

For Immediate Release:

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Jesse White Announces Winners of “Letters About Literature in Illinois” Contest
Winners from Glenview, Lincolnwood and Skokie

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White announced that students from Glenview, Lincolnwood and Skokie are the Illinois winners of 2022 “Letters About Literature in Illinois” Contest.

“Reading gives a child a greater chance to succeed,” said White. “The young writers who entered this competition demonstrated how literature impacts many lives.”

The reading and writing contest for students is sponsored by the Secretary of State’s office, the Illinois State Library and the Illinois Center for the Book.

The 2022 “Letters About Literature in Illinois” Contest winners are:

- Level I, Grades 4-6: Aiden Zhang, of Glenview, wrote to Illinois author Shel Silverstein about his book, *The Giving Tree*. Aiden is a student at Maple School in Northbrook. His letter was submitted by his teacher, Kyle Manders. This is Kyle’s first year participating in the contest.
- Level II, Grades 7-8: Ellie Kim, of Lincolnwood, wrote to Illinois author Celia C. Pérez about her book, *The First Rule of Punk*. Ellie attends Lincoln Hall Middle School in Lincolnwood. Her letter was submitted by her teacher, Leanne Ellis – who is also an Illinois author.
- Level III, Grades 9-12: Joshua Kupietzky, of Skokie, wrote to Primo Levi about his book, *Survival in Auschwitz*. Joshua attends Ida Crown Jewish Academy in Chicago. His letter was submitted by his teacher, Tirza Kahan. This is Tirza’s third Level III winner.

To participate in the annual competition, students in grades 4-12 are asked to read a book or poem and then write a personal letter to the author explaining how the book changed their personal view of themselves or the world. Students can read fiction or non-fiction works from living or deceased authors. Students are encouraged to select books that they feel strongly about.

Each winner received a \$200 check from the Illinois Center for the Book and a plaque signed by Secretary White at the awards ceremony in Springfield. To thank the winners’ teachers for their support of “Letters About Literature in Illinois,” each school receives a \$100 check from the Illinois Center for the Book to purchase books for their school library.

“Letters About Literature in Illinois” supports Common Core State Standards across all grade levels. The program also promotes reader response to literature and supports national standards established by both the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association. The winning letters are available to read at [Illinois Center for the Book \(ilsos.gov\)](https://ilsos.gov).