

# NCTE Promising Young Writers

## RULES AND PROCEDURES

Deviation from these rules and procedures may disqualify a student's entry.

### Eligibility

Eighth grade students in the present academic school year are eligible to be nominated for the Promising Young Writers program.

### Number of Nominees

The number of nominees allowed from each school is determined by the eighth-grade average daily enrollment. Use the following guide:

Average Daily Enrollment	
Under 100	1 nominee
100–199	2 nominees
200–299	3 nominees
300–399	4 nominees
400–499	5 nominees
500 or more	6 nominees

### Selection of Nominees

All nominees must demonstrate evidence of effective writing. Each school selects its own nominee or nominees: one or more eighth graders (based on number allowed as explained above) agreed upon by school committee or department. It is strongly recommended that nominees not be selected by an individual teacher. Home-schooled students may submit through a cooperating school.

Students will submit two pieces each; one writing theme-based and one "Best" writing or an excerpt from a "best" piece.

### Procedures for Entering

- Complete **one nomination form for each student** (attached form may be photocopied). **Select one teacher to represent your school.** Therefore, one form per student and one nominating teacher per school.
- Mail one completed nomination form and a \$5.00 entry fee for each student nominated (make check in U.S. funds payable to NCTE or use credit card).**

**Promising Young Writers  
NCTE  
1111 W. Kenyon Road  
Urbana, IL 61801-1096**

- For each nominee, mail the following writing samples to your current State Coordinator by February 10, 2010:**
  - Three** sets of papers with one copy of the Best Writing Sample stapled to one copy of the Theme Writing for each student.
  - One** copy of the completed nomination form for each student.

List of 2010 State Coordinators will be posted on NCTE's website at <http://www.ncte.org/awards/student/pyw> in December. You may also send an email to [pyw@ncte.org](mailto:pyw@ncte.org) to receive the mailing address for your state coordinator.

**NOTE: NCTE receives the entry form and payment. State Coordinator receives all student papers and a copy of the entry form for each student.**

### For Information on This Program

Program and state coordinator information may be found at [www.ncte.org/awards/student/pyw](http://www.ncte.org/awards/student/pyw)

Contact NCTE at

- Phone: 1-800-369-6283, ext. 3608    ■ Fax: 217-328-0977    ■ email: [pyw@ncte.org](mailto:pyw@ncte.org)

## Entries

Two written compositions by each nominated student are required.

- 1. BEST WRITING SAMPLE** A sample of writing that the student considers his or her best work, regardless of amount of revision. Research papers, term papers, or novels **will not** be accepted by state coordinators.
- 2. THEME WRITING** The theme topic, developed by the Promising Young Writers Advisory Committee, is a common topic on which all students entering the program must write.

### Directions for Best and Theme Writing

- Printed from a computer in legible black type (no smaller than 12 point) or handwritten using dark ink
- Double-spaced (except for poetry)
- Margins are 1" on all sides (except for poetry)
- Page number is in the upper right-hand corner
- Printed on one side of 8.5 x 11 inch paper
- Student's name and "Best" or "Theme" appear in the upper left-hand corner of each page
- School name does *not* appear on the papers or within the body of writing
- Max pages for theme is four (4) pages. Max pages for best paper is seven (7) pages. An excerpt from a larger piece is acceptable with a paragraph explaining the piece from which the excerpt was taken.

## 2010 Theme

### Scattering Light, Lifting Clouds

In Naomi Shihab Nye's poem "Voices," the speaker writes about the influence of a person to whom they are grateful for "scattering light" and "lift[ing] clouds." Think of a person or group who has influenced you to become the individual you are. Perhaps this person or group helped you to consider something from a new perspective or removed an obstacle that allowed you to achieve one of your goals. Whether through words, deeds, life examples, or in some other way, this person or group scattered a positive light in your life. How might you continue the cycle of scattering light for others? Write an original piece no longer than four pages in your preferred genre (such as drama, poetry, short story, essay, narratives, op ed piece, science fiction, memoir, news articles, etc.) Be sure to write for conciseness and clarity.

## Judging

Teams of teachers at the state level will judge the writing and select Promising Young Writers. Papers will be judged on content, purpose, audience, tone, word choice, organization, development, and style. Judges take into account that the writers are eighth-grade students, not professional writers.

The number of winners in each state may not exceed the number of that state's delegation in the U.S. House of Representatives. The Virgin Islands, and American Schools Abroad are limited to two winners each. The District of Columbia and Canada are limited to four winners.

## Awards

Each student who enters and writes will receive a citation. Certificates of Recognition will be awarded to students cited as winners. Certificates of Participation will be awarded to other nominees who write. All certificates will be mailed to the school principals. Additionally, winners' names are posted on NCTE's website along with the school name, city, and state.

## Optional Permission for Future Use of Student Papers

In some cases, NCTE or its Affiliates may wish to use student papers for research purposes, to publish them in print or electronic publications, or to otherwise display them. Students who desire to have their papers considered for such use or publication must have a parent (or legal guardian) sign the nomination form. If permission is granted, use of a student's paper is at NCTE's and its Affiliates' discretion.

**Lack of parental signature will not prevent a student from participating in this program or from being designated a winner.**



2010  
NCTE  
PROMISING YOUNG  
WRITERS PROGRAM

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2010

NCTE PROMISING YOUNG WRITERS

For Eighth-Grade Students

**Entries and fees must be mailed by February 10, 2010.**

The Promising Young Writers program represents NCTE's commitment to early and continuing work in the development of writing. The school-based writing program was established in 1985 to stimulate and recognize students' writing talents and to emphasize the importance of writing skills among eighth-grade students.

Eighth-grade students who have been nominated by their schools in the fifty states, the District of Columbia, American Schools Abroad, Canada, and the Virgin Islands may participate in the program. Students who submit papers will receive either a Certificate of Recognition or a Certificate of Participation to recognize their efforts.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals has placed this program on the NASSP National Advisory List of Student Contests and Activities for 2009–2010.



**NOTE: An entry fee of \$5.00 per student is required to help cover administrative costs.**

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