The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress
Announces the 22nd Annual Writing Contest for Young Readers

Letters About Literature

Sponsored in association with the Nebraska Center for the Book and Nebraska Library Commission

Theme: How did an author's work change your view of the world or yourself?

Deadlines: Entry must be postmarked by

- **Level 3** *(high school, grades 9-12)* **December 15, 2014**
- **Level 2** *(middle school, grades 7 & 8)* **January 15, 2015**
- **Level 1** *(upper elementary, grades 4-6)* **January 15, 2015**

State & National Awards

- Each state center has its own panel of judges who will select the top essayists in the state. State Winners will receive a cash award and advance to the national level judging.

- A panel of national judges for the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress will select 1 (one) **National Winner** per competition level to receive a **$1,000 cash award.** The judges will also select 1 (one) **National Honor winner** per competition level to receive a **$200 cash award.**

Mail your entry to:

Letters About Literature Contest
P.O. Box 5308
Woodbridge, VA 22194

Need some tips to get started? Not sure how to write a personal letter? **Visit read.gov/letters** to read winning letters from past competitions.

P.S. Remember, a letter is less formal than an essay or research paper. Write honestly and in your own voice as if you were having a conversation with the author. Those are the best letters to read and the most fun to write!

How to Enter

In four easy steps!

1. Select!
Select a fiction or nonfiction book, a poem or play you have read and about which you have strong feelings. *(Sorry, no song lyrics!)* It might be a book that helped you through a difficult time or it might be a book that simply touched your heart or inspired you.

2. Reflect!
Think before you write. *How* did this author's work change you or your view of the world? *How* do you know it did? *How* and *why* are you different now than you were before you read this work? *Why* did you choose this book and author and not another?

3. Persuade!
Write a personal letter to the author, stating how reading his or her work changed you. Be persuasive! Support your ideas with specific details, including details from the work itself.

4. Send!
Mail your letter, with the required entry coupon *(see page 2 of this flyer)* by the deadline date.

For Teachers: How to Submit Your Class Set of Letters

(or individual letter if entering separately from a school or library)

Letter Format & Return Address.. **Each entry must be in letter format and typewritten.** The child's name and complete return address (either home or school) must appear in the upper right corner of the first page of the letter, as per letter formatting. *Handwritten entries and entries not in letter format and without a return address will be disqualified.*

Entry Coupon. Each letter must be accompanied by an entry coupon (below). Staple the coupon to the last page of the letter. Should your student win a state prize, your State Center for the Book (or state sponsor) will contact you using this information, so be sure your coupon is complete and legible! *Letters without a coupon will be eliminated.*

Teacher Cover Letter. Each class set should include a teacher cover letter that provides contact information *plus* a list of the names of each student submitting a letter. Cover letters *do not* take the place of entry coupons. *Each student's letter must have its own entry coupon.*

Mailing Envelope & Address. Mail class sets in a flat 8x10" envelope or larger. Indicate the competition level — either 1, 2 or 3 — on the envelope. Include a complete return address on your mailing envelope. Mail to:

Letters About Literature
Competition Level *(Indicate level 1, 2 or 3 on the envelope)*
P.O. Box 5308
Woodbridge, VA 22194

Deadlines.

- **Level 3 entries must be postmarked by 12-15-14**
- **Levels 1 and 2 must be postmarked by 1-15-15**

Assessment. Entries will be judged on the following criteria:

- **Content** (addressing the contest theme)
- **Writer's Voice** (writing style and originality of expression)
- **Exposition** (language skills, organization and grammar)

Each criterion will be scored on a scale of zero (0) to five (5), where five (5) is excellent and zero (0) is not fulfilling the judging criteria.

Recommended Length of Letters. Entries for Level 1 should be no less than 100 words and no more than 500 words.• Entries for Level 2 should be no less than 300 words and no more than 1,000 words. • Entries for Level 3 should be no less than 600 words and no more than 1,500 words.

Ownership. All letters become the property of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. Please make copies of your students' entries, as no letters will be returned.

Notification & Contact. Your State Center for the Book will notify the winners within your state. The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress will notify National Winners on or about 5/15/15. For program updates, please refer to the contest website, www.read.gov/letters.

Note for Teachers Submitting Class Sets: Please do not assign the same book to an entire class, as this misses the spirit of the program — identifying a personal relationship with an author and/or book. Likewise, rather than assigning the same opening paragraph or topic sentences, encourage students to express themselves individually. *Your signature on the form below indicates that you have reviewed the submitted letter and acknowledge it to be the student's original work.* ***Remember: Each student letter must have its own entry coupon.***

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LAL 2014-15 Entry Coupon – *Please complete the form, cut, and staple to your letter!*

Name _____ Male [] Female [] Age _____ Grade _____

Book/Story Title _____ Author _____

School/Library: _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

School/Library Phone: (_____) _____ School/Library Email: _____

Teacher/Librarian Contact: _____ Email: _____

I am entering *(check one)* [ ] through my school or community library [ ] individually, on my own

The additional information below **is required** if you are submitting a letter INDIVIDUALLY**.** Otherwise, this section is optional.

Child's Home Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip Code _____ Home Email: _____

Parent's signature ***(required)*** _____ Home phone: _____