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# 2017 DETROIT SCHOOLS PARTICIPATION PACKET

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[www.dtwtdetroit.com](http://www.dtwtdetroit.com)



Dear Detroit Middle School Teachers,

Thank you for participating in the Detroit Do the Write Thing Challenge Program. In this packet, you will find a variety of helpful information to administer the essay challenge at your school. This packet includes:

- Program Rules
- Selection Criteria
- Classroom Discussion
- Common Core Standards
- Local and National Recognition Ceremonies
- School Application
- Research on the DTWT Program completed by the University of Texas at El Paso
- Student and Parent/Guardian Consent Statement
- Sample lesson plans
- Writing Rubric

Here are all of the important dates for this year's DTWT essay challenge:

December 19, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce essay challenge to students</li> <li>• Distribute <a href="#">guidelines, parent/guardian consent statements and rubric</a></li> </ul>
January 27, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">School level deadline for student entries</a></li> </ul>
February 3, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School level judging</li> </ul>
February 24, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School's male and female finalists selected and information forwarded to Detroit DTWT Chair Zemen Marrugi</li> <li>• A minimum of 100 essays need to be received by Host School, Detroit Enterprise Academy for your school's finalists to be considered for the Detroit National Ambassador position. Deliver all essays to Host School, Detroit Enterprise Academy by Friday, February 24, 2017.</li> </ul> <p>Attn: Zemen Marrugi Detroit Enterprise Academy 11224 Kercheval Detroit, MI 48214</p>
April 28, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule a special End Youth Violence assembly to celebrate the school's male and female finalists and to recognize all <a href="#">students that participated in the program</a></li> </ul>
May 1, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2017 Detroit National Ambassadors will be recognized on the Detroit DTWT website <a href="http://www.DetroitDTWT.com">www.DetroitDTWT.com</a></li> </ul>
June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Recognition Ceremony at the Library of Congress in Lansing, Michigan</li> </ul>
July 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Recognition Week in Washington, D.C.</li> </ul>

Please contact me at (313) 823-5799 ext. 155 or at [info@zemenmarrugi.com](mailto:info@zemenmarrugi.com) if you have any questions about the Do the Write Thing essay challenge. All essays need to be received by our DTWT Host School, Detroit Enterprise Academy by Friday, February 24, 2016. A list of all participating schools will be posted on our website [www.dtwtdetroit.com](http://www.dtwtdetroit.com) as their essays are received by our Host School. Thank you again for participating in the Detroit Do the Write Thing essay challenge.

Sincerely,

Zemen Marrugi  
Detroit DTWT Chair



HELP STOP THE VIOLENCE

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS

### FOR THE 2017 “DO THE WRITE THING CHALLENGE” PROGRAM

Thank you for involving your 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in the **2017 “Do the Write Thing Challenge” (“Challenge”)**. All across America, students like yours are rising to the challenge of doing something to end youth violence. The “**Challenge**” gives middle school students an opportunity to examine the impact of violence on their lives and to communicate in written form what they think should be done to reduce youth violence. Personal responsibility is emphasized. By encouraging students to make personal commitments to do something about the problem, the program ultimately seeks to give them the opportunity to break the cycles of violence in their homes, schools and neighborhoods. Your involvement and support are crucial to the success of the “**Challenge**” in your school.

Please review the following materials concerning program rules, entry deadlines, selection criteria, classroom discussion, and student recognition before presenting the program to your students.

#### Program Rules

The following guidelines for the preparation of student writings have been distributed to all participating superintendents, principals and teachers:

- *All Detroit middle schools are eligible to participate.*
- *The essay challenge will be judged for students in grades 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>.*
- *The two school finalists’ essays must be typed: 12 font size, Time New Roman. No handwritten submissions will be considered for the National Ambassador award.*
- *A school needs to provide a minimum of 100 student essays for their two school finalists to be considered for the National Ambassador Award. Schools cannot combine their essays with another school’s essay numbers.*
- *All essays must be received by Detroit DTWT Chair by **Friday, February 24, 2017.***

Attn: Zemen Marrugi  
Detroit Enterprise Academy  
11224 Kercheval  
Detroit, MI 48214

- *The names of each school’s male and female finalists will be published in the 2017 Detroit Do the Write Thing book. The names of the school finalists will also be added to the Detroit Do the Write Thing website.*

- *The Detroit National Ambassadors will be announced on the Detroit DTWT website by May 1, 2017.*
- *All school finalists will be recognized at the regional recognition ceremony at the Library of Michigan.*
- *Entries will be judged by a selection of judges based on the criteria in the rubric provided in the essay challenge packet.*
- Students may use any form of written expression (e.g. essays, poems, plays or songs) as long as the language is positive and not derogatory. Students may submit only one entry per year. All entries must be the work product of only one student.
- Student entries, at minimum, should address three questions: ***How has violence affected my life? What are the causes of youth violence? What can I do about youth violence?*** Writings that do not address these questions will not be advanced in the selection process.
- Entries should be approximately 500 to 1000 words in length. Written forms of expression such as poetry that by its nature may be shorter, may contain fewer than 500 words.
- Entries must be typed in black ink on 8 1/2" x 11" paper. Only one side of the paper may be used and the pages should be numbered.
- Entries must be in English.
- All entries must be non-fiction.
- If the student participant uses a quotation or another person's material in his or her entry, the entry must identify whose work is being used by citing the person's name or citing the source of the material. Writings based upon plagiarism will not be advanced in the selection process.
- Entries must have a "Cover Sheet" with the consent statement signed by the participating student and a parent or guardian. No personal information should appear on the body of the written entry. Entries without a signed Cover Sheet will not be advanced in the selection process. (See the attached Cover Sheet with the Student and Parent/Guardian Consent Statement.)
- Entries must be submitted in the form that they are received from the student writer. Editing for content, grammar or spelling by someone other than the student is not permitted.<sup>1</sup>

### Selection Criteria

Entries will be reviewed by the Detroit "Do the Write Thing" Committee, the coalition of business, community and governmental leaders that oversees and administers the "**Challenge**" in Detroit. Entries will be selected on the basis of content, originality and responsiveness to the three questions: ***How has violence affected my life? What are the causes of youth violence? What can I do about youth violence?*** Grammar and spelling will not be used as criteria for selection.

In their writings, students should be encouraged to describe what they feel are the causes of youth violence and to offer specific suggestions about what they as individuals can do to reduce violence in their homes, schools and neighborhoods. Personal responsibility for responding to the problem of youth violence

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<sup>1</sup> Teachers, please send us the writings and the Cover Sheets of all of the students who submit an entry. In this program, everybody who makes a good-faith effort to participate deserves to be recognized and have his or her work considered in the selection process.

should be emphasized. Students should be encouraged to share personal experiences about the impact of violence on their lives and the lives of their peers. The panel of judges in your area will be looking at how well your students present their views on these matters.

### Classroom Discussion

Classroom discussion is not mandatory for participation in the “**Challenge**”. However, over the years we have found that students and their teachers gain much from the bonding that can result from the exchanges about the impact of youth violence that occur in pre-writing classroom discussions. Teachers have indicated that they are amazed at the openness and honesty of these classroom discussions. They also indicate that these discussions present excellent opportunities to identify and prevent youth problems before they reach crisis proportions.

Many of the teachers whose classes have participated in the “**Challenge**” in the past have invited outside speakers knowledgeable about youth violence issues to lead pre-writing discussions. Other teachers have provided their students with selected readings or newspaper articles about violence in advance of the discussion to stimulate thought. Speakers or articles, which emphasize personal responsibility on the part of students for responding to the problem of violence, have proven to be particularly useful.

Below are some questions designed to generate discussion among your students before they prepare their entries for the “**Challenge**”. For other ideas, please visit [www.dtw.org](http://www.dtw.org).

#### Questions to Consider:

- How does violence affect your daily lives?
- Where are you confronted by violence? Your home? Your school? Your neighborhood?
- What are some of the causes of youth violence in your community?
- What can **you** as an individual do to reduce youth violence in your community?

### Common Core Standards

The “Do the Write Thing Challenge” has been reviewed by a panel of highly qualified public school teachers for compliance with Common Core standards. The “Challenge” meets all of the English Language Arts Standards in Writing for Grades 7 and 8. (Standards W.7.1 through W.7.10 and W.8.1 through W.8.10) Please note that we have determined Standards W.7.2 and W.8.2 to only be applicable to nonfiction submissions. (Please see attached schedule for more details on the “**Challenge**” fulfilling Common Core Standards)

### Student Recognition

#### Local Level:

Each jurisdiction participating in the “**Challenge**” has established a “Do the Write Thing” Committee to coordinate the program. A “jurisdiction” may be a city, a county, a city-county combination or even an entire state. A complete listing of participating localities can be found on the **National Campaign to Stop Violence** website, [www.dtw.org](http://www.dtw.org). Most “Do the Write Thing” Committees will organize a recognition ceremony to honor the boy and girl from each participating middle school who are selected as School Ambassadors.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the “School Ambassadors” from each school, you, along with the students' parents and your principal, will be invited to attend the recognition ceremony. Most “Do the Write Thing” Committees will also publish the writings

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<sup>2</sup> Schools with fewer than one hundred entries will not qualify for the Detroit National Ambassador selection.

of all their "School Ambassadors" and distribute the publication to area community, business and governmental leaders.<sup>3</sup>

### **National Level:**

Each "Do the Write Thing" Committee will designate two "National Ambassadors." The two National Ambassadors along with each student's teacher and one parent or guardian will be invited by the **National Campaign to Stop Violence** to attend the "**Do the Write Thing Challenge**" National Recognition Week activities in Washington, D.C. in July of 2017.<sup>4</sup> In addition, one representative of the jurisdiction's middle school system will be invited to the National Recognition Week activities.

The majority of the costs for the National Recognition Week activities will be paid by our primary sponsors: the **Kuwait-America Foundation** and the **Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science**. The people of Kuwait have donated money to the "**Do the Write Thing**" campaign for over 20 years. This has been done to say thank you to the American people for the liberation of Kuwait in 1991.

During past National Recognition Weeks, National Ambassadors have met with a United States Supreme Court Judge, the United States Secretary of Education, the Attorney General of the United States, the United States Secretary of Interior, Members of Congress and many notable celebrities to discuss the problem of youth violence. A highlight of the National Recognition Week is placing a book of the writings of the 2017 student national ambassadors in the Library of Congress, ensuring that the students' words will be available to all and for future generations. In addition, students have been honored at embassy receptions hosted by the State of Kuwait.

## **Do the Write Thing and Common Core State Standards**

Writing is the core component of the "Do the Write Thing" Challenge (DtWT). After classroom discussions about youth violence, participating middle school students are asked by their teachers to make a commitment not to be involved in violence and provide written answers to three questions:

1. How has violence affected my life?
2. What are the causes of youth violence?
3. What can I do to reduce youth violence?

The DtWT experience is flexible, allowing for adaptation as needed by school districts and individual classrooms. Thus, the writing component of DtWT can cover significant portions of the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts:

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<sup>3</sup> While all "Do the Write Thing" Committees are encouraged to hold local recognition ceremonies and publish books of student writings, and while most local "Do the Write Thing" Committees do undertake these activities, the responsibility for organizing and funding these functions rests with each local Committee. Some start-up Committees do not initiate these functions during the early years of operation.

<sup>4</sup> Jurisdictions must have at least 500 student writings to qualify for participation in the National Recognition Week activities in Washington, D.C.



# Do the Write Thing (DTWT) Metro-Detroit School Application

## School Information:

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School's Main Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## DTWT Teacher Representative Information:

Teacher's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Personal Mobile No: \_\_\_\_\_

School Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Student Essay Information:

Grades of Students that Participated in the DTWT Essay Challenge: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Only students in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade will qualify for the National Ambassador Award.)*

Number of Students that participated in the class discussion about ending youth violence: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Student essays being submitted from your school: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Only schools with a minimum of 100 student essays submitted will qualify for the National Ambassador Award.)*

## School's DTWT Student Finalists:

Female Student Finalist: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Male Student Finalist: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_



***Benefits of the “Do the Write Thing” Challenge Program***

During National Recognition Week 2014, researchers from the University of Texas at El Paso interviewed the students, parents and teachers who were in attendance. The purpose was to conduct research on how the “Do the Write Thing” Challenge Program affects its participants. Below are some of the outcomes.

***Students***

- ☐ Greater empathy and understanding for victims of violence
- ☐ Increased tolerance and less judgmental for differences of people
- ☐ Increased communication with peers and family members instead of reverting to violence
- ☐ More positive behaviors and attitudes towards peers and teacher
- ☐ More motivated to report violence to teachers and encouraged others to do the same
- ☐ Standing up for themselves to gain confidence
- ☐ More often reporting bullying and similar behaviors to adults and more aware of the importance of doing so
- ☐ Reaching out to kids who do not have friends and are often bullied
- ☐ Greater motivation to intervene, especially in bullying situations
- ☐ Believe they can make a difference
- ☐ Awareness that they can do things differently instead of using violent solutions

***Parents***

- ☐ Better understanding of the impact of violence on their children
- ☐ Increased communication with sons, daughters and other family members
- ☐ Much more aware of child's concerns
- ☐ Improved communication at home with children and spouse
- ☐ Greater understanding of violence in the school and community
- ☐ Monitoring their children more in their neighborhoods to see what they are doing
- ☐ Want to see more schools and students involved in DtWT
- ☐ Interested in creating projects to help children with problems related to violence

***Teachers***

- ☐ Increased knowledge about their students leading to 1) attitudinal changes and 2) adapting their instruction
- ☐ Established mutually trusted relationships with students
- ☐ Awareness of how students became more tolerant, less discriminating and less hostile towards others
- ☐ Greater tolerance and compassion for students as a result of discussions and essays
- ☐ Change teaching modes including using writing as a preventive measure
- ☐ More healing and bonding of families
- ☐ More closely monitoring student behavior regarding bullying
- ☐ Teaching their students to not be by-standers

Research Team: Drs. Josefina V. Tinajero, Professor & DtWT Chair; Sarah Peterson, Associate Professor; Rick Myer, Professor and Craig Williams Association Professor, UT El Paso.



# **“DO THE WRITE THING CHALLENGE”**

## **COVER SHEET AND STUDENT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT STATEMENT**

**Please Type (Preferred) or Print Legibly in Black/Blue Ink**

Thank you for participating in the “Do the Write Thing Challenge.” To have your entry considered for selection as a Student National Ambassador, you and a parent or guardian must complete this Cover Sheet and sign the Student and Parent/Guardian Consent Statement below.

**Students’ First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student’s Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **School’s Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Parent’s Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student’s Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student’s Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student’s Sex:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher’s Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Teacher’s Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher’s Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **STUDENT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT STATEMENT**

The National Campaign to Stop Violence (NCSV), which sponsors the “Do the Write Thing Challenge,” will publish selected students writings and quotations in a book and in a discussion paper on youth violence. Before publishing your writing, the NCSV requires your written consent and the written consent of a parent or guardian. If you and your parent or guardian agree to permit the NCSV to publish your writing, please sign the statement following: We agree to give ownership of the attached student writing to the National Campaign to Stop Violence so that it can be considered for recognition and published. The NCSV may further disclose the writing to the media and other parties as part of their national program. As writings including factual life experiences may receive favorable response from the judges we ask that the parent/guardian attest that the writing is either true to the best of their knowledge or has been labeled as fictional.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student’s Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent’s Email Address

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Do the Write Thing Lesson Plans  
By Carla M. Furcron

Objective:

SWBAT identify instances of violence and its effects on themselves and others.

SWBAT write an essay about youth violence which includes their experiences and possible solutions to the problem of youth violence.

Materials:

Do The Write Think books; pictures from Lansing (2015 & 2016) and Washington, DC (2015)

Bullying-Don't Be Such a Nerd (YouTube video)

Procedures:

DAY 1:

If possible, present in an assembly including the entire grade level to introduce the program. If not, present to my own class.

Open by sharing with students that young people are making strides in many areas that in the past was not the case. (Examples: Young people raising money to help those who are sick or less fortunate; young people starting businesses to earn money for college; young adults running for and winning political offices).

Continue by discussing how many young people are taking responsibility for improving their school and community environments by taking a stand against violence. Introduce the Do the Write Thing program as a way that they can be a part of that movement.

Show the slide show of the students they know who have been recognized as National Ambassadors in the Do the Write Thing essay challenge and tell them that they will have the opportunity to participate as well. Share with students the questions they will write about.

Respond to student questions about the program before closing.

DAY 2:

Show video in class, stopping before the resolution is revealed and allow students to discuss, first with a partner or small group and then with the group at large, what they think they would do in the position of the characters.

Possible discussion starters:

What do you think each student (the bully, the victim & the bystander) is thinking or feeling?

What do you think you would do in each person's place?

After the group discussion, remind students that bullying, even if no one is physically hit, is an act of violence. Allow students to share other examples of violence and start a list of students' contributions. Close by asking students to think about how we perceive violence with our senses.

### DAY 3:

Open the session with the previous day's question: How do we perceive violence with our senses?

In the past, students have been able to readily cite that we can see someone being hit or we feel pain when someone hits us, so give one or two examples of how the other senses are involved when violence occurs. (Perhaps a person might remember the smell of the gravel on the playground when someone was picking on them; they might remember the sound of voices calling them mean names, etc.)

Again allow a few minutes for group discussion and then time for students to share their responses with the entire class.

### DAY 4

On this day, students will be asked to think about their own personal experiences or the experiences of someone they may know with violence. Because, the subject can be upsetting to students, remind students they are not required to share aloud. If a student doesn't have/doesn't want to revisit a personal experience, allow them to think of an image they have seen from a movie or just on the street that elicited a feeling from them.

What were the circumstances that led to the violence?

Who was involved?

Did anyone intervene to try to stop the violence? If so, how?

What was the outcome?

Focus the day's discussion more on what led to resulting violence. Allow students to have "free reign" in terms of describing why violence occurred. Also allow students to respond to each other and ask each other questions. Record student responses.

### DAY 5

Students will focus on one incident or period of violence that they have experienced or witnessed for the purpose of writing about the situation. Students will be assured that their writing will go no further than the teacher if they do not want to submit for the DTWT essay challenge. Students will begin their essays in class and may assist each other as they write. Students will be given the weekend to complete their essays if they do not finish in class.

Those students who would like to, may read their essays to the class before they are submitted.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Detroit Do the Write Thing (DTWT)  
Essay Challenge Rubric**

Does the essay answer the following questions?	Yes	No
1. How has youth violence affected your life?		
2. What are the causes of youth violence?		
3. What can I do about youth violence?		
<b>Have all of the following requirements been met?</b>		
500-1000 words		
12 font size, Times New Roman font style		
Typed on 8 ½ x 11 paper		
One sided Paper		
Numbered Pages		
Essay is written in one of these formats: essay, poem or short non-fiction story		
Is the essay related to the theme of youth violence?		
Original/Creative writing?		
Has a strong emotional impact on the reader <b>(This is an extremely important part!)</b>		
Student Parent Consent Statement sign and attached to student essay		
Writing does not include any personal information		

Teacher Feedback: