



Dear Principal or Language Arts Chair,

Please allow me to introduce myself: my name is Elise Klein and I am the president of **TAP**, Teachers Against Prejudice. We are a grassroots, non-profit organization composed of educators, parents, and concerned citizens whose mission is to increase awareness and examine the causes and roots of prejudice and discrimination; open dialogue with students and teachers from elementary school through college; and promote understanding and respect for all through the critical exploration and analysis of films, television, and other media.

We are conducting our **Tenth** Annual International Essay and Media Contest to commence on **October 1, 2009**; the deadline is **December 15, 2009**. The winners will be notified by March 15, 2010, and, with permission, winning entries will be posted on our website by May 1, 2010. This contest is open to all students enrolled in grades 5 through 12 in public and independent schools and to those who are homeschooled. We will have two separate categories, one for middle school students (grades 5–8) and one for high school students (grades 9–12). The essay questions, judging criteria, and prizes are listed below. Winning entries from previous years can be viewed at: www.teachersagainstprejudice.org

We hope your teachers will work with their students on this important theme. We welcome and encourage their participation in this contest. We trust it will help to hone students' critical thinking skills as well as provide a forum for their creativity. In addition, if you have any teachers on your staff who are interested in helping us judge the entries we receive, please have them contact us.

Middle School Question

In real life, as in the movies, young people tend to find an affinity group, a group they can relate to and can focus on being a part of that group.

Please give an example of a film or TV show that demonstrates how young people have overcome barriers that segregate or exclude other young people based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, physical or mental challenges, or other differences. What has this movie or show taught you? How can you incorporate what you have learned from this film or TV show into your life and help reduce or eliminate prejudice and discrimination?

Please include the title of the TV show or film and give concrete examples.

Essays must not exceed 750 words, and must be typed or neatly written, clearly organized and answer all parts of the question.

High School Question

Film and TV are powerful vehicles for reinforcing prejudice and stereotypes. They can also be important tools for educating others about injustice and discrimination both past and present. In turn, they can serve as examples of how to combat prejudice in the future.

Which TV program or film that addresses an issue of prejudice or discrimination should be required viewing for all high school students? What theme(s) or message(s) does it address and how is it relevant to young people today? How would this show or film enhance students' general education or understanding of history, literature or other core subject area? If you were writing curriculum for your school, which subject area do *you* think this TV program or film should be incorporated into and why?

Essays must not exceed 1000 words, must be typed or neatly written, clearly organized, and must address all parts of the question.

Criteria: For contact purposes only, all students **must** include their name, home address, contact phone number, school name, school phone number and grade. Also include an e-mail address, if available.

Entries will not be returned and become the property of TAP.
All entries must be postmarked by December 15, 2009.

Send entries to:

Teachers Against Prejudice
58 Pine Street
New Canaan, CT 06840
contest@teachersagainstprejudice.org

Prizes: First, second and third place prizes will be awarded separately for middle school and high school students.

First place: \$300 U.S. Savings Bond
Second place: \$200 U.S. Savings Bond
Third place: \$100 U.S. Savings Bond

Prizes of comparable value will be awarded for those who reside outside of the United States.

Based on previous results, we anticipate a good response and want to make sure that your students are included in this timely, relevant discussion.

Sincerely,

Elise Klein

President