GUIDELINES REMINDER

Scenarios are due on January 18 to the coach's Dropbox. Here's a handy checklist for your students.

- Must be set at least 20 years in the future
- Must have a recognizable relationship to one of the 2020-21 FPSPI Topics or Terraforming (2020 IC Topic)
- Must not exceed 1500 words
- Must be typed, 12 pt font size and readable common font (Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman)
- No author's name, school, or Affiliate Program may appear in the scenario document
- Must have the title at the top of the first page (header).
- Four items must be submitted via coach's Dropbox: 1. Story in Word format; 2. Story in PDF format; 3. Publication Release and Statement of Authenticity; 4. A completed copy of the Scenario Writing Entry Cover Sheet (all forms can be found under Coaches Resources on wafps.org).

GIPS—UNDERLYING PROBLEM

The Underlying Problem (UP) is the most important step of the process. Why? Because your solutions, criteria and action plan are all based on it, so if your UP is off track, the rest of your booklet will likely be as well. Let's take a close look at the important elements of an underlying problem—completeness, focus, and adequacy.

Completeness means that you have all of the required components: **condition phrase, stem and key verb phrase, purpose** and **3 parameters**. Let's closely look at each of these.

Component	Definition
Condition Phrase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exactly as it says—a <i>phrase</i>, NOT an entire challenge that has an assumed consequence from Step 1. • Should use actual information (FACTS) quoted directly or paraphrased from the Future Scene or research that is relevant to the Future Scene • Tells why you chose your KVP
Stem & Key Verb Phrase (KVP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stem must be either “How might we (HMW)” or “In what ways might we (IWWMW)” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ No need to add “the Future Problem Solvers of America” • KVP is your <i>main action goal</i> that indicates what your solutions must accomplish • KVP should be a MAJOR issue in the Future Scene • KVP should stem from your challenges • KVP must be singular (should have <i>only one verb, one modifier</i>)
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tells <i>why</i> you want to accomplish your KVP • Is something positive that would result from accomplishing your KVP • Must be singular (should have <i>only one verb, one modifier</i>)
Parameters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 3: Topic, Time and Place • Can be inserted anywhere in the UP • Topic—state the topic. For our next problem you will need to include the words “human environmental impact” somewhere in your UP • Time—this information comes from the Future Scene, either the actual date or an appropriate time-relevant phrase • Place—determined by the Future Scene

Focus is a tricky concept! It refers to the *scope* of the entire Underlying Problem. You want to *narrow without trivializing*. For example:

- Too broad: HMW improve the global environment.
- Too narrow: An issue that is really minor/trivial when given the scope of the Future Scene

To evaluate focus, we consider the following:

- Have you appropriately *addressed the charge* given in the Future Scene?
- Do you have a *clear goal*?
- Did you *narrow the issue without choosing a trivial goal*?
- Does your UP *stem from your challenges* generated in Step 1?
- If *absolute wording* is used, is it appropriate to the situation?

Adequacy refers to the *significance* of the UP. In other words, given the scope of the entire Future Scene, how important of an issue did you choose? A UP that scores high in adequacy accomplishes the following:

- Addresses an appropriate, significant/important issue/sub-problem of the Future Scene or Topic
- Does not make unreasonable assumptions
- If solved, it will have a positive impact on the Future Scene

Some final notes

- Be sure that your condition phrase, key verb phrase, and purpose are:
 - Clearly related to each other, yet . . .
 - Clearly distinct from each other. In other words, they do not say basically the same thing and become “circular” in nature (e.g., Because experiencing an earthquake can be traumatic, HMW reduce the trauma of victims, so that they will not feel as devastated in the aftermath?)
- Stick with the topic.
 - Your solution ideas should have something to do with the topic you studied, so you can use your research.
 - KVPs such as “HMW educate the public” or “HMW raise funds” could be used with ANY topic, and thus are not necessarily specific to the current topic that you are dealing with.
- Check your verb phrase (KVP) carefully to be sure it is something that might actually be accomplished. Sometimes a verb can narrow the UP more than is necessary. For example, it may be more realistic to *improve* something than it is to ensure it.

Try this approach when writing your Underlying Problem!

1. Start with your KVP – what is the main action goal you want to achieve?
2. Next, write your purpose – why do you want to accomplish your KVP?
3. Third, write your condition phrase – what facts/events in the Future Scene caused you to choose this issue?
4. Be sure you have added the three future scene parameters – they can go anywhere in the UP.

Two examples of a simple formula for writing a successful UP:

Because of (condition phrase from the future scene) **how might we** (do something positive—KVP) **so that** (explain why you want to accomplish the action—purpose or rationale) **in** (place) **in the year** (time) **and beyond.**

Because of (condition phrase from the future scene) **how might we** (do something positive—KVP) **so that** (explain how your action is accomplished—purpose or rationale) **in** (place) **in the year** (time) **and beyond.**

Remember to include the words ***Human Environmental Impact*** (for this next topic) somewhere in your UP, usually in the purpose.

You can always substitute **in what ways might we ...** for **how might we ...**

WRITING SOLUTIONS

Helping students create good solutions? So, what makes a good one? First, suggest to your students that they write the KVP and Purpose at the top of every solution page. They could create their own posters of Do's and Don'ts.

A good solution is **relevant** (the basic idea addresses the KVP and does not negate the purpose). It is explained in detail (**elaborated**), telling *what* is to be done *by whom* and *how or why* it helps to solve the UP. Here are some tips for writing good solutions.

	DO 😊	DON'T 😞
RELEVANCE Solution helps solve the UP and addresses the purpose	Solve your U.P.	Solve other challenge ideas from Step One
	Use “will” in writing solutions—you are presenting ideas you believe WILL solve the U.P.	Use “may”—it can make your solution idea appear “iffy”/less sound.
ELABORATION Solution tells WHO will do WHAT, and WHY or HOW it works to help solve your Underlying Problem	Use REAL agencies who have the PIE (p ower, i nterest, and e xpertise) to implement your solutions (WHOs)	Use agencies you make up (e.g., DFF—Drones for a Fantastic Future). Although clever, they do not show research and may not really be an agency that actually has the PIE.
	Tell WHAT the agency or person will do. Be specific about the action that will be taken.	Go on and on with small details that aren't important to the understanding of the basic solution. Save those for the Action Plan if this turns out to be your best solution.
	EXPLAIN how the solution works or why your idea helps solve your U.P.	Just say it will solve your U.P. You need to explain HOW/WHY it will.
CLARITY Solution is written in a clear and concise manner	Express your ideas clearly. Be sure that what is in your head gets down on the paper, so that a stranger can tell exactly what you mean.	Don't repeat your KVP, purpose, or the date over and over in your solutions.

ADDITIONAL TIPS:

- Solution ideas are written in statement form as definite proposals.
- A Relevant solution idea addresses, or has a relationship to, the Key Verb Phrase and it is clear or easily inferred that it supports the Purpose. It also must not contradict the Future Scene parameters.
- The Condition Phrase, Key Verb Phrase, and/or Purpose is not required to be repeated verbatim for a solution idea to be relevant. A solution idea can be relevant even if the Purpose is not specifically mentioned as long as the Purpose is clearly impacted by the solution idea.
- A Relevant solution idea does not have to work perfectly, be tried and true, or be new. The solution idea does not have to totally solve the Underlying Problem. How well the solution idea solves the Underlying Problem is evaluated in Step 6.
- To receive points for elaboration, at least three of the critical questions, *who*, *what*, *how*, *why*, *when*, and *where*, must be explained. When addressing the “*who*,” it must be an appropriate *who*. While it is helpful to include when and where, these will only be counted toward elaboration if substantive in nature and not merely the Future Scene parameters.
- For non-competitive problems, if the Underlying Problem has no Purpose, the evaluator will impose a Purpose that seems logical to the Future Scene and the Key Verb Phrase without referring to the solution ideas or plan of action. **For the State Bowl competition (as well as the Qualifying Problem), evaluators will not impose a Purpose if the Underlying Problem does not include one.** Thus, it will be very difficult for a team that writes a UP without a purpose to advance to the PCA round of evaluation.

CHARITABLE DONATIONS 2020

Thank you to all who have already either donated time or given a direct cash donation! Every donation (big or small) helps to be able to offer FPS to Washington students.

Here's what Sheila Jalali (parent) said in a recent email (reprinted with permission):

"My daughter is in the highly capable program at Riverview Elementary School in Snohomish, WA. We think the world of her teacher Kimberlee Spaetig-Peterson, and she said all she wanted for Christmas was a donation to FPS so this is in her honor.

"Additionally, I would add that overhearing my daughter thinking through future problems is exciting to me because it feels like a great way to grow her brain, challenging her to problem solve and think about things that are larger than her and beyond her present scope of life. What an incredible gift to the education of a child!"

Recent cash donations:

\$1,000 and above: Kristin Watts

\$500-\$999: Steven & Dawn Watts

\$100-\$499: Sheila Jalali,

Under \$100: Melissa Marzolf, Angela Sherbert, Jennifer Kaloger, Jason Tracewell, Rebecca McGinnis, Cheryl Mazurek

Important Dates

Jan. 11: CmPS Progress Report Due

Jan. 18: Scenario Writing Due Date

Jan. 29: QP Due Date, Topic: Human Environmental Impact

Feb. 5: Scenario Performance Due Date

Feb. 19: CmPS Projects Due

March 10: State Bowl Registration Due

March 24-26: State Bowl, Topic: Personalized Medicine

June 9-13: 2021 International Conference, Topic tba

ARE YOU A MICROSOFT EMPLOYEE?

If you are a Microsoft employee and volunteer to help with your child's FPS experience, please consider donating the value of your time through Microsoft's matching funds program. Through Microsoft's GIVE portal, search WAFPS to find the Washington Future Problem Solving program.

WAFPS is a 501(c)(3) organization. EIN 91-1728780. Questions? Please contact Affiliate Director John Buissink at jbuissinkwafps@gmail.com.



FINAL WORDS FROM THE AD'S DESK

Good luck to all of you as you prepare for the Qualifying Problem.

By the way, if you liked the last Future Scene on Wearable Technology, note that our very own Evaluation Director Ann Foreyt was a member of the team that wrote the Future Scene. Awesome job, Ann!

I hope you have a very happy New Year and that 2021 will not be the intense problem solving year that 2020 was!

Please call/text (509) 386-6297 or email me (jbuissinkwafps@gmail.com) any time you have questions.

Next Up in February: **State Bowl Information & more.**

"If you can dream it, you can do it." —Walt Disney