

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE IN ILLINOIS

Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White invites students in grades 4-12 to enter Letters About Literature, a statewide writing competition offered by the Illinois State Library's Illinois Center for the Book.

TEACHER:

HELP YOUR STUDENTS ENTER LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE IN ILLINOIS!

ENTRY POSTMARK
DEADLINE:



ENTER ON ONE OF THE THREE COMPETITION LEVELS:

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



TEACHERS CHECKLIST

- BOOK SELECTION.** Let your students select a book to which they want to read and can relate.
- LETTERS.** Entries should be in letter format and be reflective.
- TEACHERS GUIDE.** Use the activities and strategies provided in the online Teachers Guide to lead your students through book discussions and the letter-writing process. Worksheets are provided for duplication and assessment.
- PREPARE CLASS SETS FOR MAILING.**
 - ENTRY FORM.** Each letter **MUST** be accompanied by a completed entry form. Make sure they are legible. Staple the entry form to the front of each letter. Letters without an entry form will be disqualified.
*To save time completing entry forms for your class, complete the static information on one entry form. Make copies of that form and pass those copies out to your students to complete their personal information.
 - SEPARATE ENTRIES.** If your classes cross competition levels, separate your entries by competition level – Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3. Put each class set.
 - MAIL.** Mail your class sets via the USPS, each in its own large flat envelope with the competition level on the outside of the envelope, by the postmarked deadline to:

Letters About Literature
Competition Level (Indicate Level 1, 2 or 3 on the envelope.)
Illinois Center for the Book
300 South Second St.
Springfield, IL 62701

OR

- EMAIL.** Send your class sets with the subject line: **LAL, competition level** (Indicate level 1, 2 or 3), **school name** and **city**. Also include an attached copy of the required entry forms for each letter by the postmarked deadline to: islcomps@ilsos.gov.

NEED SOME TIPS TO HELP YOUR STUDENTS GET STARTED?

Visit https://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/center_for_the_book/letters.html.
Read winning letters from past competitions and access the Letters About Literature Teachers Guide.
Watch our video for guidance on participating in Letters About Literature.

CERTIFICATES FOR YOUR STUDENTS

Students achieving Runners-up status will receive certificates from the Illinois Secretary of State's office by mid-May – just in time for end of school recognition ceremonies.

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STUDENT:

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

ENTRY POSTMARK
DEADLINE:



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- Level 2: Grades 7-8
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HOW TO ENTER

- READ.** Select a fiction or nonfiction book that you have read and about which you have strong feelings. 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 in some way.
- REFLECT.** Think before you write. How did this author's book 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?
- WRITE.** Your entry should be written in a letter format. It should include a date, greeting, body, closing, and your name or signature.
 - PERSUADE.** Write a personal letter to the author, stating how reading his or her book changed you. Be personal but also persuasive!
 - SUPPORT.** This is not a fan letter but rather a reflection on how the author influenced you. Include specific details from the book itself and your ideas. Write honestly, from your own perspective.
 - SHARE.** Imagine sitting down with the author of this book and sharing your personal thoughts and reaction to the book.
- ENTRY FORM.** Your letter **MUST** be accompanied by a completed entry form. This information is used to contact winners, so be sure the entry form is complete and legible. Letters without an entry form will be disqualified.
- MAIL.** Staple the required entry form to the front of your letter. Write your competition level on the outside of your envelope. Mail your entry via the USPS by the postmarked deadline to:

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NEED SOME TIPS TO GET STARTED? NOT SURE HOW TO WRITE A PERSONAL LETTER?

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Read winning letters from past competitions. Watch our video for guidance on participating in Letters About Literature and writing your letter.