



**National Steinbeck Center  
Steinbeck Young Authors High School  
JOHN STEINBECK WRITING AWARD**

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Dear Student,

Welcome to Steinbeck Young Authors High School Writing Contest!

The National Steinbeck Center invites any senior in Monterey County high schools to write a thoughtful, persuasive essay around a discussion that explores the importance and understanding of John Steinbeck's writing in today's world and how he awakens the readers' social consciousness through his works. This year's essay topic will be **"Why Read John Steinbeck?"**

In the spirit of John Steinbeck's works, you are invited to write about issues and ideas prominent in today's world that may parallel those issues and ideas reflected in works you have read by Steinbeck. As you think about the prompt, consider the ways in which Steinbeck influences your thinking or ways you have developed your thinking about your life, your goals, and/or your dreams. You may want to discuss Steinbeck in relation to other writers you have read or consider explorations focusing on the individual faced with challenges and decisions in a complex world. You may want to explore sense of place, the Salinas Valley, the place where you have grown up, or the agricultural influence around you.

Remember, freedom of expression is one of democracy's most powerful tools, and you have an opportunity to let your voice be heard through the medium of the written word.

John Steinbeck Writing Award 2020: First Place \$1,000; Second Place \$750; Third Place \$500.

Your essay should develop a clearly stated thesis that reveals author's purpose, shows clear and effective organizational structure, uses relevant compelling evidence, and engages the reader in thoughtful discourse.

Your essay contest submission will need to be 3-5 pages in length, double-spaced using Times New Roman or Cambria in 12pt size font, with your full name, grade, and school in upper right-hand corner, and submit as a DOCX file attachment to an email. Be sure to send your completed application in the email.

Please send completed essays to the Education Team at the email address listed below, on or before the submission deadline **Tuesday, March 31st, 2020**. Winners will be notified in April 2020.

Questions may be directed to the Education Team at [SYA@steinbeck.org](mailto:SYA@steinbeck.org).