



Dear SYA teacher,

The National Steinbeck Center thanks you warmly for your support of the Steinbeck Young Authors program, now in its 14th year. To greet and watch all the young writers during the Day of Writing is an incredible experience—and in 2017 we hope to film highlights to share with the teachers who make that day possible for over 100 middle school students. The NSC hopes to increase participation in 2016-17 and offer *two* Days of Writing at the NSC.

We encourage each of you to sign up early for the 2016 – 2017 program. Registration is available now. Teachers who sign up by September 15 will be sent a free Steinbeck book that ties into the May 5-7, 2017 Steinbeck Festival, “Migrations.” This small gift helps convey the NSC’s appreciation for your continuing support.

In 2016-17, as in 2015-16, there is no charge for school participation.

What are the benefits of Steinbeck Young Authors? 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 Nobel Prize winning author John Steinbeck, a Salinas native.
- Demonstrates the importance of place-based fiction.
- Meets the California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and ELD.
- Emphasizes the importance of strong writing skills throughout life.
- Connects students on the Day of Writing with community leaders and university students who value writing.
- Recognizes improved writing skills among non-native English language students as well as proficient writers.
- Promotes vocabulary building and close reading skills for all students.

How does the program benefit teachers and schools?

- Provides opportunities for professional development for teachers. In 2016-17 we will be available for site visits or teacher workshops for new and experienced teachers, giving every SYA participating teacher a chance to share best practices. The NSC will offer Continuing Education credit for these workshops and will help defray expenses for teachers to attend. Please contact susan@steinbeck.org
- Offers free admission for a school field trip to the National Steinbeck Center as well as 10% discounts on books in our Museum Store with proof of 2016-17 registration.
- 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 2016-2017 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 LISTED ON NEXT PAGE:

IMPORTANT DATES:

- **October 10, 2016** **Registration Deadline (submit teacher participant names)**
- **October 14, 2016** **Submit request for lending library copies of *The Red Pony***
- **September 19, 2016 -April 28, 2017** **Field Trips to the NSC (*please reserve 2 weeks ahead*)**
- **February 15, 2017** **Student nominations due**
- **March 6 and March 8, 2017** **The *Day of Writing* for each school to be determined by the NSC based on number of registered teachers. Students will attend EITHER Monday or Wednesday**
- **April 29, 2017** **Awards Ceremony**

To register for this exciting middle school program, please complete the enclosed Teacher Participation form. Please return via fax at (831) 796-3828 **by October 10, 2016 OR use the online submission form included in the details with the teacher participation form.** If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at (831)-775-4724 or at susan@steinbeck.org.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Susan Shillinglaw, Ph.D.
Director, National Steinbeck Center