



National Essay Contest

● Dare to be You! ●

**Winning essays published in a real book,
\$600 in cash prizes, and much much more.**

Easy to incorporate into any Language Arts program.

Who can enter

The competition is open to all students (including homeschoolers) in the United States and Canada. Students must be in grades 3-7 or the equivalent according to their school system.

Essay Topic

Students will be asked to think of a situation where they find themselves behaving in ways that don't reflect who they truly are. Then they shall dare themselves to make a change. (Example: For the next week, I DARE to stop saying hurtful things to my little brother because I am NOT a mean person. I am a kind person.) Of course, change doesn't always happen overnight, so they should try it for at least a week. Once students have completed the Dare, they should each write a personal essay about their experience.

Evaluation Criteria

All essays will be judged against the following criteria:

- Engaging voice and writing style
- Originality of content
- Clear purpose
- Appropriate tone and natural word choice
- Organization and logic
- Writing mechanics and spelling

Prizes

Finalists' entries will be published in a yet-to-be-titled paperback anthology. Each finalist will receive a complimentary copy of the book and a certificate of achievement. Among the finalists, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in each grade will each receive a cash award of \$50, \$20, \$10 respectively, and one Grand Prize winner will a **\$200 cash award**.



Deadline:

All entries must be postmarked by March 31st, 2010.

Take the Dare: Dare to be You Essay Contest • The Rules •

Who can enter? The competition is open to all students (including homeschoolers) in the United States and Canada. Students must be in grades 3-7 or the equivalent according to their school system.

Entry Categories

Grade 3
Grade 4
Grade 5
Grade 6
Grade 7

Entrants will compete with other entrants in his or her grade level for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places and one (1) Grand Prize which will be awarded to any Grade Level.

Prizes

Depending on the quality of work received, an undetermined number of entries will be chosen as finalists. Finalists' entries will be published in a yet-to-be-titled paperback anthology. Each finalist will receive a complimentary copy of the anthology. Each finalist will also receive a certificate of achievement.

Among the finalists, winners for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place and Grand Prize will be chosen.

In addition to publication, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners and the Grand Prize winner will also receive a cash prize.

1st Place Winners: \$50
2nd Place Winners: \$25
3rd Place Winners: \$10

The Grand Prize winner will receive a \$200 cash award.

Bonus Prizes – All entrants who dare at least three of their qualifying peers (students in grades 3-7) to enter the contest will also receive a bookplate and bookmark autographed by Cynthea Liu, author of PARIS PAN TAKES THE DARE.

Entry Limit: An entrant may submit only one (1) entry. There is no charge.

Deadline: All entries must be postmarked by March 31st, 2010 and mailed to TAKE THE DARE Essay Contest, PO Box 577552, Chicago, IL 60613.

Results: Finalists and placement of finalists will be announced in May 2010 at www.cynthealiu.com/contests. Certificates and bonus prizes will be delivered via U.S. mail soon after. We anticipate the published anthology will be delivered to finalists in summer 2010.

Rights:

Contest entry grants exclusive print and electronic rights to Pivotal Publishing to publish the entrant's essay and biography without compensation. All entries will become property of Pivotal Publishing and will not be returned. Contest entry also grants Pivotal Publishing authorization to exercise editorial privileges in the course of preparing the essay and biography to conform to its standard style of punctuation, spelling, capitalization and usage.

Questions? Email contest@cynthealiu.com

Take the Dare: Dare to be You Essay Contest • Entry Form •

- This form must be completed in its entirety by a parent or legal guardian
- Work will only be considered from students in grades 3 through 7.

Entrant's essay title _____

Entrant's full name _____ Email _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____ Male/Female

Parent or Guardian's Name _____ Email _____

Mailing Address _____

Entering contest through school? Y/N School's name _____

School's Contact Name: _____ Contact Email _____

School's Mailing Address: _____

School's Phone Number: _____

The enclosed original work will be entered in the TAKE THE DARE: Dare to be You! Essay Contest with the understanding that with the acceptance of this entry, the entrant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Cynthea Liu, Pivotal Publishing, associated members, officers, and judges from liability resulting in any actions arising from, or relating to, the judging and handling of this entry, and conducting, sponsoring and advertising this competition as well as liability resulting from the actions of any entrant participating in the contest.

I acknowledge that I have read and accepted the rules of the TAKE THE DARE: Dare to be You! Essay contest. I certify that I am the parent or guardian of the entrant submitting this entry and that the entrant has my permission to enter this contest.

If this entry is chosen for publication, I give Pivotal Publishing permission to publish entrant's essay and biography without any additional notice or compensation. I understand that the entrant's name, grade, school, city and state, will be the only identifying information included in the publication, and that Pivotal Publishing will own the copyright to the entrant's work.

Printed name of Parent or Legal Guardian

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Take the Dare: Dare to be You Essay Contest • Submission Checklist •

- ✓ The permission form has been completed – may be handwritten
- ✓ The official Dare form has been completed – may be handwritten
- ✓ The essay has been completed
 - The essay is an original **personal nonfiction essay** written for the contest or as a school assignment (no poetry, please).
 - The essay is no longer than 750 words.
 - The essay has a title.
 - It is written in English.
 - It is written in **first person**.
 - It is **typed**, 12 point font, Times New Roman, double-spaced.
 - It is available in electronic form as a Word document or RTF file if the essay is chosen as a finalist.
 - **No** graphics are used within the essay or entry forms.
- ✓ The Entrant's name, grade, and email address (email address of parent or teacher, if entering contest through school) appear on every page of the official Dare form, permission form, and essay.
- ✓ The permission form, the official Dare form, and the essay are paper-clipped together.
- ✓ Teachers: You may submit your students' submissions together in one envelope, so long as the permission form, official Dare form, and essay are paper-clipped together for each student.
- ✓ All entries must be mailed to Cynthia Liu, TAKE THE DARE Essay Contest, P.O. Box 577552, Chicago, IL 60613 and postmarked on or before March 31, 2010.

ATTENTION TEACHERS AND PARENTS:

How to Prepare Students for the Essay Contest

- **Read or assign PARIS PAN TAKES THE DARE to students.**
 - Consider having a few copies of PARIS PAN in your school's library (if applicable) so students can check it out on their own.
 - Classroom sets of PARIS PAN TAKES THE DARE may be ordered from the publisher at a 40% discount or through your local bookseller. Visit www.cynthealiu.com/books/parispan for book order instructions.
- **Consider doing optional activities** to make the contest a true event! Visit www.cynthealiu.com/discuss for more fun and educational ways to incorporate PARIS PAN into your lesson plans.
 - Discussion guides
 - Reader's Theatre
 - Writing warm-up (included in this packet)
 - Craft projects
- **Invite students to chat with the author** about the book via an in-person or online visit. See <http://www.cynthealiu.com/authorvisits> for more information on bringing Cynthea to your classroom.

Judging Criteria

Keep the following points in mind if you will be making the essay a class assignment or helping students with revisions. The writing warm-up is a great guide for helping students think about what to include in their own essays. All essays will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- Engaging voice and writing style
- Originality of content
- Clear purpose
- Appropriate tone and natural word choice
- Organization and logic
- Writing mechanics and spelling

ATTENTION STUDENTS:

TAKE THE DARE: Dare to be You!

Now it's your turn to take the Dare that Paris Pan should have been taking all along—
DARE TO BE YOU!

Think of a situation where *you* find yourself doing things that don't reflect who you truly are. Then dare yourself to make the change. Of course, change doesn't always happen overnight, so give it a try for at least a week. Like any dare, tell someone--your teacher, your friend, your parents-- what you plan to do, and make that someone hold you to it.

Examples of things you might dare yourself to do.

For the next week, I hereby DARE to treat the least popular girl in my class better than I have in the past. I am NOT snobby. I am friendly.

For the next week, I hereby DARE to stop being lazy and help my mom and dad around the house because I am NOT lazy. I am helpful.

For the next week, I DARE to stop saying hurtful things to my little brother because I am NOT a mean person. I am a kind person.

Once you've completed your Dare, write a personal essay describing your experience. Feel free to use the PARIS PAN warm-up as a guide. It might help you figure out what you might want to discuss about your experience. And don't forget about the rules!

The Rules

- ✓ The essay is an original **personal nonfiction essay** written for the contest or as a school assignment (no poetry, please).
- ✓ The essay is no longer than 750 words.
- ✓ The essay has a title.
- ✓ It is written in English.
- ✓ It is written in **first person**.
- ✓ It is **typed**, 12 point font, Times New Roman, double-spaced.
- ✓ It is available in electronic form as a Word document or RTF file if the essay is chosen as a finalist.
- ✓ **No** graphics are used within the essay or entry forms.

Entrant's Full Name _____
Entrant's Grade _____ Entrant's School _____
Contact Email Address _____

THE OFFICIAL DARE

For the next week, I hereby DARE _____

_____.

I am NOT _____.

I am _____.

Signature of Daree (that's you!)

Date

Hereby witnessed by:

Signature of Witness

Date

Were you dared by a friend to enter the contest? Print their name below. If not, leave blank.

_____ (Darer)

TAKE THE DOUBLE-DARE

Dare three of your friends in grade 3-7 to enter the TAKE THE DARE: DARE TO BE YOU! Essay contest and win a bonus prize. You will receive an **autographed** bookplate and bookmark from Cynthea Liu, the author of PARIS PAN TAKES THE DARE.

Just provide your friends' names below so we know who you dared, and if they turn in their contest submission saying *you* dared them to do it, they will receive an autographed bookplate and bookmark, too. Double bonus!

Friend #1 (please PRINT name) _____ Grade _____
Friend #2 (please PRINT name) _____ Grade _____
Friend #3 (please PRINT name) _____ Grade _____