

**MIDDLE SCHOOL  
2015-2016 YOUNG AUTHORS' GUIDELINES  
FOR GRADES 6 THROUGH 8**

**ELIGIBILITY:**

Students in **Grades 6 through 8** are eligible to enter a previously unsubmitted short story and/or poem written within the 2015-2016 school year. Each entry may have only one author and only one entry per author may be submitted for each category.

**CONTEST GUIDELINES:**

1. Entries must be students' original work. Editing assistance (spelling, punctuation, etc.) may be provided by peers or adults, but revisions should be student-generated and the final written product must be the student's own.
  - A. Each short story entry may range from a minimum of **two** paragraphs to no more than three typed pages (**no less than a 12 font**). **Selection must be typed using either Times Roman or Comic Sans font.**
  - B. Each poem entry will consist of a single poem, which may be any style or length.
  - C. Entries must include a completed cover sheet signed by the student author. The required cover sheets have been provided to each local council by the state committee. **(Author's name is on cover sheet ONLY...not the work itself!)**
  - D. Entries **must not** include graphics.

**SELECTION CRITERIA:**

1. Entry meets all the above guidelines.
2. Story reflects author's creativity and appropriate use of language and short story structure.
3. Poem reflects compact, creative, and appropriate use of language and imagery.
4. Poems or short stories of a violent nature will be deemed inappropriate.
5. Any violation(s) of these guidelines will disqualify the entry. The decision of the judges is final.

**DEADLINE:**

Entries must be submitted to the drop box in the media center by **December 18, 2015**.

**WINNERS:**

Each local International Reading Association Council will select one short story and one poem per grade level to submit to the state contest. The State Young Authors' Committee will then select a first and second place grade level winner per category. All of the winning entries will be published in an anthology and each student author and his/her teacher will receive a copy. A Young Authors' Reception honoring all state winners, their parents, families, and teachers will be held at the SoMIRAC Conference at the Hunt Valley Marriott in Hunt Valley, Maryland.

*Promoting Literacy in Maryland since 1972*

