

## WRITING CONTEST 2020 HELPFUL HINTS

Dear Writer,

Thank you for your interest in our writing contest. Your entry will be eligible for one of our prizes and you will receive a Certificate of Merit to show our appreciation for your effort and talent. Have fun!

Here are a few suggestions that may help you in the writing of your entry:

1. Print out the eight pages of the Statutes of Kilkenny found at [irish-society.org](http://irish-society.org) and at The Statutes of Kilkenny (1367). While you are composing your rewritten rules, you will find it helpful to browse through the Statutes for phrases you can borrow, such as, *due and expeditious execution be made against those who shall be attainted thereof (VII)*.
2. Please notice that the Statutes uses a run-on sentence style. For example, the preamble is nineteen lines long but with just one period, at the end. This style requires the writer to use many conjunctions and connectives, such as, *and, but, whereas, whereby, if, until, also, and moreover*. Many semicolons characterize the punctuation of this run-on style.
3. Very obvious in the style of the Statutes is the doubling and tripling of nouns and verbs. See **VII**: *by conspiracies, confederacies, champerties, maintainors of quarrel, false swearers, retainers, sharers of damages...* and see **IX**: *have excommunicated, interdicted or fulminated...*
4. If you are unfamiliar with words like *liege, barrators, kerns, attainted* and *chattels*, use them anyway! This project emphasizes humor. Double-talk can be very funny!
5. You may need someone to enforce your rules. Try using these officials: *seneschal of franchise, sheriff, mayor, lieutenant* and *our lord the King* and others.
6. The style of the Statutes makes much greater use of *shall* than we are accustomed to in our style today. Be generous in your use of *shall*.

Now for some examples. Here are some of the steps the writer of the following examples of rewritten rules/regulations employed to compose the samples:

**First**, the contemporary rules were chosen. The rewritten rules in the examples are (1) the requirement to bring pen and paper to school; (2) the prohibition against the wearing of patent leather shoes to school; and (3) the prohibition against holding a senior prom.

**Second**, a starting phrase was borrowed from the Statutes.

**Third**, phrases and words were taken from the Statutes to make the statement of the rule/regulation obscure and difficult to understand.

Here are the examples:

**(I) Also, it is ordained and established that every student in Excellent High School, heretofore appelled as kids, according to the franchises ordained and granted by our liege lord Principal, and enforced by his Lieutenant for the good government of the said academy, and assented to by the parliament of fowls, shall bear a quill pen and divers pieces of tinted vellum per diem; and if any do or practice to the contrary, and of this be attained, they shall be inscribed as unprepared in the roll of scholars.**

**(II) Also, whereas the divers modes of garb maintained by attendees, scholars, and enrollees of Excellent High School do affect the state of peacefulness and may bring distress to the land of scholarship, it is agreed and established that no person under the franchise of our lord Principal shall wear shoes of patent and shall forfeit the article aforesaid to the provost who shall vouch before the lord's counsel that the common good shall be attained by the forfeiture; and those that raise hue and cry against the statute shall be holden and punished as malefactors.**

**(III) Also, it is ordained and established, that no promenade, ball, hop, or cotillion shall be organized, instituted, merchandized, or inducted upon the peril that if any pedant of Excellent High School shall do so they shall be taken and detained in custody by the marshal until they shall have rendered sufficient surety to adopt the ancient customs of the said land.**

I had fun composing the rewritten rules. I hope you have fun too.

With appreciation,

John Walsh  
Contest Chair