

KET announces winners of its 2021 Young Writers Contest

FOR RELEASE: May 11, 2021

KET is pleased to announce the winners of its 2021 Young Writers Contest. The annual contest encourages creative expression and literacy development by inviting students in kindergarten through 12th grade to submit original illustrated stories, short stories and poetry.

This year, KET received more than 590 submissions from across Kentucky.

Leatha Kendrick, a Lexington author of five poetry collections who served as one of the judges for the contest, said she found it difficult to narrow down the finalists, given the quality of the work.

“What a tough job to judge these poems!” Kendrick said. “I was impressed with the depth of thought, the courage, and the strong voices of so many of these poets. Each of these poets deserves the recognition you are giving their work with this contest.”

The top three winners, along with a list of finalists for each division, are listed below. Full versions of the winning entries will be available online at [KET.org/writerscontest](https://ket.org/writerscontest).

Kindergarten — Illustrated Story

First place: Caroline Reynolds, homeschool, Lexington

Second place: Wriston Iocco, homeschool, Walton

Third place: Greta Walther, Squires Elementary, Lexington

Finalists:

- Oath Smith, Newton Parrish Elementary, Owensboro
- Rainie Lin, Rosa Parks Elementary School, Lexington
- Johnbo Morrison-Taylor, Second Presbyterian Weekday Preschool, Louisville

First Grade — Illustrated Story

First place: Nathan Hardin, Cirque Hardin (homeschool), Louisville

Second place: Dawson Abney, Model Lab Elementary School, Richmond

Third place: Maryam Gauhar, Greathouse Shryock Elementary, Louisville

Finalists:

- Adalynn Kennedy, Custer Elementary School, Hardinsburg
- David Sun, Rosa Parks Elementary School, Lexington
- Mary Alice Sienkiewicz, Cassidy Elementary, Lexington
- Carson Miller, MBP, Richmond
- Noah Poly, Poly Academy, Lexington

Second Grade — Illustrated Story

First place: Grace Hardin, Cirque Hardin (homeschool), Louisville

Second place: Madison Iocco, homeschool, Walton

Third place: Raiyan Elmerse, Norton Elementary School, Louisville

Finalists:

- Eden Stanley, Daniel Boone Elementary, Richmond
- Nova Sutton, Glenn Marshall Elementary, Richmond
- Jesse Simpson, Waco Elementary, Waco
- Shelton Stepp, Shannon Johnson Elementary, Berea
- Alice Kim, Norton Commons Elementary, Louisville
- Ali Jaber, Islamic School Of Louisville, Louisville

Third Grade — Illustrated Story

First place: Ellie Groene, Beechwood Elementary, Fort Mitchell

Second place: Elliot Murry, The Lexington School, Lexington

Third place: Melody Yates, Yates Homeschool Academy, Winchester

Finalists:

- Pinkie Lin, Rosa Parks Elementary School, Lexington
- Faith Lee, Wilmore Elementary School, Wilmore
- Joseph Fox, Williamstown Elementary School, Williamstown

- Payton Pelfrey, Williamstown Elementary School, Williamstown
- Stella Heathcoat, Biscuits & Gravy Homeschool, Lexington
- Ben Schissler, Louisville Classical Academy, Louisville
- Porter Dodson, Newton Parrish Elementary, Owensboro

Intermediate — Illustrated Story

First place: Adah Hardin, Cirque Hardin (homeschool), Louisville

Second place: Ibraheem Gauhar, Greathouse Shryock Elementary, Louisville

Third place: Charlotte Pohn, The Waldorf School of Louisville, Louisville

Finalists:

- Anika Fauver, The Waldorf School of Louisville, Louisville
- Lucas Glasnovic, homeschool, Louisville
- Davis Borders, Garrett Morgan Elementary, Lexington
- Sylvia Mason, Coral Ridge Elementary, Louisville
- Ella Hanson, The Frankfort Christian Academy, Owenton
- Huda Hasnain, Islamic School of Louisville, Goshen

Intermediate — Short Story

First place: Nika Heidinger, St. Matthews Elementary School, Louisville

Second place: Asher Cohen, The Waldorf School of Louisville, Louisville

Third place: Peyton Kennedy, Custer Elementary School, Hardinsburg

Finalists:

- Megan Simon, Livermore Elementary School, Calhoun
- Zoe Kasacavage, Cassidy Elementary, Lexington
- Lydia Wiseman, Ashland Elementary, Lexington
- Bella O'Connor, Brandeis Elementary, Louisville
- Piper Carlisle, McBrayer Elementary, Morehead
- Emma Brown, Louisville Classical Academy, Louisville
- Nicol Cohen, Waldorf School of Louisville, Louisville
- Avery O'Brien, Pride Elementary, Madisonville
- Gabriella Maldonado, Baker Intermediate, Winchester

- Abigail Mitchell, River Ridge Elementary, Villa Hills

Middle Grades — Short Story

First place: Alyssa Pollard, Noe Middle School, Louisville

Second place: Emma Garner, Marnel C. Moorman School, Simpsonville

Third place: Sophia Taylor, Highlands Middle School, Fort Thomas

Finalists:

- Zaine Elmerse, Crosby Middle School, Louisville
- Jaycie Wilcox, Anderson County Middle School, Lawrenceburg
- Albany Vincent, Ramsey Middle School, Louisville
- Mia Lequire, Lequire Academy Homeschool, Banner
- Carriann Campbell, McLean County Middle School, Utica
- Ansley Cecil, McLean County Middle School, Calhoun

High School — Short Story

First place: Zach Herp, Eastern High School, Louisville

Second place: Abby Kane, Dixie Heights High School, Crestview Hills

Third place: Olivia Lewis, Western Hills High School, Frankfort

Finalists:

- Jon Mills, Barbourville High School, Bimble
- Christine Lee, duPont Manual High School, Louisville
- Ella Fogle, Daviess County High School, Utica
- Zoe Schaeffer, Henry Clay High School, Lexington
- Lucy Cunningham, Franklin County High School, Frankfort
- Victoria Korchuk, Woodford County High School, Versailles
- Hailey Lin, Eastern High School, Louisville
- Emma Henderson, Eastern High School, Louisville
- Lauren Wood, duPont Manual High School, Louisville
- Nikki Shouse, Western Hills High School, Frankfort

Intermediate — Poetry

First place: Sylvia Mason, Coral Ridge Elementary, Louisville

Second place: Charlotte Garman, St. Albert the Great School, Louisville

Third place: Michael Reljac, Model Laboratory School, Richmond

Finalists:

- Caitlyn Douglas, SCAPA Bluegrass, Lexington
- Jack Reinecke, Cline Elementary, Cold Spring
- Sawyer Thornton, homeschool, Louisville
- Robert Swansburg, Louisville Classical Academy, Louisville
- Colt Cook, Lancaster Elementary, Lancaster
- Liam Moffett, Mercer County Intermediate School, Harrodsburg
- Presley Norton McClure, Mercer County Intermediate School, Harrodsburg

Middle Grades — Poetry

First place: Nashell Broughton Robinson, Newburg Middle School, Louisville

Second place: Jacoby Smith, Newburg Middle School, Louisville

Third place: Nina Tay, SCAPA at Bluegrass, Lexington

Finalists:

- Dwight Thompson, Newburg Middle School, Louisville
- Lily Berfield, Noe Middle School, Louisville
- Ethan Holtsclaw, Highland Middle School, Louisville
- Della Peron, Louisville Classical Academy, Louisville
- Cadence Perman, Farristown Middle School, Berea
- Ethne Fleming, Capital Day School, Frankfort
- Nancy Kirk, Gray Middle School, Union
- Hajar Elayyadi, Conner Middle School, Hebron

High School — Poetry

First place: Kiran Koul, Paul L. Dunbar High School, Lexington

Second place: Macie Hill, Madison Southern High School, Berea

Third place: Maira Faisal, Dixie Heights High School, Florence

Finalists:

- Katie Norman, Frankfort High School, Frankfort
- Kathleen Bauer, Lafayette High School, Lexington
- Caylin Kohlstruck, Eastern High School, Louisville
- Emma Henderson, Eastern High School, Louisville
- Evelyn Parsons, Madison Southern High School, Berea
- Madison Sharon, Madison Southern High School, Richmond
- Abby Kane, Dixie Heights High School, Crestview Hills
- Mayukha Bhamidipati, duPont Manual High School, Louisville

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