

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE

Iowa Judging Assessment Rubric

Level I emphasizes each area equally. Levels II and III emphasize Purpose/Content more heavily.

Exposition

- Is the letter organized and coherent? Does it hook the reader immediately?
- Is it a dialogue with the author, not a summary of plot?
- Is the writer's prose grammatically correct?

Purpose /Content

- Does the letter address how the work changed his/her world view or self?
- Are there specific, concrete examples, anecdotes, quotes, relevant to the reader's response to the book?

Writer's Voice

- Does the letter exhibit originality of expression? Use metaphor or imagery to make points?
- Is word choice vivid and appropriate, intended to communicate, not to impress?

Process for Judges:

- Read the letters for content, i.e. the writer's message. This will give an overall sense of the scope of all letters on the competition level. Obviously, not all letters will be of equal quality.
- Reread each letter, keeping the three categories above in mind. Judges need not rank all letters, unless that is helpful to them.
- Select the top 6 – 10 letters that impressed you. Rank them using the point system below:
5 – excellent 4 – very good 3 – satisfactory 2 – weak 1 – poor
- Finally, all judges come together to discuss and select the three winners and three honorable mention winners.