



# **ANNOUNCING:**

## **The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Student Writing for Literacy Library Essay Contest**

### **Sponsored by:**

Friends of the San Diego Public Library  
San Diego Public Library  
San Diego Unified School District Library Media Teachers  
KPBS & Lloyd Pest Control  
Computers 2 SD Kids (C2SDK)

**OPEN TO: all students**, public, private, parochial and home school, in **grades 4, 8 & 10**, who attend a school served by the San Diego Public Library system.

**Suggested topic choices, guidelines for writing your essay and the entry form are included here and will be posted on the Library Foundation web site,\* the San Diego Public Library web site,\*\* the KPBS One Book, One San Diego web site\*\*\* and e-mailed to Schools and Libraries in early October, 2012.**

**Students/Teachers: The DEADLINE for receipt of entries will be:  
3:00 PM FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2012**

**SCHOOL WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN JANUARY, 2013, at their branch library.**

**Four Grand Prize Winners** at each level will be announced during a ceremony at THE BALBOA PARK CLUB ON MAY 2, 2013.

Top prizewinners will each receive a monetary award AND a laptop computer!

One special prize of \$500  
will be awarded in memory of  
JACK and CAROLYN WINER  
for the best overall essay

\*[http://www.supportmylibrary.org/pub/Essay Contest intro flyer.pdf](http://www.supportmylibrary.org/pub/Essay%20Contest%20intro%20flyer.pdf)

\*\*[www.sandiegolibrary.org](http://www.sandiegolibrary.org)

\*\*\*One Book, One San Diego <http://www.kpbs.org/news/2011/oct/12/2011-student-writing-literacy-essay-contest/>

**QUESTIONS: Contact Wendy Gay, [pahlwen@pacbell.net](mailto:pahlwen@pacbell.net) OR 619- 697-2024**

## ESSAY IDEAS and GUIDELINES FOR THE 2013 STUDENT CONTEST

The Essay Contest this year offers four topics or subject ideas for you to choose from. Number one draws on universal issues found in many of the recent KPBS “One Book, One San Diego“ title selections; numbers two, three, and four are popular traditional topics/ideas you may choose from. Use narrative techniques and follow the guidelines for size, spacing, font, etc. as outlined on the entry form.

Issues such as immigration, religious differences, culture ‘clash’, parental discord, consequences of war, sorrow, grief and friendship are universal and can be found in the book titles selected for KPBS “One Book, One San Diego“. Listed below are some of these titles that you might enjoy. Read one of these books and write an essay discussing how or where you experienced (or observed or read about) the issues addressed in this title.

•*Sky of Red Poppies* by Zohreh Ghahremani

This story is set in pre-revolutionary Iran and tells about two young girls who become best friends even though they come from different social and economic classes. As they grow up, they grow apart by virtue of the different paths they choose, and the reader gets to see the consequences of those decisions.

•*Moloka'i* by Alan Brennert

Young Rachel Kalama’s dreams for the future are shattered at age seven by the discovery that she has leprosy. She is sent to a leper colony on the island of Moloka'i. This story is about life and hope, AND the strength of the human spirit.

•*Into the Beautiful North* by Luis Alberto Urrea

19-year-old Nayeli, who works at a taco shop in her Mexican village, dreams about her father who, along with almost all the male villagers, has long ago gone north, seeking a better life. She is a determined young woman whose quest to find herself on both sides of “the fence” makes a compelling story.

•*Outcasts United* by Warren St John

This story follows a refugee soccer team of 15 year old boys during a pivotal season in their lives and that of their families and their charismatic coach. They all struggle to build new lives in a small Georgia town. There is a story about resilience in the face of extraordinary hardship, the power of one person to make a difference and the daunting challenge of creating community in a place where people seem to have so little in common.

•*The Gangster We Are All Looking For* by lê thi diem thúy

This is a true-life novel about a Vietnamese refugee family in San Diego, told from the perspective of the family’s daughter, who is just six years old when they arrive. The narrator and her parents struggle to adapt to life in an unfamiliar land.

If these titles do not ‘work’ for you we have assembled a list of similar titles and have included it with this year’s contest information. You may choose a title from this list to read and write about.

*California Literacy Standard: 2.2 - Response to Literature (Grades 4, 8, 10)*

### **Traditional Topics:**

- (2) A book that inspired me to help save the earth I will inherit is... Why?

*California Literacy Standard:*  
2.2 - Response to Literature (Grades 4, 8, 10)

- (3) If all the books in the world were about to disappear, but you could save one, what would it be? Why?

*California Literacy Standard:*  
2.3 - Information Report (Grades 4, 8, 10)

- (4) What resources are available to me at my San Diego Public Library relating to my personal interests, such as my favorite sport, hobby, etc.? Describe.

*California Literacy Standards:*  
2.3 - Information Report (Grade 4, 8, 10)  
2.4 - Persuasive Composition (Grades 8 & 10)

For more information about “One Book, One San Diego” go to <http://www.kpbs.org/one-book/>

## 2013 Essay Contest - Additional book titles

Cha, Dia. *Dia's Story Cloth*. New York: Lee and Low Books, Inc., 1996. unpagged

Born in Laos, Dia fled with her family to Thailand as a child, spending four years in a refugee camp before arriving in the U.S. Her story is chronicled in an intricately stitched, traditional, colorful story cloth. For centuries, needlework has been part of Hmong culture. But it has only been since the war in Vietnam and Laos, which displaced many Hmong, that the new, narrative form of "story cloths" has emerged as a bridge between past and present. grades 1-6

Cooney, Caroline B. *Diamonds in the Shadow*. New York: Delacorte Press, 2007. 228 pages.

The Finch family in Connecticut welcomes five refugees from Sierra Leone, but only four are going to stay with them. Jared, the Finch family's oldest son, realizes that something is wrong, and he must make a decision that could change the fate of both families. grades 5-8

Ellis, Deborah. *Mud City*. Oxford University Press, 2003. 164 pages.

Orphaned Afghan refugee Shauzia, 14, leaves a rough Pakistan border camp and joins other homeless children on the streets of Peshawar. Her dream is to reach the ocean and a place called France. Instead, disguised as a boy, she begs and scrounges for food and odd jobs. In the end, she returns to the rough camp and the tough camp leader, Mrs. Weera, whom she thought she hated. This is a survival adventure, but Shauzia is no sweet waif; she's brave, determined, and rebellious. Her struggle with the rough Mrs. Weera reveals that they are both strong and brave. grades 4-8

Na, An. *A Step from Heaven*. Penguin Putnam, 2001. 159 pages

Young Ju is a Korean immigrant whose family left Korea to come to America (specifically California) for a better life. Young Ju is suspended between adopting American ways and keeping her Korean heritage alive. Young Ju's family is not what it appears on the outside. Her father is abusive and an alcoholic. Her mother is obedient but strong. Young Ju is trying to cover up her reality and her brother is rebelling against everything. What becomes of this family makes a compelling story of how much a family can endure and overcome. grade 8 up

Paterson, Katherine. *The Day of the Pelican*. New York: Clarion Books (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), 2009. 144 pages

The Lleshis are Albanians living in Kosovo, a country trying to fight off Serbian oppressors, when suddenly they are homeless refugees. They find their courage tested by hunger, illness, and a long, arduous journey with danger on every side. Then, unexpectedly, they are brought to America by a church group and begin a new life in a small Vermont town. The events of 9/11 bring more challenges for this Muslim family--but the US is their home now so there is no turning back. grades 5-8

Staples, Suzanne Fisher. *Under the Persimmon Tree*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (Francis Foster Books) 270pp

Najmah, a young Afghan girl whose name means "star," suddenly finds herself alone when her father and older brother are conscripted by the Taliban and her mother and newborn brother are killed in an air raid. An American woman, Elaine, whose Islamic name is Nusrat, is also on her own. She waits out the war in Peshawar, Pakistan, teaching refugee children under the persimmon tree in her garden while her Afghan doctor husband runs a clinic in Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan. grades 6 and up

Williams, Karen Lynn. *Four Feet, Two Sandals*. Erdman Books for Young Readers, 2007.

Beautiful illustrations.

Ten-year-old Lina is thrilled when she finds one sandal that fits her foot perfectly; then she sees that another girl has the matching sandal. The two girls Lina, and Feroza soon meet, each wearing one coveted sandal. Together they solve the problem of having four feet and two sandals. They decide to share the sandals and their stories. grades 2-5

Williams, Mary. *Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan*. New York: Lee and Low Books, 2005, unpagged, advanced picture book.

Eight-year-old Garang is tending cattle far from his family's home in Sudan when war comes; he returns to that home to find everything has been destroyed. Soon he meets other boys whose villages have been attacked. They become a moving band of thousands, walking hundreds of miles seeking safety — first in Ethiopia and then in Kenya. The boys face numerous hardships and dangers along the way, but their faith and mutual support help keep the hope of finding a new home alive in their hearts. grades 1-6

Local Branch Library: \_\_\_\_\_

**Students:** Attach this completed entry form to your essay. **Keep a copy of your essay and this entry form for your records!**

Please put your name on all pages of your essay.

## 2013 STUDENT WRITING FOR LITERACY ESSAY CONTEST ENTRY FORM

PLEASE PRINT

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

(First)

(Last)

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Number

Street

Zip

HOME PHONE: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

eMAIL address: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL : \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE:(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

YEAR ROUND yes\_\_\_\_ no\_\_\_\_

TOPIC OF ESSAY: \_\_\_\_\_

(Select from topics listed on the reverse of the contest flyer.)

TEACHER FULL NAME (print): \_\_\_\_\_

(First)

(Last)

JUDGING CRITERIA:

Grades 8 & 10 entries **must be typed**; Grade 4 entries may be typed or **written legibly in ink**. All entries will be judged on originality and focus on the selected prompt by a panel of community members.

**Schools submitting 1-10 entries will have one winner, 11-20 entries will have two winners, and above 20 entries will have three winners at the branch library.**

Each branch library will then select and submit a first prize essay at each grade level for Grand Prize judging.

Suggested maximum length:

Grade 4: Suggested Maximum 250 words

Grade 8: Suggested Maximum 500 words; 12 pt. size type

Grade 10: Suggested Maximum 1000 words; 12 pt. size type

SIGNATURES:

We certify that this entry is a new original work and was developed and written by the student.

*We give permission for the writer's essay and picture to be reproduced for promotional purposes including publication in the news media. We understand that the objective of this contest is student recognition and that there is no compensation beyond the prizes mentioned.*

STUDENT SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

PARENT SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

To be officially entered, all signatures must be complete when the entry is received.

The DEADLINE for receipt of entries at your branch library is:

**3:00 PM FRIDAY DECEMBER 21, 2012**

QUESTIONS CALL: Marian Day/Carleen Hemric, Friends of the Library, (619) 542-1724

Wendy Gay, San Diego Unified School District, Librarian, Retired, (619) 697-2024

This contest supports

***THE CALIFORNIA CONTENT AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR LITERACY***

Thanks to Copy-it ([www.copy-it.com](http://www.copy-it.com)) for printing assistance