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 Affiliate State Centers for the Book

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](http://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!

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**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 Envelop & 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

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.

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: _____________________________