



Dear SYA teacher,

The National Steinbeck Center thanks you warmly for your support of the Steinbeck Young Authors program, now in its 16th year. To greet and watch all the young writers during the Day of Writing is an incredible experience.

We encourage each of you to sign up early for the 2018 – 2019 program. Registration is available online at Steinbeck.org. Teachers who sign up **before September 28** will be given a free Steinbeck book of your choosing. This small gift helps convey the NSC's appreciation for your continuing support.

In 2018-19, as in the past two years, there is **no charge for school participation**.

What are the aims of the Steinbeck Young Authors' program? The Steinbeck Young Authors (SYA) Middle School Program motivates student writers and improves the writing skills of middle school students using a multi-level study of a single work by John Steinbeck, *The Red Pony*. This program:

- Introduces students to the work of a Nobel Prize winning author John Steinbeck, a Salinas native.
- Demonstrates the importance of place-based fiction. Students love a story set in the area they know well.
- Shows that reading and writing are richly rewarding experiences.
- Meets the California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and ELD.
- Emphasizes the importance of strong writing skills throughout school and life.
- Connects students with community leaders and university students who value the written word—on the Days of Writing.
- Recognizes improved writing skills among non-native English language students as well as proficient writers.
- Promotes a strong vocabulary and close reading skills for all students.

How does the program benefit teachers and schools?

- Provides exciting opportunities for professional development for teachers. In 2018-19 the NSC staff will be available for site visits. On **October 11 from 4:30-6:30**, we are also offering a reception and teacher workshop for new and experienced teachers at the NSC. The discussion/workshop will focus on best practices.
- The program offers free admission for a school field trip to the National Steinbeck Center as well as discounts on books in our Museum Store. Discounts are also available to teachers and students for all NSC programs, including the annual Steinbeck Festival, to be held in 2019 on the first weekend in May.

- Sends to each school a copy of the *Gabilan Journal*, published by the National Steinbeck Center, which contains **ALL** of the essays written by student finalists of the 2018-2019 Steinbeck Young Authors Day of Writing, as well as pictures of every student participant with his or her writing coach.
- Schools that enroll in the program will receive a password, which will give teachers access to all of the Steinbeck Young Authors curriculum materials.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- **September 20, 2018** Early Registration deadline
- **October 11, 2018** SYA Teachers Talking to Teachers: Best Practices 4:30-6:30 PM at the NSC, includes refreshments
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- **October 26, 2018** Registration Deadline (Submit Teacher Participant Names)
- **September 17, 2018 – April 26, 2019** Field Trips to the NSC (*must reserve 2 weeks ahead*)
- **February 15, 2019** Student Nominations Due (Final Deadline)
- **March 4, 2019** Day of Writing! Nominated students come to NSC to write!
- **April 27, 2019** Awards Ceremony

To register for this exciting middle school program, please choose one of the following methods to submit your Teach Registration form. If you need digital or paper copies of our forms, ALL forms can be found on our website for immediate download: www.steinbeck.org/education/young-authors. All forms are due **by October 26, 2018**. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Tara Spada, tara@steinbeck.org.

Ways to turn in your forms:

- Fax form to (831) 796-3828
- Email to programs@steinbeck.org
- Fill out the online form: <https://goo.gl/forms/8ZqPlw9wEA1n1p783>

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to working with each of you on this signature program, now in its 16th year!

Sincerely,

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