

YWP'S NONFICTION WRITING CONTEST



YOUNG WRITERS PROJECT'S Community Journalism Project is holding a nonfiction writing contest! Cash prizes and publication in *The Voice* and local media. First prize: \$150. Second prize: \$75. Third prize: \$50. Deadline: Friday, Feb. 21, 2020. Submit writing in response to the challenges below – as often as you like!

This contest evolved from YWP's *Vermont Writes Day* as a way to honor writing. Instead of just one day of writing, as we've done in the past for Vermont Writes Day, we decided to launch a WRITING CONTEST in conjunction with YWP's Community Journalism Project! Have fun!

THE CHALLENGES: Write about *YOU* and the issues that matter to you. Respond to one or all three challenges – as often as you like. Each challenge includes suggestions. These are intended only to get you started – not to limit or restrain your individual voice.

1. **WHO.** You're a teen (or pre-teen) in 2020, but *who are you?* What makes you uniquely you? What would you like people to know and understand about you? Where or how do you feel most like you?
2. **HOME.** Describe what feels like "*home*" to you. What do you appreciate about it? What makes it yours? This could be a favorite place, such as your house, a natural setting, your town, rural road, your state, or it could be the people in your life – your family, friends, community, team.
3. **ISSUE.** What is one issue that *really* matters to you, globally, nationally or locally? What keeps you up at night? How does this issue affect your vision of the future? What message would you like to send to decision-makers? What do they need to know? How could this issue be solved? Topics could include climate change; social justice issues of race, gender, economic disparity; a divided nation; gun violence and school shootings; threat of war; cost of college; future job uncertainty.

CONTEST DETAILS:

- This is a *nonfiction* contest, but feel free to write poetry, prose, essays, lyrics – whatever works.
- Must be original work
- Maximum word limit: 500
- Deadline: Friday, Feb. 21, 2020
- Writers must have an account on youngwritersproject.org to participate (it's easy to join!) or teachers may submit on behalf of students (Include writer's name on each submission. Contact Susan Reid at sreid@youngwritersproject.org with any questions)
- Submit writing online by responding to these challenges. Write to one or all three challenges -- as often as you like.
- Writers need an account on youngwritersproject.org
- Prizes will be announced on the site Friday, March 6, 2020.
- **Tips:** Take your time. Write freely. Show, don't tell. Lots of detail. Clear, original writing. Avoid cliches. Go back and review. Check spelling and grammar. Revise until you're happy with it.

THANK YOU! This contest was made possible by the supporters of the Community Journalism Project, including the Gannett Foundation/USA Today Network, Lisa Schamberg and Patrick Robins, the National Life Group Foundation, and the Windham Foundation.