23rd Annual Writing CONTEST 2015 - 2016

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Letters About Literature

Read. Be inspired. Write Back.

A Library of Congress National Reading and Writing Promotion Program

The 23rd annual writing contest for young readers is made possible by a generous grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, with additional support from gifts to the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, which promotes the contest through its affiliate Centers for the Book, state libraries and other organizations.

Competition Levels:

Level 1	Grades 4 - 6
Level 2	Grades 7 - 8
Level 3	Grades 9 - 12

THEME

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

How to Enter

READ

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.

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?

Persuade

Write a personal letter to the author, stating how reading his or her work changed you. Be personal but also persuasive! Support your ideas with specific details, including details from the work itself. This is not a fan letter but rather a reflection on how an author influenced you.

WRITE

Type your entry in letter format – do not send handwritten letters. Your name and complete return address (either school or home) must appear in the upper right corner of the first page of the letter.

SEND

Mail your letter with the required entry coupon by the deadline date.

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 and to access the Letters About Literature Teaching Guide.

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For updates on the program, please refer to the contest website, read.gov/letters.

Deadlines

Entries will be accepted beginning **November 2, 2015**

Entries must be postmarked by the following dates

LEVEL 3	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 1
DEC 2015 4	JAN 2016 11	JAN 2016 11
Grades 9 - 12	*Grades 7 - 8*	*Grades 4 - 6*

ASSESSMENT. All entries will be judged on the following criteria:

Round 1

Audience. Is the essay in letter format and does it address the author of the work? Entries that are not in letter format and are written about the author, rather than to the author, will be eliminated.

Purpose. Does the essay address the contest theme of how an author's work changed the reader's view of self or the world? Is personal reflection evident in the letter? Entries that are book summaries or fan letters will be eliminated.

Letters that meet these criteria advance to Round 2.

Round 2

Grammatical conventions. Is the essay written in a clear and organized way with specific details to support the essay's main ideas? Single paragraph letters with significant grammatical errors will be eliminated.

Originality. Does the essay express ideas creatively, communicating a unique or powerful point of view? Letters that are formulaic without evidence of a writer's voice will be eliminated.

Letters that meet these criteria advance to state level judging.

Judges selected by affiliate Centers for the Book choose the top letters in each competition level for their state and coordinate recognition ceremonies and awards. The first-place state-level winners advance to the national level judging.

The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress selects a panel of judges to award National Winners and National Honor Winners.

Awards

Each state recognizes and awards prizes to winning participants.

The Library of Congress will announce all National and National Honor Winners and awards and will list all state-level winners on its website.

National Winners in each competition level will receive a $1,000 cash award

National Honor Winners in each competition level will receive a $200 cash award

Check read.gov/letters for details on state awards and ceremonies.

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR LETTERS AND ENTRY COUPON

Entry Coupon. Each letter must be accompanied by an entry coupon. Staple the coupon to the last page of the letter. Affiliate Centers for the Book will contact State Winners using this information, so be sure entry coupons are complete and legible! Letters without a coupon will be eliminated.

Class Set of Letters. Teachers must submit their name and contact information with a list of the names of each student submitting a letter. This list does not take the place of entry coupons.

Each student's letter must have its own entry coupon. Mail class sets in a flat envelope - 8x10 or larger.

Ownership. All letters become the property of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. Please keep a copy of your entries, as no letters will be returned.

Mailing Address. Indicate the competition level — 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)
c/o C. Gourley, Project Manager
81 Oliver Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18705

Letters About Literature Entry Coupon for 2015 - 2016

Please complete the form, cut and staple to your letter!

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Name _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Book / Story Title _____ Author _____

FOR CLASS ENTRIES

School / Library _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

School / Library Phone _____ School / Library Email _____

Teacher / Librarian *(signature required)* _____ Email _____

FOR INDIVIDUALS

Fill out ONLY if you are submitting a letter individually. Otherwise, this section is optional.

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Parent's Signature *(required)* _____

Email _____ Phone _____