



Austin/Travis County CHALLENGE REQUIREMENTS, INFORMATION AND SURVEYS 2017-2018





WHY DO THE WRITE THING?

Do the Write Thing Benefits STUDENTS Because:

- They feel respected
- Their voice is heard
- High interest topic
- Introspective for students
- Meets TEKS requirements

Do the Write Thing Benefits TEACHERS Because:

- Five day writing plan provided that was developed by a successful master teacher complete and ready to go
- Real life scenarios with recent related articles have been created by current classroom teacher and are provided for classroom discussion to generate ideas
- Lesson plan that includes the Six Traits of Writing
- Foldable lesson included with a "how-to" video on the website
- Resource pages for foldable are included in the teacher packet
- Meets TEKS requirements for expository writing (see page 7)
- Can be used with all types of learners

In a 2014 study of Do the Write Thing conducted with students, teachers and parents by the University of Texas at El Paso, the Challenge was found to have strengthened relationships between students and their parents and teachers as well as creating a greater empathy for victims of violence and fostering a commitment to reduce violence.

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS

Thank you for involving your 7th and 8th grade students in the 2017-2018 *Do the Write Thing* Texas Challenge.

WHY *Do The Write Thing*?

The *Do the Write Thing* Texas writing challenge satisfies a number of objectives from the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum in English/Language Arts and Social Studies, and complements character building and drug abuse prevention programs.

Personal responsibility is emphasized.

Please review the information below for program rules and deadlines:

Entries will be judged on the basis of content, originality, and the most thought provoking and responsiveness to these three questions:

- **How has violence affected my life?**
- **What are the causes of violence?**
- **What can I do about violence?**

- All 7th and 8th grade student writers will receive a certificate of recognition for participating.
- Students must submit their writing along with the signed Student/Parent consent form.
- Student name on essay is acceptable, but no school name please.
- Submit all student writings so a certificate of recognition can be sent to the student.
- Entries that do not include a student or parental signature will not be advanced in the judging process. They will receive a certificate of recognition.
- Entries should be submitted in the form that they are received from the student writer.
- Editing for content, grammar, or spelling by someone other than the student is not permitted.
- No fictional writing in essays
- Essays can be either handwritten or typed, and **must be single-sided in blue or black ink only**. Essays written in pencil or double-sided will **not** be advanced in the judging process, but will receive a certificate of recognition.
- **Your school must submit a minimum of 25** papers to qualify for a school finalist.
- Students must staple the following together before submitting to their teacher:
 - The Student/Parent Consent Form (attached)
 - The original writing
- **REQUIRED:** Return a completed Teacher Survey (attached) and submit with your packaged student writings. Last year we received almost 13000 student writings from 40 school districts. The Teacher Survey will ensure all student writings are posted with the correct teacher, school and district.

ESSAY SUBMISSION DATES

SUBMIT YOUR ENTRIES BETWEEN MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH AND FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2017

**Austin/Travis County Do the Write Thing Texas Challenge
2515 S. Congress Ave.
Austin, Texas 78704**

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

Additional scenarios along with a PDF version of this Teacher Packet can be accessed under Teacher Resources tab at: www.dtwtx.org.

Classroom discussion is not a requirement for participating in the Challenge. However, candid discussions have proved to be beneficial. Classroom discussion provides an opportunity for educators to learn about problems simmering in school before the problems become crises.

Following are some questions to generate discussion among your students before they prepare their entries for the Challenge:

- When you hear the word violence, what thoughts or memories do you have?
- What are some signs of bullying? Can bullying be a prelude to violence? Can anything be done to reduce bullying?
- Can bystanders be the key to controlling some types of bullying? If safe, how can bystanders intervene? Why do bystanders allow violence by ignoring it or allowing it to happen? How can we change this? Can learning empathy change bullying?
- Do you think the media promotes violence? How does the amount of violence portrayed in movies, music, books, TV, newspapers, videogames, and internet sites affect you? Are today's young people being desensitized about violence due to the amount of violence they are exposed to on a daily basis?
- Do teen celebrity role models influence today's youth to dress provocatively, diet to be thin, drink underage and make poor decisions? Are they sending the wrong message to their fans?
- Are reality shows teaching us that it is ok to be rude and uncaring to others?

LOCAL AND NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Local Level

The **Austin/Travis County Do the Write Thing** Committee coordinates the program locally. The Committee will organize a recognition ceremony to honor the boy and girl finalists from each participating school. The student's parents, teacher, principal, and superintendent will be invited to attend. The committee will publish the writings of all school finalists, and distribute the book to civic leaders.

LOCAL CONTACT INFORMATION:

Estela Medina email: Estela.Medina@traviscountytexas.gov
phone: (512) 854-7069

Creschenda Horton email: Creschenda.Horton@traviscountytexas.gov
phone: (512) 854-5650

National Level

Two National Finalists will be chosen for the **Austin/Travis County Challenge**. These finalists, along with one parent and their teacher are invited by the *National Campaign to Stop Violence* to attend the *Do the Write Thing* Challenge National Recognition Week activities in Washington, D.C.

Past National Recognition Week activities have included meeting with the Secretary of the Department of Education, the Attorney General of the United States, and members of Congress to discuss the problem of violence. Students have also been honored at embassy receptions hosted by the Ambassador to the United States from the State of Kuwait.

Disclaimer: Student Finalists attending the National recognition events must depart from and return to their original local *Do the Write Thing* Texas city site.

2017-2018 TEACHER SURVEY - (REQUIRED)

Your packaged Student Writings must be packaged together with this survey.

Dr. _ Mr. _ Ms. _ Mrs. _ TEACHER'S FIRST NAME: (please print) LAST NAME: (please print)

School Email Address: _____ School Phone Number: _____

Name of School: _____

Address of School: _____

City:

Zip

Dr. _ Mr. _ Ms. _ Mrs. ___ PRINCIPAL'S FIRST NAME: (please print) LAST NAME: (please print)

Teacher's Cell: _____ Teacher's Personal Email: _____

Questions 1 and 2 (required)

1. Approximate number of your students submitting writings for the Challenge. _____

2. Did you have a classroom discussion about violence before your students prepared their writings for the Challenge? (yes) (no)

Number of your students who participated (were present) for the discussion.

1-50 51-100 101-150 151-200 201-250 251-300 301-350 over 351

3. Did you use any of the TEKS correlated scenarios provided with the teacher packet? (yes) (no)

4. **Comments**

Optional questions:

5. What (in your opinion) were the **top three causes of violence** identified by your students?

6. What (in your opinion) were the **top three solutions for violence** identified by your students?

2017-2018 STUDENT AND PARENT CONSENT FORM - (REQUIRED)

*****ALL SECTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED*****

(Clearly print information in the boxes below.)

STUDENTS FIRST NAME

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

MIDDLE NAME OR INITIAL

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

LAST NAME

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

STUDENT'S GRADE: _____

STUDENT'S AGE: _____

GENDER: Male _____ (or) Female _____

STUDENT'S MAILING ADDRESS (street number, street name, city and zip code):

STUDENT'S PHONE NUMBER: _____

SCHOOL: _____

DISTRICT: _____

TEACHER'S NAME: _____

STUDENT AND PARENT CONSENT STATEMENT

The National Campaign to Stop Violence, which sponsors the *Do the Write Thing Texas* Challenge, will publish selected student writings and quotations in a book and in a research paper on youth violence. Prior to publishing the student's essay, the Texas Challenge and the National Campaign requires the written consent of the student, and the written consent of the student's parent. If the above-named student and his/her parent agree to permit the Texas Challenge and the National Campaign to publish the student's writing, sign the following statement:

We agree to give ownership of the attached student writing to the *Do the Write Thing Texas* Challenge and to the *National Campaign to Stop Violence* so that the writing can be considered for analysis, recognition and/or publication in print and on the Texas Challenge Website.

STUDENT Agreed:

PARENT Agreed:

Signature of Student

Signature of Parent

Printed Name Student

Printed Name Parent

Student Email

Parent Email

STAPLE THIS FORM ON TOP OF YOUR ORIGINAL WRITING BEFORE SUBMITTING TO YOUR TEACHER