



WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY  
GANDHIAN FORUM FOR PEACE & JUSTICE  
**High School Peace and Justice Writing Contest**

The Gandhian Forum for Peace and Justice at William Paterson University invites Paterson high school students to participate in its "Peace and Justice Writing Contest." The Gandhian Forum is an organization committed to promoting engagement with issues of peace and justice on the William Paterson campus and in the broader community. The writing contest offers high school students an opportunity to reflect on important contemporary social problems and their solutions, and share those reflections in a public setting.

To participate, you must write an essay on one of the three topics below. You may include your personal or family experiences in your essay, but the primary focus must be on issues of social justice. Essays must be no more than 1,500 words.

Here are the topics.

1. Choose some international conflict. Describe the conflict and propose a peaceful solution. Explain why your solution would be just and achievable.
2. Choose a country in which some social injustice is occurring. Describe the problem and propose a solution. Explain why your solution would be just and achievable.
3. Choose some situation in the United States -- whether in your local community, New Jersey, or nationwide -- where citizens are experiencing social injustice. Describe the problem and propose a solution. Explain why your solution would be just and achievable.

There will be two categories of submissions: 1) 9th and 10th graders, and 2) 11th and 12th graders.

Within each category, three winning essays will be selected. Winners will receive monetary prizes and be invited to dinner at William Paterson University, along with their parents/guardians and teachers, where they will read their winning essays. All students who submit essays will receive a certificate of participation.

Submissions must be received on or before April 16, 2013, at 5:00 p.m. Entries will be read by a panel of William Paterson faculty and members of the Gandhian Forum's advisory board. Essays will be judged on the basis of the following criteria: 1) Does the writing make a significant statement about peace or justice? 2) Is the essay well-researched and factually accurate? 3) Is the argument convincing? 4) Is the writing successful in style, content, and mechanics?

#### Prizes

	9th and 10th Graders	11th and 12th Graders
1st place	\$500	\$500
2nd place	\$300	\$300
3rd place	\$200	\$200

#### Frequently Asked Questions

**Can a student submit more than one essay in this year's contest?** No.

**May I get help with my essay?** Writers often incorporate suggestions and editing from friends, colleagues, and teachers. This doesn't take away from their sole authorship. But the first draft and any subsequent substantial revisions need to be your own work.

**Is there any required format for the paper?** The first page must have only the author's name, grade, and school name. There must be no other identifying information on any other pages of the submission. The paper should begin on the second page and it must be typed double spaced.

**Is there any required citation style?** No. Any consistent citation style is permissible. Any material or quotations taken from other authors must be properly attributed and acknowledged.

**Do submissions have to be in English?** Yes.

**How should essays be submitted?** They must be sent as an email attachment to [gfpj-contest@wpunj.edu](mailto:gfpj-contest@wpunj.edu). All submissions will be acknowledged.

Gandhian Forum Peace and Justice Writing Contest for Paterson High School Students

Additional Guidelines, March 21, 2013

(developed after meetings at the three Paterson high schools)

1. A student may submit only one essay.
2. Each essay must be written by a single student.
3. Essays cannot have been previously published.
4. Submissions must be non-fiction prose essays, not poetry.
5. No graphics, music, or multimedia may be included with the essays.
6. The 1,500 word limit is rigid (use the word-counter on your word processor!). Count everything beyond the cover page (the page with name, school, and grade) -- thus, footnotes or references count as part of the 1,500 word limit.
7. If an essay uses footnotes that give complete citation information, no further bibliography is required.
8. Since names and schools are supposed to appear only on the cover page, please be sure not to use any sort of running header or footer that contains this information.
9. We will probably want to post the winning essays on the Gandhian Forum website ([www.wpunj.edu/gfpi](http://www.wpunj.edu/gfpi)). We will request winners to sign a release allowing us to post their essays, though the writers will retain all other rights to their work.
10. The dinner for the winners (and their parents/guardians and teachers) will be held on the William Paterson University campus on an evening during the week of June 10-13, the precise date yet to be determined. If a student is unable to attend the dinner, arrangements can be made for the prize to be mailed.
11. The social problem identified in an essay must have a peace or justice angle to it. So, for example, crime is obviously a social problem, but unless the essay ties crime to some *injustice* (e.g., differential treatment by the criminal justice system), it is not a peace and justice issue appropriate for this contest.
12. It will probably be easier if all essays are turned into a teacher for the teacher to submit electronically, rather than having the students submit directly -- less danger of submissions getting lost in cyberspace.