

## *Thomas Fiveash Riddick Society (TFRS)*



So you've decided to join the Thomas Fiveash Riddick Society (TFRS).

First thing first, who is this Brother that we have named this society after? MWB Thomas Fiveash Riddick, was the first Grand Master of the newly formed Grand Lodge of Missouri and the "father of public schools" owing to his securing a funding source for public schools in St. Louis and the surrounding areas.

Remember this, no two Brothers will have the same path on this journey. The Society is a personal journey that you are encouraged to share with others who travel down this road and have traveled this way before you. Do not be surprised if they have different thoughts or opinions and experiences than you do. Some may find the online exams harder than others, some may struggle with the writing, others may find it difficult to put into words their thoughts and feelings about this journey. When you find yourself faced with something difficult or challenging, remind yourself that it is part of the process of becoming a better man and a better Mason.

However, this program was not set up so that you would struggle with the design and format of the program. This document was designed to be a guide to help you through your journey to become a Master of the Craft. Much like you received instruction and were found to be proficient in the preceding degrees when you progressed through your initiation experience, each level of TFRS is to be completed before moving onto the next one. Remaining true to this design of the program will facilitate your growth through the program. When you have questions along the way, if they are not addressed in this document, please reach out to the Grand Lodge Education Committee or the Board of Regents for answers at: [education@momason.org](mailto:education@momason.org).

One final reminder: while there will be sections in this that many brothers have already "completed" this is not a retroactive experience, you will be required to complete each section as if you are a newly raised mason. Go into this experience with open eyes and willingness to learn.

On several occasions you will be required to submit documentation to the society for evaluation. Please remember the Board of Regents receive many submissions and uniformity in those submissions will simplify evaluation and help facilitate a timely reply. Therefore, you are asked to comply with the following guidelines for all submissions:

- Documents should be 1.5 spaced with one (1) inch margins and in standard 12pt font.
- Documents should be saved & submitted in **both**, pdf & Word or Pages format.
- Documents should be spell-checked for grammar and spelling before submission.
- Documents should be revised, and edited to meet the suggested length for each assignment.
- Document filenames should follow this pattern: *Last Name/First Name - Assignment Title*.

You are not expected to be a professional writer to become a Master of the Craft in the TFRS. However, the ability to express your ideas in clear and concise language, and properly convey your meaning for the understanding of another is an expectation of this society. Therefore you should make every effort to present your ideas in the best form possible. At the end of this document there are some tips that might help improve your writing. For your Masterpiece, you will be giving a presentation in Lodge. If this is your first presentation, there is no reason to worry or stress. Remember, the audience is made up of Brothers that want you to succeed. Additionally, you will be presenting on a part of your personal journey and no one is more qualified to speak to that journey than you.

When you begin writing your reflections and preparing your presentation, remember that you are writing each one for yourself. You are not writing them for the Board of Regents. You are not writing them for your Lodge. You are not writing them for the Grand Lodge. Do not treat this like a game and try to give the Board of Regents when you think they want. Regardless of the specific topic, ask yourself: Why is this important to me? What is my personal connection? How does this relate to my personal journey in Freemasonry? If you honestly write each reflection for yourself with these questions in mind, it will be a success in the long run.

### **The Board of Regents**

The TFRS exists as a program of the Committee on Masonic Education and is nominally overseen by the Board of Regents. These Brothers serve as proctors, facilitators, and reviewers for the program as well as guide its general effort.

R.W. Bro. Jacob W. Thompson, Chairman of the Board of Regents  
R.W. Bro. Joshua A. Thompson, Regent  
R.W. Bro. Mark A. McCarthy, Regent  
W. Bro. Randall K. Sanders, Regent  
W. Bro. Steven A. Mackley, Regent

### **What to expect from the components in the Thomas Fiveash Riddick Society**

#### ***Fellows of the Craft***

##### ***Level 1***

This level provides a baseline of information that sets forth that everyone taking part in this journey starts at the same place:

*Approaching the Portal of Masonry* reading only, *Entered Apprentice Degree*, *Fellowcraft Degree & Master Mason Degree* readings and multiple choice exams to be taken on the Grand Lodge of Missouri Online Portal. Be sure to read each section thoroughly before attempting the exams, if necessary the exams can be taken an unlimited number of times. These exams are automatically graded in the portal. The registration fee for this section is \$35. The registration fee provides access to exams and application. All elements must be completed after you have

registered for this level. Upon completion of this level a certificate and jewel will be presented by a TFRS Regent at your home lodge during a tiled lodge meeting or at a District Event.

### **Pillar of the Craft**

#### **Level 2**

This level provides experiences that help you to become more engaged in this journey, explore your personal connections and values, and travel within friendly lands: The registration fee for this section is \$55. The registration fee provides access to exams and application. All elements must be completed after you have registered for this level. Upon completion of this level a certificate and jewel will be presented by a TFRS Regent at your home lodge during a tiled meeting or at a District Event.

#### ***Foundational Documents -***

*Ancient Charges* Reading & Multiple Choice Exam.

*Ceremonies* - Reading from the booklet provided by the Grand Lodge of Missouri (*Installation of Lodge Officers, Laying of Cornerstone, Dedication of a Masonic Hall, Masonic Funeral Service*) & Multiple Choice Exam. As before the exams will be taken on the Grand Lodge of Missouri Online Portal and will be automatically graded. If necessary they can be taken an unlimited number of times.

#### ***Whence Came You -***

You will research one of two options and submit a reflection essay on one of them:

**Option #1.** Your Masonic Lineage: Finding the Masonic Lineage two generations removed from yourself.

For Example:

- You will find the record of your top line signer; then find the record of your top line signers signer.
- You could also explore the Masters who raised you, or actual family members.
- In your reflection, provide the degree dates for the Masons in your lineage.

**Option #2.** The History of your Lodge: Who were the charter members of your lodge? What are the locations that your lodge has called home? Have you had any prominent members in your lodge (masonic or otherwise)? What important events have taken place in your lodge? Strange occurrences or any other pivotal details about your lodge.

*The submitted reflection shall be no more than two (2) pages and follow the style guide at the beginning of this document. Any alternate form, such as an audio or visual recording must be approved by the Board of Regents prior to submission.*

#### ***Travel in Friendly Lands -***

You will attend a stated or special meeting at five (5) other lodges within your region and write a reflection on the experience.

*When submitting the application for this level, the dates and locations of the travel along with the signature of the Secretary & Master, or DDGM verifying the attendance, shall be included on/or with the application form.*

*The submitted reflection on the experience of visiting Lodges other than your home lodge shall be no more than two (2) pages and follow the style guide at the beginning of this document. Any alternate form, such as an audio or visual recording must be approved by the Board of Regents prior to submission.*

### ***What Come You Here To Do -***

For this section you will be required to reflect upon the Working Tools for each degree and submit an essay answering the following question: What lessons have you learned from the Working Tools, taken individually or as a whole, and how have you incorporated them into your life to make yourself a better Man, Mason, Friend, and Citizen?

*The submitted essay shall be at least four (4) pages in length and follow the style guide at the beginning of this document. Any alternate form, such as an audio or visual recording must be approved by the Board of Regents prior to submission.*

## **Master of the Craft**

### **Level 3**

This level provides experiences that all help you reflect, connect with Brothers in “foreign lands”, and pass on what you have learned to further generations of Masons. The registration fee for this section is \$75. The registration fee provides access to exams and application. All elements must be completed after you have registered for this level. Upon completion of this level you will be presented with a certificate and jewel by a TFRS Regent in your home lodge or at a District Event, in addition to this you will invited to the yearly TFRS Induction Ceremony

### ***Universality -***

The intention for this is to have you step outside of your tradition and explore for yourself, the commonalities in Freemasonry.

This can be accomplished in one of two ways:

**Option #1.** Using the Ritualist Guide to World Religions (adapted from the GL of Ohio), compare the recommended verses of three traditions: Your own and two outside of your tradition.

**Option #2.** Read the Masonic Code (Constitution and ByLaws) of at least one outside jurisdiction recognized by the Grand Lodge of Missouri, compare their code to Missouri’s in terms of Qualifications of Candidates, Candidate Education/Proficiency requirements, Qualification of Officers, Meeting Requirements and at least one other area of your choosing.

*This reflection shall be no more than three (3) pages in length, and follow the style guide at the beginning of this document. Any alternate form, such as audio or visual recording must be approved by the Board of Regents prior to submission.*

***Improving in Masonic Knowledge -***

You will read a text from an approved list, according to your personal interests. You will then submit a critical response to the selected text that summarizes the main idea and offers your reactions and thoughts to the text based on your own experience and thoughts. You may respond to the text's relevance (in today's society vs when written), accuracy, evidence, suitability, etc.

*This reflection shall be no more than five (5) pages in length, and follow the style guide at the beginning of this document. Any alternate form, such as audio or visual recording must be approved by the Board of Regents prior to submission.*

***Travel in Foreign Lands -***

You will attend five (5) Masonic functions outside of your district and the adjoining ones to it and write a reflection on the experience. These functions can be special or stated meetings, multi-district events (Grand Lecturer School of Instruction, Grand Masters Area Meetings) Wardens & Masters Training or Grand Lodge Annual Communications, Multi-Jurisdictional events or events with another recognized jurisdiction (including the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Missouri, Prince Hall Affiliated F&A.M.)

*When submitting the application for this level, the dates and locations of the travel along with the signature of the Secretary & Master, or DDGM verifying the attendance, shall be included on/or with the application form.*

*This reflection shall be no more than four (4) pages in length, and follow the style guide at the beginning of this document. Any alternate form, such as audio or visual recording must be approved by the Board of Regents prior to submission.*

***Applied Education -***

For this section, you will mentor a candidate through the three (3) degrees in Lodge or have served a full Masonic Year as Lodge Education Officer.

*When submitting the application for this level, if using the mentoring to fulfill the requirement you must be listed as the mentor in the Grand Lodge of Missouri's online membership portal, and submit a signed form by the Secretary or Master of your lodge.*

*If using your term as Lodge Education Officer to fulfill the requirement you must be listed as the Lodge Education Officer in the Grand Lodge of Missouri's online membership portal and submit documentation of what programming you used throughout the year.*

***Ritual -***

For this section, you will give either a lecture or a charge in one of the three (3) degrees, from memory, in a tiled lodge or have acted as Master (in a degree) and obligated a candidate.

*When submitting the application for this level, the date and location along with the signature of the Secretary and Master or DDGM or DDGL verifying the ritual should be on the form.*

***Sprig of Acacia -***

For this section, you will write and submit a letter addressed “Contents for any of my Descendants” c/o your home lodge, to be opened fifty (50) years from submission. This letter, to the brothers of your lodge, should be a message from you to them about who you are, what is happening in your lodge right now, and any message you would like to give to your brothers and family two generations from now. ***You are not required to share the contents of the letter; if you so desire.*** The letter will be submitted (sealed) to the Grand Lodge Education Committee care of the TFRS Regents and will reside in the Grand Lodge Office at the Masonic Complex. The Grand Lodge Office will nominally be responsible for cataloging them and ensuring the delivery of the letter to your lodge and descendants in proper time.

***Masterpiece -***

This part is the capstone for the TFRS journey: You will produce and present an original piece of personal and researched Masonic Work in a Tiled Lodge with no less than one member of the TFRS Board of Regents in attendance. Your topic must be approved by the Board of Regents and/or the Education Committee in advance, or from a list of approved topics. For most, this will consist of a research paper on an area of your interest: but you are not limited to this and you are welcome to propose a work that is indicative of your talents, skills, and interests.