KET announces winners of 2025 Young Writers Contest

FOR RELEASE: May 12, 2025

KET is pleased to announce the winners of the 2025 Young Writers Contest. The annual contest encourages creative expression and literacy development by inviting students in grades Pre-K through high school to submit original graphic novels, illustrated stories, poetry and short stories.

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.

Illustrated Story - Early Elementary (Pre-K, K, 1)
First Place: Greyson Branham, Dorton Elementary, Jenkins
Second Place: Charlotte Dyal, Glenn Marshall Elementary, Richmond
Third Place: Remi Woosley, Glenn Marshall Elementary, Richmond

Illustrated Story – Elementary
First Place: Arlette Rodriguez, St. John School, Georgetown
Second Place: Madelyn Burgin, Eastern Elementary, Pleasureville
Third Place: Thomas Hayes, Homeschool, Pewee Valley

Illustrated Story – Elementary Intermediate
First Place: Vivian Ahlgrim, St. John School, Georgetown
Second Place: Katherine Hamm, Oak Hill Elementary, Somerset
Third Place: Bailey Schreiner, Lexington Christian Academy, Nicholasville

Illustrated Story – Middle School
First Place: Emma Ritter, Crosby Middle, Louisville
Second Place: Clara Schlafer, Western Middle School for the Arts, Louisville
Third Place: Heidi Freeman, Crosby Middle, Louisville

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Illustrated Story – High School

First Place: Riley Mitchell, Danville High School, Danville

Graphic Novel – Elementary

First Place: Libby Jones, Central Elementary, Benton
Second Place: Avery Leonard, Central Elementary, Benton
Third Place: Evelyn Parrino, Bates Elementary School, Louisville
Fourth Place: Hadiyah Gauhar, Chenoweth Elementary, Louisville

Graphic Novel – Middle School

First Place: Lucie McCaffrey, SCAPA Bluegrass, Lexington
Second Place: Maddie Schreiner, Lexington Christian Academy, Nicholasville

Graphic Novel – High School

First Place: Alice Lugauer, Lafayette High School, Lexington
Second Place: Meredith Sither, Lafayette High School, Lexington

Short Story – Elementary

First Place: Theodore Thomas, Oak Grove Classical, Philpot
Second Place: Paisely Mitchell, Custer Elementary School, Custer
Third Place: Sophie Gillispie, Garrett Morgan Elementary School, Lexington

Short Story – Elementary Intermediate

First Place: Sarah-Nur Islam, Meadowthorpe, Lexington
Second Place: Noelle VanYperen, Goshen Elementary at Hillcrest, Goshen
Third Place: Dorothy Weinberger, Murray Middle, Murray

Short Story – Middle School

First Place: Nandini Sakineni, Winburn Middle School, Lexington
Second Place: Amelia White, Highland Middle, Louisville
Third Place: Arlo Pannell, Grayson County Middle School, Leitchfield

Short Story – High School

First Place: El Arnold, Danville High School, Danville

Second Place: Rachel Jones, Lafayette High School, Lexington
Third Place: Emma Phillips, Joyful Hearts Homeschool, Campbellsburg

Poetry – Elementary
First Place: Alisha Raheja, Greathouse / Shryock Elementary, Louisville
Second Place: Savannah Weinold, Clear Creek Elementary School, Shelbyville
Third Place: Liam Burgin, Eastern Elementary, Pleasureville

Poetry – Elementary Intermediate
First Place: Sarah El-Shaarawy, Lansdowne Elementary, Lexington
Second Place: Emma Parsons, Model Laboratory School, Richmond

Poetry – Middle School
First Place: Zachary Maurmeier, Hebron Middle School, Shepherdsville
Second Place: Tegan Donaghy, Crosby Middle School, Louisville
Third Place: Mike Williams, King Middle School, Harrodsburg

Poetry – High School
First Place: Destini Gruber, Marion County High School, Bradfordsville
Second Place: Lily Kouns, Wolf Creek Academy, Greenup
Third Place: Karynn Scruggs, Hopkins County Central High School, Providence

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