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Photos and additional writing samples available on request.

Writing about Place: A Contest for Hudson Valley Students

Hyde Park, NY – Each year Teaching the Hudson Valley (THV) invites children and teens, grades K-12, to tell us about places in the Hudson Valley that have special meaning for them. Here is the key information.

Eligibility. Students who live and/or attend school in the 11-county Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area including Westchester, Ulster, Saratoga, Rockland, Rensselaer, Putnam, Orange, Greene, Dutchess, Columbia, and Albany counties are eligible. Work should be recent -- completed during summer or fall of 2016 -- and submitted by midnight, Monday, November 7.

What to write. Students in grades K-4 write poems, paragraphs, or short stories about museums, historic sites, or parks in their community or elsewhere in the Hudson Valley. Older students may choose one of two prompts www.teachingthehudsonvalley.org/prompts2016/, designed to provoke more complex thinking and writing.

Awards. All submissions will be considered for publication on THV’s blog. The classes of three students – one each from grades K-4, 5-8, and 9-12 – will receive up to $900 to cover transportation and admission fees so they can share their place with classmates. To be considered for prizes, places written about must be regularly open to the public, have cultural, historic, or natural significance; and be owned or managed by a not-for-profit or government entity.

Evaluation. Readers will look for evocation of place, a lively style, and use of conventions appropriate to each student's age and development. Submissions will be read by teachers and staff from museums, historic sites, NYS DEC's Estuary Program, and the Hudson River Valley Institute at Marist College.

Parents, teachers or others with questions regarding Writing about Place may get get guidelines, prize information, and other details at www.teachingthehudsonvalley.org/writingoverview2016/. For additional questions contact THV at info@teachingthehudsonvalley.org or 845-229-9116, ext. 2035.
Excerpts from last years’ student writing

From My Storm Kingdom
Therese Fischer, grade 9, Newburgh Free Academy, Newburgh City Schools, Orange County

My mother has always been interested and intrigued with the beauty of art. She used to persuade my siblings and me to come with her to Storm King Art Center. My younger brother, Luke, would complain about the heat, while I would trudge up the paved path. My older siblings were better sports about it.

I can remember staring up at a chipped orange sculpture, seeing nothing. Or the times I would angrily walk up the steep, dry hills with the sun burning my shoulders. However, over time, I have come to see how fortunate we were to be introduced to things so expressive and special as art. I’m not agitated, but eager to see sculptures I have already seen. I always have an impulse touch, to extend beyond what I see and hear. Every time I look, I see something new that I didn’t see the time before.

From Sunshine, salt marsh, and sand shrimp: My visit to the Marshlands Conservancy in Rye
Archie Lakhman, grade 6, Hommocks Middle School, Mamaroneck Union Free School District, Westchester County

We got on our boots and our bright coats and we went to the Marshlands Conservancy in Rye. It is easy to get to, you almost don’t notice it. We did notice the big houses nearby, though!!

The first thing we did was explore the visitors’ lodge. Scott is the director there and he showed us so many cool animals. There is a microscope and you can look at animal skulls and feathers. It’s awesome! We looked at horseshoe crabs, which are very funny animals. Actually they are almost insects, because they are more like ticks. Scott told us how we can tell if it’s a male or a female crab — the males have boxing gloves!

From Fishkill Farms
Asa Miller, grade 3, Haldane ES, Putnam County

The apple cider donuts at Fishkill Farms are terrific. The best part of the donuts is the cinnamon. The cinnamon makes my day!

The donuts are soft and messy. The donuts have many tiny crumbs and the cinnamon gets all over you.

Down in the pumpkin patch you won’t believe how many pumpkins there are!

The pumpkins are big and they’re little. They’re orange and white. The big round pumpkins are beautiful.