

December 13, 2007

Dear Jerry Spinelli,

affected

I read your book Stargirl, and it really inspired me. I like all the characters and they all taught me something. Hillari Kimble taught me not to be stubborn or angry all the time, because nobody would want to be around you. Leo taught me to always give people some sort of a chance, even if they are different. Stargirl taught me the most important lesson. You should forget about what other people think about you and just be yourself. Being yourself is better than trying to be someone else or something you're not because you enjoy yourself more and you don't always have to worry like, "Am I doing this?" or "Am I acting or dressing like that?" Plus, in reality, none of that really matters, and ten years later everyone would forget about what jeans or shoes you had. They would care about what kind of person you are then. Also, if everyone acted like one person, the world would be a bore! If you don't let people be different, you won't get to meet a lot of really cool people. Like in the book, Leo wants Stargirl to change and she does it anyway even though she doesn't want to just to make him happy. Then she left and Leo must have realized what a big mistake he made and he missed out on getting to know her better and see what different humans can be like.

I also think it is neat how Stargirl changed her name when she thought it didn't fit her anymore.

The happy wagon is awesome because it shows her feelings, and when you read the book, it makes you think more about how she is feeling and why. I even have my own happy wagon!

meaningful

I thought about the line where it says "When Stargirl cries, she does not shed tears, but light." and I think it means that when we are sad, you can tell because we cry. When Stargirl was sad, she didn't cry, but she did things for other people so they wouldn't be sad too, but the whole time Leo thought she just didn't notice that people were making fun of her.

I also have pet rats, so I know what they are like!

affected

There was also something else I learned from Stargirl:
Always cheer for the other teams!

Sincerely,

Kelin Doner

Author Letter – Writing Assignment Evaluation

Name Kelin Dorner

Number 3

Author Jerry Spinnelli

Student Evaluation

- Highlight and label on your letter where you discuss how this book was meaningful to you.

What grade would you give yourself for this part of the letter?

B+

- Highlight and label how the book affected you.

What grade would you give yourself for this part of the letter?

2

Was your writing clear and easily understood?

Yes

Not always

Circle your best writing in your letter.
Explain here why this writing is good.

I think that part of my writing is good because I told what I thought with examples from the book.

Teacher Comments

Neatness +

Spelling +

Effort +

Final Grade A



Washington
Secretary of State
SAM REED

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6880 Capitol Boulevard S
PO Box 42460
Olympia, WA 98504-2460
Tel: 360.704.5200
Fax: 360.586.7575
www.secstate.wa.gov/library

March 7, 2008

Dear Student,

Congratulations! You have been selected as a Washington State semi-finalist in the 2007-2008 Letters About Literature program.

You are one of only 181 semi-finalists chosen from the more than 2,500 Washington students who participated this year. You can check Washington State Library's web site to see your name listed with other semi-finalists.

You are cordially invited to the Letters About Literature Awards Ceremony on Friday, April 4, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. in the Capitol Rotunda in the Legislative Building in Olympia, Washington. A reception with light refreshments will immediately follow the ceremony. Your family members are welcome to join you at the ceremony, but please note, seating is limited and attendees may have to stand during the ceremony.

All semi-finalists can pick up their Letters About Literature award certificate and be recognized during the ceremony. Certificates will be available for pick up beginning at 1:00 p.m. in the Capitol Rotunda on the 2nd floor. If you are unable to attend the ceremony, your certificate will be mailed to you. For more information about parking and other services in Olympia, please see the enclosed list.

Letters About Literature is a reading and writing competition that challenges students to write to an author and describe how his or her book affected them. This competition is sponsored by the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress, the Washington State Library, a division of the Office of the Secretary of State, and Target stores.

Thank you for entering this year's Letters About Literature contest. Your example proves the power of reading and writing to open doorways to new worlds.

Sincerely,

SAM REED
Secretary of State

JAN WALSH
State Librarian

Enclosure



*Letters
About
Literature*

Awards Ceremony

April 4, 2008 • Capitol Rotunda • Olympia, Washington

WASHINGTON STATE LIBRARY



Washington
Secretary of State
SAM REED

Level III:

Acuna, Jon	Federal Way	Hollander, Samantha	Everson
Boe, Matthew*	Arlington	Kidane, Danait Girmai	Lynnwood
Chamberland, Alayna**	Olympia	Korf, Rebecca	Seattle
Denney, Heather	Brush Prairie	Pacheco, Arlette	Lynden
Frederick, Kirsty	Yelm	Pendergraft, Raechel	Lynnwood
Goodwin, Nastacia*	Everson	Post, Heather*	Vancouver
Graham, Maddie	Woodinville	Powell, Michael*	Woodinville
Greene, Stephanie	Woodinville	Ramos, Francisco Pablo*	Forks
Gutierrez, Berenice	Forks	Rodriguez, Gabriel Andre	Lynnwood
Gutierrez, Yesenia*	Forks	Spencer, Jeffrey	Woodinville
Hattan, Brian*	Pullman	Trost, Anja*	Woodinville
Heaslet, Derek	Uniontown	Wreggelsworth, Kristin	Arlington

Washington State's Letters About Literature 2007-2008 Champions

McKenzie Dent, a 6th grader at Zieger Elementary School in Puyallup, wrote the **Level I** champion letter. McKenzie wrote to Alice Mead, the author of *Soldier Mom*.

Dear Alice Mead,

My Dad didn't leave me because he wanted to. Soldier Mom helped me to know that by Jas having similar experiences. I have realized that although the Army has taken my dad away for a year, it is his job to serve in the war and keep our country free. Jas knows and understands what it feels like to hate the fact that one of our parents are in the Army. We both wish that they had never joined.

Though Jas has her mom gone, and I have my dad gone, we both know what it feels like to have such an important role in your life not being filled. No one else in this world can understand the kind of pain that the soldier and his/her family are going through, unless they have had the same exact situation in their life. Others will say "Oh, I'm so sorry" and "Is there anything that we can do to help?" But, the truth is: they don't understand and there is no way or thing that they can do or use to replace my dad or Jas's mom.

It hurts me to watch the news and see all of the bad things that are happening where my dad is right now. And I know that it hurts Jas too. When I watch the Iraq TV Specials, I start to understand why Martin Luther King Jr. was so insistent on having peace in the world. War is horrible. It kills soldiers and worries their family and friends around them.

When I read your book I kept asking myself the same questions: Did you have a similar experience? You wrote in such a way that I wondered that because you described the feeling of Jas so vividly. I was able to completely relate to Soldier Mom.

Thank you for writing Soldier Mom. I started to understand Jas's feelings and emotions which helped me to understand those of my own that I have bottled up inside of me. I feel like I know Jas. Now, I just have to learn to know myself.

Sincerely,
McKenzie Renee Dent