



Steinbeck Young Authors, Grades 6, 7, 8

National Steinbeck Center

Commitment to participate must be received by October 20, 2017

The Steinbeck Young Authors Program is an opportunity for middle school students to explore the excitement of writing and to enhance their writing skills by reading and discussing John Steinbeck's *The Red Pony*.

The Steinbeck Young Authors Program consists of three stages:

1. Classroom Component.
2. Day of Writing event for teacher-nominated students.
3. Awards Ceremony.

Stage One: Classroom Component

- Teachers are provided with a drop-in curriculum designed to enhance students' writing skills.
- The unit includes engaging class activities and progressive writing activities that focus on *The Red Pony* as well as a rubric for assessing the students' writing skills (the same rubric used by coaches and judges in Stages Two and Three). A ELD component is included for English language learners.
- The teacher selects two-three students to move on to the next level of the program, in one of the following categories:
 - **Proficient/Advanced Writer:** Students who are good or strong writers, who consistently write clear and focused essays.
 - **Emerging Writer:** Students who are still developing their skills and making steady progress towards proficiency.
 - **English Language Learners:** Students whose first language is not English and who are making steady progress towards proficiency in English.

Stage Two: Days of Writing on Monday, March 5 or Wednesday, March 7, 2018 at the National Steinbeck Center

Selected students from each participating teacher will participate in a day-long event in the spring. The Day of Writing is an opportunity for students to write an essay about *The Red Pony* and receive feedback and mentoring from a member of the local community for whom writing is an essential component. The Day of Writing also includes a hands-on demonstration of horse care, activities, and a tour of the National Steinbeck Center. Within a week following the close of registration, teachers will be notified which day their selected students will attend for DOW.

Stage Three: Awards Ceremony: Saturday, April 28, 2018

- The students' essays from the Day of Writing are reviewed by a panel of expert judges.
- Awards recognize Advanced/Proficient Writers, Emerging Writers, and English Language Learners. Special Judge's Awards allow judges to recognize students with unusual achievements such as highly descriptive prose, outstanding language, or unusual perspectives.
- All students who participate in the Day of Writing receive an individualized certificate of participation and the *Gabilan Journal*, which includes all DOW student finalist essays.