

Letters About Literature - Reading and Writing Initiative Coming Back to Kansas

by Cindy Roupe, Public Services Director, State Library

Student submissions to Letters About Literature (LAL), a national reading and writing initiative sponsored by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress in partnership with Target, are now being accepted. To enter, young readers write a letter to an author, past or present, describing how that author's work somehow changed the student's view of the world or of himself/herself.

The project, which focuses on reader response and reflective writing, has three competition levels: Level 1 for students in grades 4-6; Level 2 for students in grades 7 and 8; and Level 3 for students in grades 9-12. Letters About Literature is open to public, private, and home-schooled students.

Winners on the state level each receive a cash award as well as a \$50 Target GiftCard. Six national finalists and their parents will travel to Washington, DC., courtesy of Target, where the finalists will read their letters during the National Book Festival in the fall of 2007. The national winners also receive a \$500 Target GiftCard.

Target sponsors Letters About Literature as part of its national reading initiative, "Ready. Sit. Read!," which is aimed at fostering a love of reading among children at an early age.

Please consider how Letters About Literature can enhance your library's programming for children. If you have questions please contact Roy Bird at the Kansas Center for the Book, State Library of Kansas, 300 SW 10th Ave., Room 343N, Topeka, KS 66612, 800/432-3919, kcfb@kslib.info.

All entries must be received by December 8, 2006. Official how-to-enter guidelines can be downloaded at the LAL website, www.loc.gov/letters. To receive a free copy in Adobe of the LAL teacher's guide, which includes lesson plans, blackline masters, and assessment checklists, teachers should contact the national project director at lettersaboutlit@epix.net.