

YOUNG AUTHORS CONTEST

Presented by
Tucson Festival of Books
and Altrusa International of Tucson

Calling all students pre-K to 12th grade!

Enter your story or poem for a chance to win prizes!



DEADLINE: 4:30 p.m.

December 31, 2020

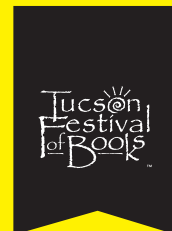


Fill out the attached entry form & follow instructions!

Entry form also available at AltrusaTucson.org

Winners will be announced at the virtual 12th Annual Tucson Festival of Books on Saturday, March 6, 2021.

Topics may include life during the pandemic, or any subject of the writer's choice. Contest entry is free. Original stories or poems are limited to 1000 words.



YOUNG AUTHORS CONTEST

writer's
guide

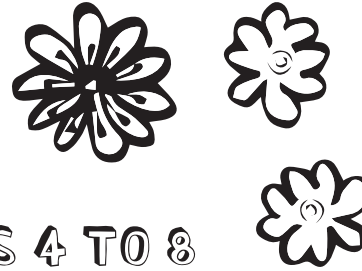
PRE-K TO GRADE 3

- Go for a walk with a parent or caregiver. Bring a small notebook. Ask your parent or caregiver to write down or tape your observations. When you get home, think about what inspired you. What did you see or hear? Dogs chasing sticks, birds chirping in trees, quiet spaces, older kids laughing and listening to music?
- Have you had an outdoor adventure during the pandemic that surprised you, or that you really enjoyed? Describe this experience. Who was with you? How did you feel?



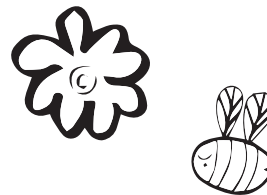
Writing and nature go hand in hand, like a hummingbird to a flower.

During this Covid-19 pandemic have you scampered around outdoors, strolled in one of Tucson's many parks, rode a red bike around your neighborhood, or hiked in the desert with teen friends? Here are some suggestions for writing about your time in nature (1000 word limit).



GRADES 4 TO 8

- Sitting in your backyard, consider how playing outdoors during the pandemic has stayed the same or been different for you, your family, and friends. Do you still play soccer, go to the playground, or hike with your family?
- Jot down whatever pops into your head about an ordinary day. Choose one thought and turn it into a story about your day, or imagine what that day was like.
- You are a giant saguaro standing in the desert. Your personality is unique. What makes you proud? What do you see and hear around you? What exciting, sad, confusing, fun, scary things happen during your day?



GRADES 9 TO 12

Walk a mile in someone else's shoes...
Write a story imagining what another Tucsonan's life might be like: a migrant crossing the desert; Mayor Regina Romero's hopes and dreams; a motorcycle police officer; one of your teachers; a Saguaro National Park ranger; a teen your age one hundred years ago; or create your own main character.

WORD JAM!

Looking for a few new words?
Try these!

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| • Flummox | • Melancholy |
| • Sparkle | • Prickly |
| • Dusk | • Shadows |
| • Shenanigan | • Agave |
| • Robotic | • Tranquil |
| • Avocado | • Evidence |

WRITING BASICS

- **JUMP RIGHT IN!**
“Let’s go to Reid Park,” NOT “I want to tell you that I’d like you to go to Reid Park with me.”
- **VARY SENTENCE LENGTH.**
Make some sentences short and some long. Be careful of run-on sentences: “Let’s go to Reid Park,” NOT “Please come to Reid Park with me to watch my soccer game and then my mother will give you a ride home but first we will stop for ice cream and you can choose any flavor.”
- **BE SPECIFIC.**
“My favorite birthday present was a red bike,”
NOT “I received many birthday presents.”
- **CHECK YOUR SPELLING AND WORD MEANINGS.**
Use different verbs throughout, not just “I like.” Try enjoy, prefer, choose, or appreciate. Notice other verbs you overuse...enjoy using your online thesaurus!
- **CHECK YOUR PUNCTUATION.**
A period belongs at the end of a sentence. Don’t use too many commas.
- **CHECK YOUR VERB TENSES.**
“Yesterday’s math homework was hard. When I finished it I watched TV.” Stay with the same tense unless you switch to a new subject: “Today I’m helping my mom clean the house.”
- **CHECK YOUR USAGE OF THEY'RE/THEIR/THERE AND YOU'RE/YOUR. PLEASE.**
- **READ YOUR STORY ALOUD TO YOURSELF.**
Revise if you’re confused because your readers will be, too.
- **HAVE FUN!** Tell a story that’s meaningful to you!



PANDEMIC POETRY!

Complete one of the sample poems below with your thoughts, use one of the sample poems to inspire your own poem, or compose a pandemic poem.

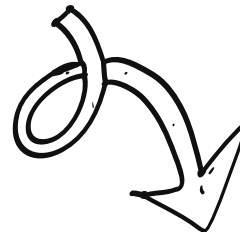
She is holding a book close to her body,
carrying it home on the cracked sidewalk,
down the tangled hill.
If a dog runs at her again,
She will use the book as a shield.



From “Because of Libraries We Can Say These Things,” by
Naomi Shihab Nye, *Everything Comes Next, Collected & New Poems*
© Greenwillow, 2020.

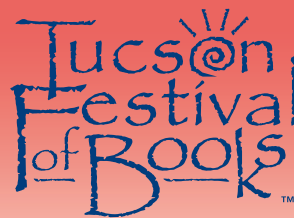
Someone said it is going to rain.
I think it is not so.
Because I have not yet felt the earth and the way it holds still
in anticipation.
I think it is not so.
Because I have not yet felt the sky become heavy with moisture of
preparation.
I think it is not so.
Because I have not yet felt the winds move with their coolness.
I think it is not so.
Because I have not yet inhaled the sweet, wet dirt the winds bring.
So, there is no truth that it will rain.

From “It Is Going to Rain,”
by Ofelia Zepeda [Tohono O’odham],
Earth Movements (Kore Press, 2005).



DEADLINE: December 31, 2020 | Entry form at AltrusaTucson.org

Everyone has a story...tell us yours



Young Authors Contest • Pre-K through 12th grade

Contest Rules:

- Entries must be accompanied by this entry form
- Maximum length 1,000 words (*strictly enforced*)
- Only single-author submissions
- Illustrations may be included
- Children may dictate their story to an adult
- Non-English text must include English translation
- Poetry will be judged as a separate category. Students may enter one story AND one poem.
- Winning entries will be published as submitted
- For students from across Southern Arizona
- Text must be written legibly or typed, single spaced on white letter-sized paper
- Students may write about the effects of the pandemic or write about any topic of their choosing.
- Story and/or poem must be original work of the student.

Sponsored by



Parent Permission Information (please print legibly):

By entering your child's work in this competition, you agree to the writing competition rules and regulations. You also agree that the Tucson Festival of Books may use your child's name and submission in any activities related to the Festival. If Tucson Festival of Books is unable to contact you, or to receive signed acknowledgement, a different entry will be selected. The decisions of the judges are final. Sponsors are not responsible for lost, late, damaged, misdirected or illegible submissions.

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

Home Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Young Author / Student Information (please print legibly):

STUDENT NAME: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Title of Story: _____ Number of Words: _____

Teacher (if applicable): _____ Teacher's Email: _____



Deadline for receipt of entries: Thursday, December 31st, 2020, 4:30 p.m.

In 2020, entries must be mailed or emailed

(note new address to the right),

emailed to: young_authors@yahoo.com

or mailed to: [Young Authors Contest](#)

[Altrusa International of Tucson, Inc.](#)

[PO Box 42801](#)

[Tucson, AZ 85733](#)

Entry may be returned to the author. Finalists in each of four age categories will be recognized on Saturday, March 6, 2021 at the Tucson Festival of Books; in 2021, this ceremony may be online. This contest is sponsored by the Tucson Festival of Books and Altrusa International of Tucson, Inc. and is not a school district-sponsored event.

Questions? Please email Childrens@TucsonFestivalofBooks.org