# Frequently Asked Questions and Supporting Information
# GFWC Texas ESO

## 1. What is Epsilon Sigma Omicron (ESO)?

Epsilon Sigma Omicron (ESO) is a voluntary program and honorary educational society within GFWC that fosters reading and lifelong learning among *per capita* members. ESO encourages club women to read books from a diverse list of thirty-four distinct subject categories and write a brief opinion report on each book.

The first ESO level is completed when a club woman submits sixteen book reports (four books in four different categories) and officially becomes an ESO Member, making her eligible for a Certificate of ESO Membership and the honor of wearing the ESO Member pin. Continuing to submit book reports from other categories will result in achieving higher ESO levels including Star, Torch, Century, and Diamond.

## 2. What are the requirements for each ESO level?

| ESO Level | Requirements: | Recognition: |
|---|---|---|
| Pledge | Complete the Pledge form (found at https://www.gfwctexas.org/epsilon-sigma-omicron-eso/) | |
| Member | Submission of sixteen (16) book reports (4 reports in 4 separate categories) | ESO Member Certificate and ESO Member pin for completing a total of 16 reports |
| Star | Submission of twenty-four (24) more book reports (4 in 6 additional categories) | ESO Star Certificate for completing a total of 40 reports |
| Torch | Submission of twenty-four (24) more book reports (4 in 6 additional categories) | ESO Torch Certificate and ESO Torch guard for completing a total of 64 reports |
| Century | Submission of thirty-six (36) more book reports (no categories required) | ESO Century Certificate for completing a total of 100 reports |
| 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc. Century | Submission of one hundred (100) more book reports (across the categories) for each Century level | ESO 2nd Century, 3rd Century, 4th Century, ... 9th Century Certificates |
| Diamond | Completion of 1st Century through 9th Century levels | ESO Diamond Certificate for completing a total of 1000 reports |

## 3. What do I need to do to get started in ESO?

- First, **complete** a "Pledge Application" and email it to your district ESO chairman or directly to Wanda Godso at email: wanda@godso.com
- Second, **Write** four Book Reports in four categories (16 reports total) books of your own choosing.
- Third, you are ready to **submit** your reports to gain ESO Member status.

## 4. How and to whom do I submit my completed ESO Book Reports?

- Completed book reports may be emailed to your district ESO chairman who will then forward them to the state chairman. Alternately, email the reports directly to Wanda Godso; email: wanda@godso.com
- Each member must keep copies of each bundle or group of book reports that are submitted.
- When submitting ESO Book Reports, **bundle** each set of reports and list them on the ESO Book Report Submission form. For example, submit all sixteen reports (4 reports in 4 categories) together to achieve Member status. Then, submit twenty-four more reports (4 reports in 6

additional categories) together to achieve Star status. Then, submit twenty-four more reports (4 reports in 6 additional categories) together to achieve Torch status.

- When you have reached Torch status, you may submit a bundle of thirty-six additional reports from ACROSS all categories to achieve Century status.

## 5. Who keeps track of my book reports?

Members are encouraged to keep copies of all their submitted book reports.
The GFWC Texas ESO Chairman keeps and stores all book reports, verifies levels achieved, and logs all issued certificates. That archive is maintained and passed on to subsequent chairmen.

## 6. What book titles are acceptable for me to report in ESO?

Literally, any book that a member is reading now, has read in the past, or wants to read in the future is eligible to report. The challenge is to place each title into a specific category. Following is a list of title resources:
1. Any book ever printed

## 7. What are the ESO categories?

There are thirty-four (34!!!) ESO subject categories under which to submit book reports. EVERY BOOK EVER PUBLISHED WILL FIT INTO AT LEAST ONE OF THESE ESO SUBJECT CATEGORIES.

1. American History
2. The Arts
3. Biography and Memoir
4. Business and Finance
5. Conservation and Ecology
6. Drama
7. Education
8. Fiction, Classic
9. Fiction, General
10. Fiction, Historical
11. Fiction, Mystery, Thriller
12. Fiction, Romance
13. Fiction, Science Fiction/Fantasy
14. Health and Medicine
15. Home
16. Garden
17. International Authors
18. Parenting and Families
19. Poetry
20. Reading to Children -Picture Books and Story Books
21. Reading to Children - Chapter Books and Young Adults
22. Religion and Inspirational
23. Science
24. Social Science
25. Sports and Recreation
26. STEM/STEAM books for adults
27. STEM/STEAM books for children
28. Travel
29. Geography
30. Volunteerism
31. Women's Studies
32. World History
33. Texas Authors or Authors from Texas
34. Books about Texas or that are set in Texas

## 8. What if a book I have read fits into more than one category?

- You may report a title in your choice of category, although any title may be reported only once.
- You are responsible for the accuracy of your category choices.
- Some authors and their titles could be reported in more than one category. When grouping four reports together to complete a category, use your best judgement as to which category an individual title is reported. If you have read more than four books in one category, check if the extra titles could be reported in another category. Many books could fall under American History or World History or Biography and Memoir categories, for example.

## 9. Where are Pledge applications, Book Report forms, Submission forms, category checklists, and Reading Lists found?

**Under the Programs tab on the GFWC Texas Website, or at GFWC Texas Epsilon Sigma Omicron (ESO)**

Pledge applications, GFWC Texas ESO Book Report forms, GFWC Texas ESO Submission forms, category checklists, the GFWC Texas ESO Reading List, the GFWC Reading List, and FAQ's are available

on the link listed above.

## 10. Is there any ESO social media available?

- There are two Facebook pages that provide updates, news, and information:
- "GFWC Texas ESO" and “GFWC ESO Book Club”

## 11. From where are ESO certificates and ESO jewelry obtained?

ESO certificates, Member pins, and Torch guards are ordered from GFWC by the state ESO chairman upon receipt and verification of book reports for a particular level.

## 12. What are some ways to promote interest in ESO in my club?

- Meeting together outside of regular monthly meetings to offer support for writing book reports is a fun and informal way to promote participation.
- Designating an ESO club chairman and including a monthly report on the agenda can generate interest and document progress.
- Awarding an ESO Member pin or an ESO Torch guard at a meeting is a wonderful way to publicly acknowledge achievements.
- Once a member has finished a book she especially enjoyed, she may pass it along to someone else in the club.
- Create a catchy name to brand your club’s readers. How about ESO Reading Divas? ESO Novel Dames? ESO Book Lovers? ESO Page Turners?

## 13. Does ESO have opportunities to volunteer within my community?

- Absolutely! While the ESO reading program, at its core, seeks to promote a member’s personal growth and self-enrichment through systematic reading, it has also proven to be a segue in uniting volunteer women in like causes such as supporting local libraries, promoting literacy programs, providing book access to children, and modeling positive reading habits. Some ideas for club members that could become a club ESO project are:
- Share time and talents with local libraries. (That is not a new thing in Texas, as 85% of the state’s libraries were founded, in part, through the efforts of Texas Federation members.)
- Reading to Children is one of the ESO categories. That category could be satisfied by reading to grandchildren, hospitalized children, young neighbors, elementary school children, or at a library story time.
- Promote books to family members of all ages through modeling sustained reading habits.
- Reading entire books to the elderly, or the incarcerated is another way to work toward completing a category. This endeavor could be done as a club Home Life project.
- Collect used children’s books, read them to children in hospital/clinic waiting rooms, and then donate them to the hospital/clinic.

## 14. Can my club’s ESO activity be reported?

YES!!!!! It is important that your and your club’s ESO participation and progress be made known to your district ESO chairman during the reporting cycle in January. Keeping a log of all your local club’s ESO efforts and activity will contribute to a more anecdotal report when it is submitted to district. More detailed reports might include: number of Pledges, ESO levels earned among the membership, number of books read, number of book reports submitted, successful methods that increased participation, effective communication from club ESO chairmen, possible outreaches with community partners, positive feedback from members, number of volunteer hours (community activism by ESO members in literacy programs, library support, providing reading material to children with limited access to books, and personal reading time), ESO meetings or workshops attended, future plans, photos, etc. When district ESO chairmen submit their reports to state, they may only include information that was reported from the club level. The take-away here is that a more detailed club report will enhance the district ESO chairman’s report to state; a more detailed district report will enhance the ESO State report to International.

## 15. How are “volunteer hours” calculated for ESO?

Volunteer time spent by ESO members who work together to improve literacy programs, support greater use of libraries, and promote the benefits of reading are reportable as ESO Volunteer Hours. (Note that hours are reportable once, and may not be reported in another report.) Also, credit is given for hours spent reading! The rule of thumb that is widely used across GFWC is five (5) hours per book. So, a member who read 10 books could report 50 ESO volunteer hours to her district ESO chairman. Obviously, there is a range with this matter. Be judicious and fair when time is reported. **It is important that you and your club’s ESO participation and progress be made.**

## 16. Whom may I contact for questions or clarification about ESO?

You may contact Wanda Godso; GFWC Texas ESO Chairman, at email: wandagodso@me.com; 1802 Carriage Estates Rd; Sherman, TX 75092, or 832-312-9005, leave a voice message.