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## Writing Contest Open to Readers in Grades 4-12

MILWAUKEE – A book is more than just a collection of words. A book can have a direct and concrete impact on a life. For children and youth, a book can help them transcend difficult situations – like bullying, peer pressure or prejudice – or help them cope with loss and disappointment.

Letters about Literature (LAL) is a writing contest for young readers in grades 4-12, sponsored by the Library of Congress and the Wisconsin Center for the Book. Students write a letter to an author of a fiction or nonfiction book, a short story or poem describing how the work changed the students' view of the world or of themselves. Students are asked to do reflective writing rather than a book report. Entries are judged at both the state and national levels and prizes are awarded for the best letter at various grade levels.

LAL awards thousands of dollars each year through state and national prizes. This year, the annual writing contest for young readers is made possible by a generous grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, with additional support from gifts to the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, which promotes the contest through its affiliate Centers for the Book, state libraries and other organizations.

Last year, some 47,000 students from around the United States (including 700 from Wisconsin) entered the competition.

Details on the program can be found on the Web site [www.read.gov/letters](http://www.read.gov/letters). The site also outlines lesson plans for teachers who want to incorporate the Letters about Literature program into their curriculum.

The deadline for submissions is Jan. 11, 2019.

CONTACT: Mary Lou Santovec, Wisconsin Center for the Book, 208 E. Prospect St., Lake Mills WI 53551; [santovec@gmail.com](mailto:santovec@gmail.com) or 920-945-0610 for more information.

Wisconsin Center for the Book was created to celebrate the culture of the book. The Center celebrates books and the book arts, encourages the joy of reading and writing, and honors Wisconsin's literary heritage. The Center honors all aspects of the literary world and provides a link between our citizens and writers, illustrators, publishers, librarians, and educators.

For more information, visit <https://uwm.edu/informationstudies/wisconsin-center-for-the-book/>

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