

Writers' Showcase Magazine

A Journal of the Arkansas Literacy Association - Spring 2024 - Vol.3, No. 1

ARKANSAS
LITERACY
ASSOCIATION

Topic Chosen for ALA Contest ALA Announces 2024 Writers' Showcase Winners

Each fall Arkansas Literacy Association chooses a topic on which all students in Arkansas might respond. This year's topic focused on a person whom each writer would most like to meet, with the student writer furthering explaining his or her reasoning behind that choice.

In April, the winners were honored and recognized during a recognition reception that included parents and their teachers being invited to participate and listen as several chose to share excerpts from the winning compositions.

Thanks to all who submitted. Congratulations to the winners!

Grades 2-3

- 1st - Lyla Cowell - Crawford Elementary - Arkansas River Valley
- 2nd - Maddie Phillips - Julia Lee Moore Conway - North Central AR
- 3rd - Milo Smith - Julia Lee Moore Conway - North Central AR

Grades 4-5

- 1st - Eli Warnick - Russellville Intermed. School - AR River Valley
- 2nd - Mick Wilson - Danville Lower Mid School - AR River Valley
- 3rd - Colson Gililland - Danville Lower Mid School - AR River Valley

Grades 6-7

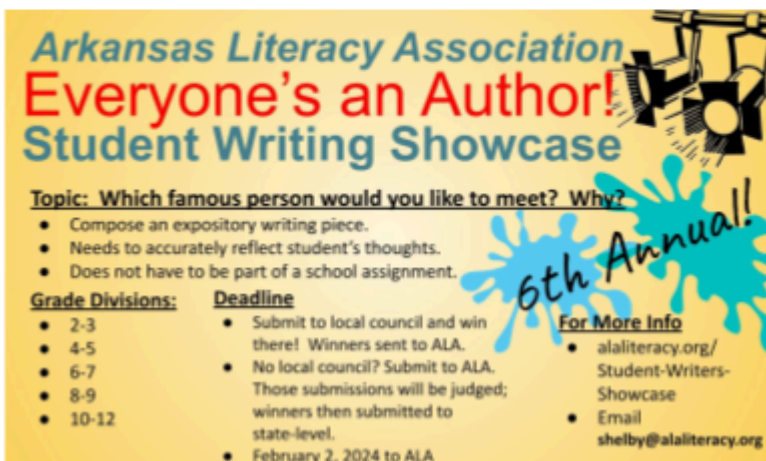
- 1st - Hallie Grace Miller - Russellville Mid School - AR River Valley
- 2nd - Ava Kate Fields - Russellville Middle School - AR River Valley
- 3rd - Braelynn Blair - Old High Middle School - Non-council Entry

Grades 8-9

- 1st - Lydia Landrum - Harding Acad - Three Rivers Reading Council
- 2nd - Jack Springer - Cabot Freshman Academy/Non-council Entry
- 3rd - Briana Swearngen - Cabot Freshman Acad/Non-council Entry

Grades 10-12

- 1st - Anna Robertson - Harding Acad - Three Rivers Reading Council
- 2nd - Jackson Wilson - Southside Charter High - White River Reading
- 3rd - Ethan Price - Harding Academy - Three Rivers Reading Council



Arkansas Literacy Association
Everyone's an Author!
Student Writing Showcase

Topic: Which famous person would you like to meet? Why?

- Compose an expository writing piece.
- Needs to accurately reflect student's thoughts.
- Does not have to be part of a school assignment.

Grade Divisions:

- 2-3
- 4-5
- 6-7
- 8-9
- 10-12

Deadline

- Submit to local council and win there! Winners sent to ALA.
- No local council? Submit to ALA. Those submissions will be judged; winners then submitted to state-level.
- February 2, 2024 to ALA

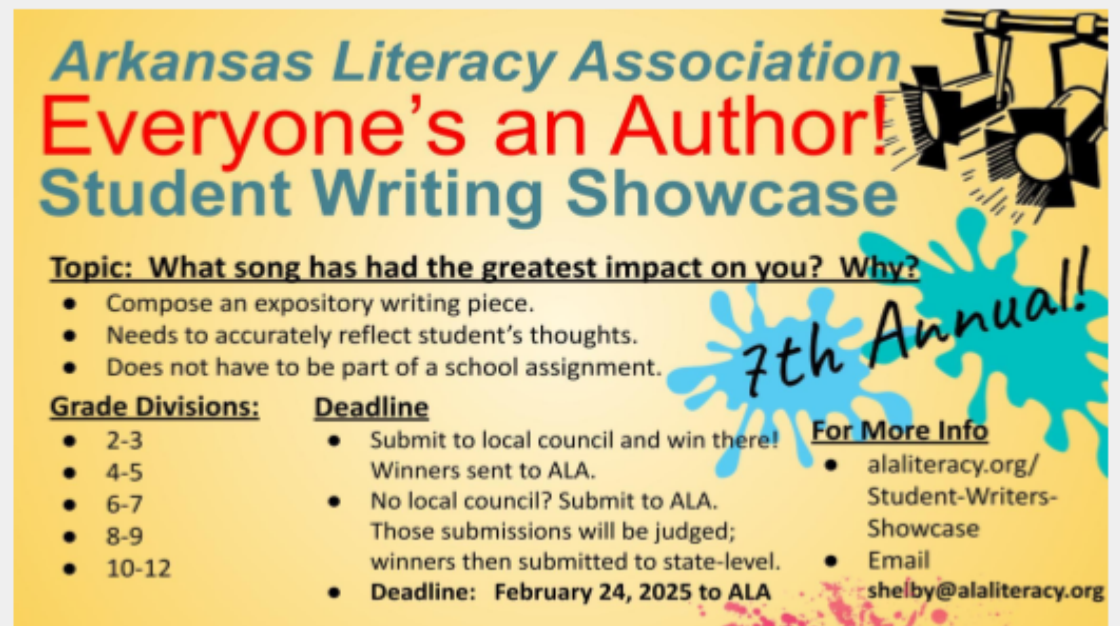
For More Info

- alaliteracy.org/Student-Writers-Showcase
- Email shelby@alaliteracy.org

THANK YOU
ALA thanks members of the Arkansas Literacy Board for reading and scoring the writing entries.

THE MISSION OF THE ARKANSAS LITERACY ASSOCIATION: dedicated to promoting reading and developing literacy.

Plan Now...Think Now...Draft Now



Arkansas Literacy Association
Everyone's an Author!
Student Writing Showcase

Topic: What song has had the greatest impact on you? Why?

- Compose an expository writing piece.
- Needs to accurately reflect student's thoughts.
- Does not have to be part of a school assignment.

Grade Divisions:

- 2-3
- 4-5
- 6-7
- 8-9
- 10-12

Deadline

- Submit to local council and win there! Winners sent to ALA.
- No local council? Submit to ALA. Those submissions will be judged; winners then submitted to state-level.
- **Deadline: February 24, 2025 to ALA**

For More Info

- alaliteracy.org/Student-Writers-Showcase
- Email shelby@alaliteracy.org



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grades 2-3 - Lyla Cowell - Crawford Elementary

Arkansas River Valley Reading Council

"It's a Love Story, baby just say yes!" Taylor Swift is one of the most famous pop stars in the world, and she has recorded over 15 albums! She has over a million fans and has sold 114 million album units worldwide. The first reason I would like to meet Taylor is because my mom, sister, and myself are all Swifties. We listen to her music in the car, in my room, and on movies that her songs have appeared in. It is something that we enjoy doing together.

Another reason I would love to meet her is to ask how she goes about making her songs. She puts so much emotion into her songs. Sometimes her songs are sad, funny, about love, happy, and even angry at times. My favorite song is "You Belong With Me." It is very catchy and easy to remember. I would love to know her writing process.

My last reason for wanting to meet her is because of the way she interacts with her fans. There are videos of her meeting her Swifties and exchanging friendship bracelets. In the past, she has even helped out some of her fans who are having a hard time at her concerts. Her kind heart makes her a good role model for younger generations.

In conclusion, her catchy songs, the emotions she puts behind them, and her warm spirit are just a few of the reasons why I want to meet Taylor Swift. If I ever meet her in person, I will bring my favorite book and let her know I have a "Blank Space" for her to write her name.



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grade 2-3 - Maddie Phillips - Julia Lee Moore Conway -

North Central Arkansas Reading Council

The person I would like to meet is Ruby Bridges because she made a huge difference in the world at a young age. Ruby became involved in the civil rights movement at six years old. In 1960 Ruby was the first African American student to attend William Frantz Elementary school in New Orleans, Louisiana. Ruby was very smart as a child. She had to pass a difficult test to attend this all-white school. Ruby was one of six students that passed the test to attend a white elementary school in New Orleans. It was a very hard time for Ruby and her family because they supported integration. Her father lost his job and could not find a new job. They did not have a lot of money either.

Ruby was a bit frightened when going to her new school. She was escorted to school by federal marshals. Some people said hateful and hurtful things to Ruby and her family. One woman even held up a black baby doll in a coffin on her first day of school. Ruby was courageous; she did not care what others said to her. She stood up for herself and others like her even though she was scared. She was a good example for other people. She didn't give up.

I would like to talk to Ruby about how I can help change the world. I would like to ask Ruby what she thinks are the most important things that kids can do to change the world. I think kids can help change the world by following some easy rules and I would like to know if Ruby agrees with these rules:

1. Be kind to others,
2. Respect others,
3. Listen to others,
4. Be nice to everyone,
5. Share with everyone

I would also like to ask Ruby how she was so brave when she was six years old and scared. I would like to ask her how it felt to not have many friends at her new school and if she made friends at school. I would like to ask Ruby if any of the kids at school were nice to her.

Ruby Bridges became a hero when she was six years old because she was brave. Ruby Bridges is still alive today. She lives in New Orleans. I could learn a lot from Ruby about changing the world so I would like to meet her.

"If you don't like to read, you haven't found the right book."

J.K. Rowling



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grades 2-3 - Milo Smith - Julia Lee Moore Conway

North Central Arkansas Reading Council

If I had the chance to meet any author in the world I would choose Bill Watterson. I would like to meet him because not many people get to interview him. Also, none of the interviewers were kids, so I think it would be cool if I interviewed him. I would also like to meet him because he wrote the *Calvin and Hobbes* books. I really like them because Calvin is always getting into trouble. Also, it's usually because of different reasons, so I would want to ask him some questions.

One question I would ask is if he made another book, what would Calvin do and why. Since he's always getting into mischief, I wonder what kind of trouble he would get into. Another question I would ask is "Why is Hobbes a tiger stuffed animal?" Why not a bear or jaguar? Maybe he had a tiger-stuffed animal when he was a kid. The last question I would ask is what Calvin would do in certain situations, like if he was at the beach, or playing a board game, that kind of stuff. That is why the person I would like to meet is Bill Watterson.

I would also want to say thank you for making such a funny book and maybe that I think he should write "Hello, kids, don't do this at home!!!" on the book so that kids will not get themselves in trouble. That is why I would choose Bill Watterson to meet.



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grades 4-5 - Eli Warnick - Russellville Intermediate School

Arkansas River Valley Reading Council

The year is 1922, and a child named Leonard Thompson was on his deathbed. He was dying from a disease called childhood diabetes which was 100% fatal at the time. A doctor named Fredrick Banting was not going to let Leonard die. He was going to solve this worldwide problem for children by helping them live healthy lives from then to today. If there is one famous person I could meet in history, I would choose Dr. Banting because of the impact he has had on the world.

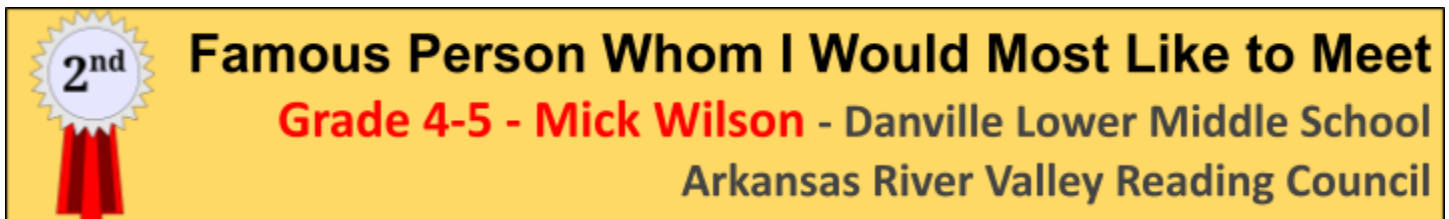
Fredrick Banting had a wild idea that he could cure childhood diabetes, but before he could do that he had to get a team of people who could help. Even though Fredrick Banting wanted to create this wonderful treatment, he didn't have a traditional medical degree. He became a doctor after being sent to fight in WWI where he became a field medic. After the war, he became interested in finding a cure for childhood diabetes. However, because he didn't have the background to do this, he needed to find a partner to create a cure. The first thing he did was find a doctor who gave him space in his research lab. He also partnered with a chemist who helped purify the insulin he hoped to use as a cure. After long hours and a lot of hard work, his dream came true. With the new drug that they created, they were able to save Leonard.

Even though their teamwork created a miracle cure, there were people who suffered from this. This team worked together, but they did have times when they had difficulty. Dr. Banting did not want the cure to cost money. He wanted insulin to "belong to the world." Some of the people like the chemist they worked with wanted to patent the cure. After a big fight, they decided they would sell the patent for one dollar to the government of Canada. Another argument they had happened when they were awarded the Nobel Prize. Only two scientists won the Nobel Prize, but Dr. Banting didn't like this so he shared the prize money with all four scientists.

Dr. Banting's work has saved the lives of millions of children around the world, but the reason why I learned about his work was because his discovery saved my life as well. Like Leonard, I was in the hospital, and I was very sick. I didn't know what was making me sick at first, but then I heard the doctor say I had type 1 diabetes, which used to be called childhood diabetes. When the doctor said this, I felt very scared and overwhelmed. However, my doctor said that I could still live a normal life like other kids my age. The only difference was that I would need to take an injection of insulin. At that time, I didn't know that the person who made insulin was Dr. Banting, but the more I learned about this, the more I thought about how nice it would be to meet him. If I could meet Dr. Banting, I would tell him that it was so

unbelievable that he saved my life by creating insulin for people who couldn't make it on their own. Making insulin is something that most people never think of because it is just an everyday thing that their bodies do. I used to be like these people, but since I have been sick, I learned that not everybody's body does this like it should. My pancreas may no longer make insulin, but he created an injection that will provide it the same way my body would. Dr. Banting's selfless dedication to create this cure is the reason I will be able to grow up and have a happy, healthy life.

As you can see there are many reasons why I would like to meet Dr. Banting. He had a dream that he could help children with type 1 diabetes live a long and healthy life, and he worked hard to make it come true. He had to overcome many challenges to accomplish this goal. Starting with Leonard, he helped millions of people worldwide, including me. It is great that Dr. Banting created this cure that saved my life. I wish I could talk to him and tell him how thankful I am.



Have you ever read a book so inspiring, so enthralling, so entertaining, that it was literally the only reason you actually read the book and that book was so good that it got a movie and television spin off (even though the movie flopped)? Well, that's my case with the talented writer Rick Riordan. Rick is a great writer, great lookin', and a great show creator. I would be on cloud nine to meet Rick Riordan because I would appreciate the ability to thank him for inspiring me to become a reader, ask him about the Percy Jackson universe and what's next, and, finally, I could only dream of asking him what inspired him to create a *New York Times* #1 best-selling author series.

To begin, Rick Riordan's *New York Times* #1 bestselling book *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* is the only reason that I indulge in books by choice. The first novel featuring Percy Jackson was not only entertaining and shocking but also heart wrenching. There was betrayal. There was friendship. There was adventure. The main character Percy and his friends were up a creek without a paddle 24/7. From fighting a literal god to escaping an "impossible" maze. Clearly, the characters were faced with seemingly impossible obstacles. All these traits had me hooked on this story. That's why I would be pleased to thank Rick Riordan for unlocking this joy in my brain that had been locked away for almost a decade.

To continue, I wish I could talk to Mr. Riordan about Percy Jackson and what's the next step in his life. I mean he literally has four series tied to Percy Jackson whether it would be a whole other mythology or a god losing his godlihood. No matter what, Percy exists at the least. So I would adore asking him what in the name of Zeus is next. Besides the 7th Percy Jackson and the Olympians book, what else can Percy do? He's done about anything and everything from eating a blue cookie to saving the world...twice!. This guy has been in hot water more times than I can count. Just having a sneak peek into what's ahead for my favorite character would be incredible, and if I could meet Rick Riordan, I might just be able to find out.

To end on a good note, I would pay trillions of dollars to question Rick on why he wrote the book in the first place. Why Greek mythology? Why Percy Jackson? Why not somebody more popular like Perseus or Hercules? I would also like to go beyond that and find out why he became a writer in the first place. I'd ask, "Was your inspiration a 7th grade teacher or your mom? Was it some writer you loved back when you were a kid?" Or maybe, "Were you in a dark place and writing carried you back into the light?" And finally, "Was there ever a moment in time when you were about to throw in the towel on the book, or any of your books for that matter? And if you did what kept you going?" All of these questions, I'd love to have answered by this talented author.

In conclusion, I would beg to meet Rick Riordan to show my appreciation for his incredible books, ask what's next for Percy, like will he save the world again or finally rest and spend time with his girlfriend, and finally I would jump up and down with glee to inquire why he wrote the books that helped "grow" my love of reading in the first place. Even though most of my classmates would likely want to meet a famous rapper like Travis Scott, a famous youtuber like MrBeast, or maybe even LeBron James, I would rather pick somebody with more than three brain cells! If I could meet a famous person, I'd choose to meet Rick Riordan. Do YOU know about Rick Riordan or any of his books? Well, if you haven't, check them out. I highly recommend you read the books written by my favorite author: *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* books 1-5.



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grades 4-5 - Colson Gililand - Danville Lower Middle School

Arkansas River Valley Reading Council

If you guessed Kobe Bryant as the most famous person I would want to meet, you would be...WRONG. If you guessed Justin Beiber, again, you would be.... wrong. But.., if you guessed Adam Sandler, you would be correct! Not only is Adam very well-known for acting in some of the best-known movies such as, *Grown Ups*, *Click*, and even *Billy Madison*, but he is also one of the most hilarious people on the face of this planet, and he makes people beyond happy. I mean, I would be happy if I got to see him in person. Hands down, if I got the choice, I would definitely choose to meet Adam Sandler.

Starting off strong, Adam Sandler has acted in some of the best movies that have ever been filmed. You know...the type of movies that get you on the floor laughing. In other words, my kind of movies. I mean, have you ever had a long, rough day and all you wanted to do when you got home is watch TV? Well, if you have, your man would definitely be Adam Sandler. It's the best feeling to get comfy on the couch, eat some salty popcorn, and watch the best: Adam Sandler. It's like being on cloud 9. He acts wonderfully in so many different movies. If you have seen movies such as, *The Benchwarmers*, *Bedtime Stories*, or *The Waterboy*, you have seen Adam Sandler at his all-time best. He doesn't even just act, he is also a voice actor in some of my favorites, like *Leo* and *Hotel Transylvania*. Obviously, this great man is a wonderful actor in several of the best movies out there. No wonder he has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Not only is he in some of the most fabulous blockbusters ever created, but Adam Sandler is without a doubt one of the funniest people alive. I bet you a hundred dollars that Adam Sandler has made more than a million people laugh. I mean, seriously this dude is hilarious. The very first thing I would ask this guy if I got the chance is, "What's your secret to being so hysterically funny?" Just imagine being able to sit down and laugh hysterically with one of the greatest men on earth. My absolute dream come true. I can't even fantasize sitting down and talking to this amazing man. It would be a chance of a lifetime. It's not hard to see that Adam Sandler is absolutely hilarious.

Last, this amazing comedian brings joy and happiness to people across America. I don't know about you, but Adam Sandler has made me beyond happy countless times. Adam Sandler has made people break down into tears just being able to see him! I can't even imagine how overjoyed I would feel if I got to see him. Additionally, did you know that Adam Sandler doesn't even use most of the money he gets on himself? He donates it to charities such as, Animal Rescue Foundation, Ante Up For Africa, Autism Speaks, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Children's Cancer Association, Chris Farley Foundation, Clothes Off Our Back, and EB Medical Research Foundation. Just imagine one of these kids going through a hard time and not having much money and suddenly getting amazing things from a generous billionaire. If I were them, I would be ecstatic. Not only that, but he even donated 400 Playstations to Israel for victims of the Israel-Lebanon War. I would be over the moon if I were one of those kids, and I would be so beyond elated and grateful.

Studies even show that Adam Sandler has cured people around the world from depression. Now, I bet you'll agree with me that Adam Sandler makes people happy. It's as clear as day that I would definitely like to meet Adam Sandler. Not only is he in some of the best blockbusters on earth, but he also is hilarious, and he makes people beyond happy.

"Don't try to figure out what other people want to hear from you;
figure out what you have to say.

It's the one and only thing you have to offer." —Barbara Kingsolver



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grades 6-7 - Hallie Grace Miller - Russellville Middle School

Arkansas Reading Valley Reading Council

Taylor Swift, Stephen Curry, Elvis Presley, Michael Jordan, Marilyn Monroe, and many others are famous today and have been famous ever since their big breakthrough happened. Some people would give anything to meet these people. Some people think of them as their idols. That's not the case for me. If I were to meet someone famous and had the choice of anyone in the world, I would pick Sadie Robertson. Why Sadie? She has inspired me, as well as many others. She is a Christian that devotes her life to spreading the gospel with others and she is a great role model that gives the perfect example of how I should be as a woman of God.

One word that describes Sadie is that she is someone that is inspirational. I admire people that will give others advice or they will show you great life lessons. Sadie has shown that to many people. She has a YouTube channel called *Sadie Robertson Huff*. She talks to other people that have experienced hard times or have struggled in life and talks to them about how they made it through those times. Then, throughout her "interview" with them, she continues to bring up life lessons that then eventually lead to her inspiring others that you can make it through the hard times. More specifically, in her video "When I Stopped Letting Feelings Dictate My Life" she is joined with this girl and her name is Allie Schnacky. Sadie asked Allie, "What is the best advice anyone has given you?" Allie responded by saying you can't please everyone. This really stuck out to me and made me think about my life and if I think that I have to please everyone. When I watched Sadie and Allie, it made me think a little bit harder and tell myself, "Yeah, not everything I do is going to please everyone, but I still need to do it because I am better than what other people think." The same way that I thought about what Sadie and Allie experienced, others could have thought the same thing too. Then, they both go on giving more and more advice that just inspires me so much. (I want to be around people like Sadie that will build others up and not put them down.) In my opinion, I think that when you are given a life-lesson you are being inspired to do better and to show others love or whatever the lesson might have been. A person talking and giving his or her own personal advice to others and helping them can say a lot about a person's personality. I love influencers that will take knowledge and share it with others to make them feel good about themselves or just to even help change whoevers watchings way of how they used to be acting. Some people do think about what others would say, and some people do think that they are not good enough, but when influencers like Sadie give inspirational words and advice, it can definitely change the way people think towards themselves and others.

I'm a Christian, and I love it when I find others that will go out of their way to spread the gospel. Sadie has written multiple books. One book specifically that I have read is *Live Original*. In this book she talks about her family and some personal life, but then she goes on and gives teachings of the gospel, and she gives readers real life examples and how she used the gospel to help her through it. One example that Sadie gave in the book was when you are struggling or going through a hard time at school, home, basketball, cheer, dance, anywhere, God is there to push you through it and to be your guide. Sadie has also gone on tour giving her testimony. One thing that she talks about in one of her teachings was "How Do You Know God Is Real." Even though she is probably nervous inside she still does it because she loves the Lord. She is also not afraid as much because she is spreading God's word which is powerful and will give you more confidence. I know that I was always too nervous to spread the Gospel because I did not like talking to other people about that stuff. I was always nervous about what they would say or if they would reject what I was saying. So, I never really did it. I love that about Sadie, how she will go out and give her thoughts and real life information about the Lord. It gives me so much confidence to try and go out and give my own information too. When I saw that Sadie was the complete opposite of me, I just fell in love with her.

Is this a good thing that I should be doing? Is this a good appropriate outfit? Is this Godly? I have asked these questions all the time. But, with the help of Sadie she has given me good advice to live my life as a Godly woman. One of her videos on her YouTube channel is all about modesty. I know that there are girls out there that

should work on their modesty a little and that's okay. Sadie gives advice about what the Bible says about modesty. She's not trying to be rude or trying to make you feel bad about yourself; she is trying to help you and shape you into the Godly woman God wants you to be. That's a great quality about Sadie. She is doing it for a good cause. She has changed me in a great way. I have been more careful about what I wear. On her channel she has this part called "Short Talks." In this part of her channel, it is literally just life lessons. It has the modesty video, be you, thanksgiving, God's timing, and how to help when you are anxious. These videos help give advice to young children and adults today. It's amazing about Sadie. Not only does Sadie give examples of how to be a woman of God, she is a woman of God. So just by watching her videos and just by listening to what she says gives a perfect example. In some of her videos, just by listening to what she starts talking about to others and how she uses kind and encouraging words, is a great example of how we should be talking. Kids at my school should probably watch some of her videos because they use discouraging words and be rude to others. If they watched her, maybe they could change just like I did. It's a quality in Sadie that not every famous celebrity has. That's why Sadie is one of a kind. She will use everything she knows about being a woman of God and put it to action to help other young people change their lives too.

How many famous people do you know? Have you ever wanted to meet them in person? I know a ton of famous people, but there is one that has always really stuck out to me because of the way she is inspiring to me and many others, devotes time to sharing the gospel with many other people, and how she is a perfect example of how to be a godly woman. She is well-known today and is someone that I would love to meet one day. This loving, kind, intelligent, godly person is Sadie Robertson.

"The more that you read, the more things you will know.

The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

— Dr. Seuss, *I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!*



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grade 6-7 - Ava Kate Fields - Russellville Middle School

Arkansas River Valley Reading Council

"So you may not always have a comfortable life. And you will not always be able to solve all the world's problems all at once. But don't ever underestimate the impact you can have, because history has shown us that courage can be contagious, and hope can take on a life of its own." -Michelle Obama

I was asked which famous person I would choose to meet. I personally would choose to meet Michelle Obama. Michelle Obama is a great role model not only for young girls but also for women of all ages. She was the first African American first lady. She also led over four main initiatives and programs. She's not only a mom, leader, and inspiration; she is also a *New York Times* Bestselling Author.


Michelle Obama is most famous for being the first African American first lady. She not only gives inspiration to people of color but also to people with disabilities because her dad suffers from multiple sclerosis, a disease where the body attacks itself by mistake. Even with all this on her shoulders, she was able to get a law degree from Harvard and an undergrad degree from Princeton. She inspires me to keep pushing because there are always going to be things in your way, but we just have to overcome them.

When I think of a caring person, I think of Michelle Obama. Mrs. Obama leads a total of four programs. Her first one she established in 2010 is called "Let's Move," a program to bring awareness to child obesity. This program donated fresh veggies and good protein to schools so kids have a better nutritional diet. They also got kids more active in sports. Their main

goal was to give parents the right resources so they can get the nutrition they need. Her next program, which was started in 2011 with current first lady Jill Biden, is called "Joining Forces." The point of this program was to ensure that service members and veterans have the resources they need to live a happy and healthy life. They would make sure they had things, such as insurance and retirement. In 2014 she started a program called "Reach Higher." It focuses on showing students of all ages different jobs and careers that are available to them. Her latest program from 2015 is called "Let Girls Learn." The main goal of "Let Girls Learn" is to encourage countries around the world to let the women of their country get a proper education instead of staying home and following the men's rules. I hope to make as much of an impact as she has on today's society.

One of my favorite things about Michelle Obama is that she is a *New York Times* Best-Selling Author. One of my favorite books that she has written is her biography called *Becoming*. In the book *Becoming* by Michelle Obama, it talks about how she came from a home on the edge of poverty in South Chicago and how she is where she is now. Another one of her many books is *The Light We Carry*. It encourages people to take a look at their own lives and make more out of themselves. These are just two of her seventeen books. I love writing and hope to come out with a bunch of books just like Mrs.Obama.

Michelle Obama is my biggest inspiration. In third grade I had just discovered who she was for a project on American role models, and she has been my role model ever since. She has been a great influence on today's generation. If I could meet one famous person, it would easily without a doubt be Michelle Obama.



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet
Grades 6-7 - Braelynn Blair - Old High Middle School
Non-council Entry

Malala Yousafzai, who is known for her courage and commitment to promoting education for girls, has become a global symbol of hope and resilience. Meeting her would be an incredible opportunity to connect with her inspiring story. There are three main reasons that I would like to meet Malala, including the impact of her advocacy, her personal journey, and what meeting her could teach me about making a positive change in the world.

Malala Yousafzai is an amazing example of how one person's strength can overcome difficult challenges. She was born in Pakistan in 1997 and grew up in a beautiful place called Swat Valley. Unfortunately, when she was still young, the Taliban became more powerful in the region and started making it harder for girls to get an education. Despite these obstacles, Malala never gave up fighting for her right to learn and inspire others to do the same.

Malala, despite the danger she faced, was determined to fight for education. She started writing about her experiences anonymously on the BBC Urdu blog, using the name Gul Makai. Her writings explained what it was like living under Taliban rule and the challenges people faced in accessing education. Malala's bravery in standing up against oppression began a journey that would soon capture the world's attention.

Despite facing danger and threats from the Taliban, she continued to speak out. Unfortunately, she was targeted in an assassination attempt, but she survived. The attack made her a symbol of courage and resistance, and people from all over the world supported her. Malala's story shows that education can change lives, even in difficult circumstances. Instead of giving up, she became even stronger and continued to speak out for girls' education. She wrote a book called *I Am Malala* and has become a well-known advocate for education around the world. *I Am Malala* is a book by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb.

It's not just a personal memoir but a powerful message advocating for the right to education. It's a call to fight against oppression and a symbol for those who are not heard. In the book, Malala not only shares her personal story but also raises awareness for the millions of children who are unable to access education due to war, poverty, or discrimination.

Malala Yousafzai, a young activist from Pakistan, has made a significant impact on the world through her powerful speeches and the establishment of the Malala Fund. Her speeches at global forums, including the United Nations, have inspired people to focus on education as a means for positive change and development. The Malala Fund, a non-profit organization, was founded by Malala to advocate for girls' education worldwide, demonstrating her dedication to transforming her advocacy into practical action.

She believes that education is important for everyone, especially girls who are often denied the opportunity to

learn. Malala's work has inspired people all over the world to join the cause for gender equality and human rights. Meeting Malala would be a great chance to learn more about her experiences and the challenges she has faced, as well as the impact her work has had on the world.

Malala Yousafzai's story has greatly impacted the world, and I want to meet her. Where I am growing up, education was easily available, so I don't realize how lucky I am to have access to it. But Malala's story has reminded me that not everyone is so fortunate. She has shown incredible courage in fighting for education, even when it puts her life in danger. This really resonates with my own desire to fight for equality and fairness for all people.

As a young individual navigating a world filled with opportunities and obstacles, I find inspiration in Malala's unwavering dedication to a cause greater than herself. The values she embodies - resilience, courage, and an unshakeable belief in the power of education - align with my own aspirations to contribute meaningfully to the betterment of society. Malala's story challenges me to reflect on the privileges I have and encourages a sense of responsibility to leverage those privileges for the benefit of those less fortunate.

Malala is a strong advocate for human rights and gender equality. She doesn't just focus on her own experiences but rather addresses bigger issues that affect everyone. I really admire how she sees that social issues are all connected and how her work can make a difference in creating a more fair and equal world. I hope that by meeting her, I can learn more about her journey and how her work can benefit society as a whole.

I really want to meet Malala Yousafzai, not just because I admire her, but because I want to connect with her story on a personal level. I am curious to know how her experiences have influenced her thoughts about education, equality, and how people can make a positive difference in the world.

Malala is a global icon who has faced many challenges and has shown incredible strength and resilience. I am curious as to what keeps her going in the face of such difficulties. How does she maintain her determination to achieve her goals, and how can we learn from her example? Malala's story raises important questions about how to advocate for a cause while balancing personal beliefs with the realities of the global stage. How can personal experiences be turned into a universal message that can make a lasting impact? These are some of the issues that can be discussed in a conversation with Malala, drawing on her own experiences and insights.

I'm interested in how education can create positive change for both individuals and society as a whole. I'd like to know more about Malala's ideas on how education can transform not only individual's lives but also entire communities and even nations. Also, I'm curious to know how education can help to break down systemic inequalities and promote a more inclusive and equitable world.

Meeting Malala Yousafzai would be a dream come true for me. I really want to learn from her how to advocate for important issues, and I hope that our conversation will inspire me to make a positive impact in the world. I want to know more about her advocacy work and how she stays strong and motivated even in difficult situations. I believe that education is a powerful tool for change, and I am excited to hear her thoughts on this topic. Overall, I think this conversation will be a very enlightening and profound experience for me.

"A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies . . .

*The man who never reads lives **only one.**"*

George R.R. Martin

"I find television very educating.

*Every time somebody turns on the set, I go into the other room and **read a book.**"*

Groucho Marx (American comedian, actor, writer, stage, film, radio, and television star)



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grades 8-9 - Lydia Landrum - Harding Academy
Three Rivers Reading Council

Meeting a celebrity can often feel like an unattainable dream. If I could make this dream come true, I would want to meet Allyson Felix. Many people may not know of Allyson Felix, who is a famous and influential Olympic track star. For me, meeting her would be an inspiring and life changing experience. I would love to meet Allyson Felix to learn how she became successful, how she keeps her faith strong, and how she stays determined.

Allyson Felix's success has greatly influenced track history; with many records, metals, and world championship titles, she is one of the most outstanding sprinters of all time. I would love to learn more about how she gained her success and the steps she took to become the impactful runner she is today. Knowing the strategies Felix took to gain her success would allow me to apply them to my own life and maybe help me to chase my dreams to become a notable sprinter. Felix's success has inspired me to never give up, because she has proven that if you don't give up great things can happen. For instance, when she ran in the Olympics 10 months after giving birth, she worked very hard to get back in shape in order to win another olympic medal.

Allyson Felix's faith has greatly displayed what it truly means to give everything to God. Through all the success and accomplishments she has made, it could be very easy to say that it was all her doing, but instead she maintains a humble attitude. She demonstrates her humble nature by always giving credit to God for her victories and accomplishments. I would like to meet Felix to learn the secret about how she makes time for God while maintaining the priorities of a busy training schedule. If I got to meet her, learning her methods for balance would be very beneficial for my life.

Allyson Felix's career, like any other career, had setbacks whether that be an injury or not wanting to get out of bed in the morning; she always stayed determined. I would love to learn how she stays motivated day after day, especially after giving birth to a child. Felix could have made up many excuses about how she couldn't do her workouts or training, but she didn't. She seems to always keep her focus and work toward her goals.

I would love to meet Allyson Felix to learn how she became successful, how she keeps her faith strong, and how she stays determined. I feel that learning about these aspects of her life would help me not only in athletics but also succeed in my everyday life. If I could meet Allyson Felix, it would be a very life changing experience and a dream come true.



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grades 8-9 - Jack Springer - Cabot Freshman Academy
Non-council Entry


The famous person that I would like to meet would be Pythagoras for his beneficiary contribution to the field of mathematics, his sage-like cognitive abilities, and his ability to have substantial impact and influence with philosophy.

Firstly, I would like to meet Pythagoras for his extraordinary contribution to the theorem in mathematical study. When Pythagoras worked with his "cult," he created a fundamental theorem that would impact not only people but the entire field of mathematics. This fundamental theorem would be the commonly known Pythagorean theorem ($a^2+b^2=c^2$). As a freshman student, I have been sufficiently impacted by the theorem in the use of geometry, not only for the base theorem but its effect on distance and triangle identification. Not only academically has this mathematical contribution affected me but also through my interest in my future career. As a person I have grown fond of the idealism and overall theories of mathematics; in turn, I believe that meeting Pythagoras would be beneficial to my understanding of the concept and how he drew his conclusions to what would become a renowned mathematician theorem. In addition to the baseline widely known information of Pythagoras, he had an impact on the 3-D world of mathematics. Pythagoras, through the limited knowledge known, is credited with beginning the five regular solids of math (cube, tetrahedron, octahedron, dodecahedron, and icosahedron). From the research I've done in the past with the other contributor to the creation of modern geometry Euclid, I've grown an interest in the function of what are known as platonic solids in modern-day terms. Meeting Pythagoras would give me additional insight into the creation of the foundation for the solids and what the modern day has changed and tweaked out over time as new mathematicians have come into the field. In the end, I would meet Pythagoras for intellect in mathematical creation and to see the difference between the modern vs 300 B.C. eras.

Next, I would like to meet Pythagoras for his thorough cognitive abilities and overall wisdom. Since early young adult years, Pythagoras had noticed a sense of rhythm within the natural world. Matter of fact, this natural rhythm that Pythagoras found would be the creation of the musical ratios (1:2 Octave, 2:3 Perfect fifth, and 3:4 Perfect fourth). As it has already been explored I have a

deep connection to the study of the mathematical field. However, as a percussionist, I also have invested time into learning the field of musicology. Meeting Pythagoras would fulfill my interest in not only academic structure but also in the ideology of music principles based on natural rhythms used in the common world. Overall analytically I would have benefited from Pythagoras from my major and minor interest in math and music respectively. Moving forward, Pythagoras not only used the framework for musical composition but used it to create a relative theory of the night and day cycle. Pythagoras used the math principle and music principle and created a relationship between the position of the earth and other spheres that controlled the earth's position to a "central flame". In general, Meeting and working with Pythagoras would show me a development in my ability to analyze pieces of data that seem on paper unconnected but rather have a greater and even more beneficial meaning than a basic definition. Academically I would have grown to understand the composition of my likes and dislikes and I would begin to understand how everything is connected through the use of heavy analytical analysis. Overall, I would like to meet Pythagoras for his cognitive ability and analytical thinking.

Finally, I would meet Pythagoras for his contribution to philosophy, and the impact he had on the other Greek philosophers. Besides Pythagoras, Aristotle was a mentor to a philosopher named Plato. Plato, when mentored by Pythagoras, had based his views on the concept and belief of Pythagoras. As stated in the second paragraph, meeting Pythagoras would be beneficial for my academic and cognitive growth. Pythagoras in general has a very impactful life to other people through his philosophy and intelligence. Another example of impact is with his religious group or what is more associated with a "cult." Despite the generally negative impact of a "cult" sound I surmise that the benefit in this case for me would outweigh the cost. Through Pythagoras, great sage-like ability had great followings and impact on what the modern-day world is like now. From my values, Pythagoras would have academically made me grow but also would have impacted me to rethink my principles and consider options that I would be blind to without the wisdom of an intelligent thinker who can lead an entire following. Ultimately meeting Pythagoras would be a case of benefits outweighing the cost, I would gain academically and analytically in my way of thinking.



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet
Grades 8-9 - Briana Swearngen - Cabot Freshman Academy
Non-council Entry

Do you ever feel different than others just because of something you're born with? When I was a child, I was always unaware of how the world truly was, oblivious to how others treated me or African Americans until now as I look back at my life, especially now that I'm in the South where slavery heavily impacted people back then and now. I am mixed race, so I know what it's like to have people judge me, often making fun of my hair when I was younger or dealing with unfair treatment. But this shouldn't hold anyone or me back, as for all my life I've been making the most of what I have. A quote by the civil rights activist Martin Luther King Junior, states that "Everyone has the power for greatness, not for fame but greatness because greatness is determined by service." This quote alone is enough to display how anyone can make it far in life by his or her service not by power or fame but by actions. With Dr. King Day passing, the famous person that I would like to meet is Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

One reason why I would want to meet him is because he had peacefully protested and fought against segregation, being able to make a difference through his actions and words instead of violence. For instance, he used civil disobedience, a way of protesting the government and establishments with an active refusal of laws, demands, or commands by the government at the time about what people of color could do. Dr. King thought about what was righteous, often leading to organized boycotts like the Montgomery bus boycotts for Rosa Parks, lasting over a year. King was put into jail for his actions. A quote by King while he was in jail at the time, writes "There is nothing greater in all the world than freedom. It's worth going to jail for. It's worth losing a job for. It's worth dying for." The fact that King could use nonviolent protests and be successful in acting against Jim Crow laws despite the repercussions he could've faced or even died makes him a strong leader and someone I look up to. I get inspired by people who hold to their beliefs, even if they deal with hardships, and continue to try and better the world. Not only did he fight for African American civil rights but also labor rights as well. King would often help with picketing and protesting against discrimination and living wages in the workforce. He would also speak at labor union meetings, and even during the time of his assassination, he was supporting the striking of sanitation workers. One of the most impactful events he led was the march on Washington for jobs and freedom, where over 250,000 people gathered to advocate the rights of employment, economic rights, and the rights of people of color on August 28th, 1963. According to National Public Radio, King had given his famous "I Had a Dream" speech where he called to end racism and economic injustice, speaking to the crowd: "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today." This shows that King stood up for what he believed in, even when many had brought him down and tried to stop his actions. Not only did desegregation but also worker rights and poverty make King continue his journey and make me believe that I should speak my mind and do what I feel is

right in my heart. His “I Have a Dream” speech is so recognizable because of how powerful King is with his voice, using his anger as an amazing advantage.

Another reason was that he cared for the people and risked his life even in death, even when he was threatened by death and hated, to bring justice to African Americans. He dealt with various threats, his own home being bombed numerous times, and even got stabbed by a woman a decade before being assassinated while being an activist during his life. When he faced violence, he never once used violence back or encouraged people to put away their weapons. Despite how the police, the majority of the U.S., and many high figures tried to put Martin Luther King, Jr., down or even sabotage his family, he still wanted to speak the truth about his morals and ideologies. Even being shot at in public never made him want to change his desire to make the country stronger. He fought for the lives of many, the oppressed and poor, and communities who wanted a better future. The South is where I live now so seeing that somebody would have made a difference in a world of ignorance shows that things can happen if you work hard enough. Martin Luther King also wanted to help the poor and children of the future, traveling often to speak at churches, schools, and also conferences to spread his voice on life, god, and his views on issues. For instance, he would speak a sermon at the Montgomery church on how America’s moral and spiritual process is not as far as its technology and scientific development and that the dangers of racism and issues of capitalism impact the country as a whole. He uses heavy figures of speech and personification, using four mountains in the speech relativism, materialism, segregation, and finally violence. These are what society needed to overcome to keep moving, from King. From the 1960 Spelman College speech, Dr. King is quoted saying, “If you can't fly then run if you can't run then walk if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.” King had a powerful voice in what he wanted to say, even in the final moments of his assassination. He was a highly faithful person, wanting to bring wisdom to Christians as his views aligned with what God would’ve wanted, often using the bible as a reference to the ideas he formed. He also wasn’t afraid to criticize America, talking about how people cared more about income and profit than the quality of their character. So even when he was disliked by so many, he had a lot to believe in and talked Positively.

But the most important thing about why I would want to meet Martin Luther King, Jr., is that I am inspired by his story and continue to learn about his life and journey as a mixed person and someone who cares about civil rights. To say that black people even now are still impacted by segregation and the decades of hardships, especially in the South is an understatement. With events in Arkansas like the integration of Central High School by the Little Rock Nine, it goes to show how these events still matter. Interracial marriage became legal in 1967, allowing white people and African Americans to marry and have children together. Even then, it was still socially unacceptable, and it took decades for more people to normalize interracial couples. Without this law, without the civil rights activists speaking against segregation and the freedom for people to come together despite their race, I would not be able to live my life normally or even be born. What Dr. King did has impacted my life and many others, even if he wasn’t a perfect person, he led a legacy that is a part of history, and the South has changed so much since he movement. Even now, some things are worth fighting for, and being able to meet him would help with my life more than imaginable. Martin Luther King Jr. also came from a humble background, which influenced him to stand with the labor movement and civil rights movement, showing people that they could have the freedom of speech to get their rights. King was however the most influenced by his father, which made him want to pursue civil rights, and he admired his strong presence. In *The Autobiography Of Martin Luther King, Jr*, he writes about his dad's character, saying that he had great integrity and was a conscientious person: “Even the person who disagrees with his frankness has to admit that his motives and actions are sincere.” Not only from the actions of King's father but also from his philosophy was he able to keep himself motivated. Graduating college at age 15, King was intelligent and during his young years, he understood how racism was in the U.S. at the time but grew up grateful, saying that his mother was gentle and his father was strong, sourced from Stanford University’s MLK research and education institute. His beginnings, how he started is admirable because he never came from a high power or with special perks as a kid, he loved his family and where he lived was uplifting. This is what makes him an inspiring and powerful individual; he had a lot of dreams, and even as he grew up, his father had deeply impacted the way he viewed civil rights and standing up for yourself. It makes him feel more like an ordinary person than other high figures you see in the media. He’s intelligent and hardworking and learned about how the world worked even as a child. If he were still alive today, he would have a lot more stories to tell as time passes, being able to change more lives and even his speeches change me. What I can take away is to fight for what I stand for, know what I’m worth, and finally what my country deserves to be.

In summary, the famous person that I would like to meet is Martin Luther King, Jr., because he had taken advantage of his words over violence against what he fought for to make a difference; he cared for the rights of oppressed people and would even die to sacrifice what he had to his family and American citizens; and, lastly, he deeply inspires me in my life and what is worth fighting for. King wasn’t a politician or privileged, but despite the backlash and struggles he went through for many decades he still wanted to help his children and others from the hardships during that period. As I grow up to be an adult woman, I can reflect on how there's still much to be passionate about or fight for, how I can love my country but still criticize its actions, and look at King as an inspiration in my life. When I first learned about racism, it was a hard concept to grasp until I was older and saw it still happen; despite what happens, when I see the civil rights movement, I see people who weren’t afraid to stand up for themselves and the justice they wanted.



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grades 10-12: Anna Robertson - Harding Academy

Three Rivers Reading Council

I make a lot of mistakes. Maybe it's just because I have had to face the consequences of all of them, but it seems to me that I make more mistakes than the average person. When it comes to asking myself what famous person I would most like to meet, the obvious answers Oprah, Taylor Swift, Abraham Lincoln, Jesus - don't appeal to me like one would think. There's something intimidating about coming face-to-face with someone who is considered great. I think, rather, that I would want to come face to face with someone who is considered less than good. If I could meet anyone famous, I would want to meet the apostle Peter. Peter journeyed through doubt, denial, and growth, and there is something beautiful about a person who messes up like he did and still comes through the end telling the story of God's love.

Peter was a doubter. He wasn't the kind of doubter with polite questions and simple hesitations. He was a messy kind of a doubter, with a faith that got blown in every direction. In Matthew 14, the disciples are caught out at sea in a raging storm. Jesus begins to walk on the water towards the disciples, and, upon discovering that it is Jesus, Peter declares that he wants to walk towards him on the water, too. Soon after he steps out, though, he sees the wind and the waves and becomes afraid, sinking into the sea. Jesus catches him and asks him why he doubted. In Luke 5, the disciples are out fishing with no luck. Jesus approaches and tells them to try again, and Peter, though skeptical, agrees. The net emerges from the water so full of fish that the boats begin to sink. Peter's doubt in these stories is so real. His struggle between doubt and wanting to trust Jesus is obvious. I have felt myself distracted by the fear that comes from the storm around me, and I have known what it is to have my doubts proven wrong. I want to meet Peter and ask, "When did your doubt change to trust?" and learn from him what it means to have your fears and decide to walk towards Jesus anyway.

Peter was also a denier. Jesus is washing the disciples' feet in John 13. When he approaches Peter, Peter tries to deny Jesus the right to wash his feet. Jesus gently explains that this is the way in which Peter will take part with him. In Luke 22, Peter's denial goes farther. Three times he is asked if he knows this Jesus, and three times Peter says he does not. His fear caused him to deny. There have been times when I have denied Christ, both from fear of his goodness and fear of the world's evil. I want to talk to Peter about why he denied Jesus the right to wash his feet, and I want to ask him, "When did your denial change to acceptance?" More importantly than these, however, is the fact that Peter grew. After Jesus' resurrection, he asks Peter three times in John 21 if Peter loves him. Each time, Peter says, yes, redeeming himself from the three times he denied Jesus. In Peter's own book, *I Peter*, he tells his readers to lay their anxieties on Jesus because Jesus cares for them. If I were to meet Peter, I think this is the part that would take up most of the conversation. This is the part where Peter finally seems to get it. He understands what Jesus was trying to teach him all along - through the storms, the denial, the shame. Jesus never seemed to be afraid of Peter's doubt. All he wanted was for Peter to take a step towards him on that water. All he wanted was for Peter to cast his net once more into the water. All he wanted from Peter was for him to give Jesus his anxiety because Jesus cared for him. I would ask Peter, "When did your fear turn into faith?"

Maybe the apostle Peter wouldn't be the kind of person from whom I would be trying to obtain an autograph. I think Peter would gladly be the first to admit that he made some big mistakes and learned some important lessons. He likely would have carried some of that guilt with him for the rest of his life. But I think that his journey of faith would have made him one of the wisest people who ever lived, and he would be more than willing to share some of that wisdom with someone like me - someone who is a human, a sinner, and a doubter.

"And what, you ask, does **writing teach us**? First and foremost, it reminds us that we are alive and that it is **a gift and a privilege**, not a right." — Ray Bradbury, *Zen in the Art of Writing*



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grades 10-12 - Jackson Wilson - Southside Charter High School
White River Reading Council

John Darnielle is a classic troubadour in the modern music world. His simple use of instruments and importance of lyrics make Darnielle classical in the landscape. Thanks to his emotional writing and intense passion for music, I would love to meet John Darnielle of *The Mountain Goats*.

John Darnielle is a prolific writer when it comes to folk music. First, he is loved in the folk genre for his themes like self-destruction in "Tallahassee" or helping others through escapism in "All Hail West Texas." Furthermore, each song feels personal and important alone and gives the albums powerful messaging and emotion. The folk background gives the human element to the songs, making the heart of the listener strum with each time Darnielle slams on the guitar. All with the characters who span albums, the albums are like shows or a movie franchise with the Alpha couple, which are the main characters in "Tallahassee" or "Jenny," which showed up in "All Hail West Texas" and "Jenny from Thebes." Importantly, these characters' stories grow and change overtime, and the individualistic form of the songs make multiple stories coalesce into one giant life-long story. You can see characters from separate albums meet or how characters who have not seen each other in years or songs meet again and realize how different they are.

With his poetic writing style, Darnielle tells amazing stories about the human condition through characters, including Tallahassee is about the destructive and alcoholic Alpha Couple who eventually begin to hate one another. In fact, they had been featured in singles in previous albums but were given an entire major album by Darnielle after their evolution from problematic young lovers to self-destructive alcoholics. The couple had been around since his 1994 album *Zopilote Machine*, having two songs named after them. Jenny was a character in "All Hail West Texas" and finally Darnielle acquiesced and gave her own album, *Jenny From Thebes*. The album, as it states in the bottom of the cover, is about seven people, two houses, a motorcycle, and a locked asylum for adolescent boys.

Along with the emotional stories and complex characters, his vocals and guitar go fast, ecstatically showing excitement to perform the songs. First in his song "New Star Song," Darnielle screams the chorus out and constrains his guitar strings to become percussion. In addition, Darnielle's early career was incredibly lo-fi with only his guitar and voice on a boombox, which gave it an authenticity along with his singing and guitar techniques. The early, simple era of the Mountain Goats made the story-telling and emotions much more intense as his vocals brought passion and excitement to the art. Including Darnielle's *The Sunset Tree* album was dedicated to himself and his unalienable, abusive step-father, who both were featured in multiple songs. The hit song "This Year" tells the story of a young Darnielle rebelling against his step-father and celebrating how in one year he will be an adult and able to leave. The album showed how complex Darnielle is as a person and how he is able to create these characters and stories.

Darnielle and his band *The Mountain Goats* are able to be original with their daring simplicity in the exceedingly complex music world. The emotional lyrics and complex characters give contrast to the instruments and vocals that give the stories a whole new side of sensitivity. Even though his artistry almost goes in the opposite direction of every other popular artist, Darnielle has thrived with his experimental creative writing, concept albums, and recurring characters; the clear joy he has in all of the above makes me want to meet John Darnielle of *The Mountain Goats*.



Famous Person Whom I Would Most Like to Meet

Grades 10-12 - Ethan Price - Harding Academy
Three Rivers Reading Council

Everybody always says to not meet your heroes, but I do not believe that this is the case for John Lewis. John Lewis was a Black American civil rights leader turned politician born in 1940's Alabama, a harshly racially segregated state. If I could meet any famous person, I would meet John Lewis because of his civil rights career, his political career, and his tough upbringing and how that contributed to his life.

John Lewis was a major part and influence during the civil rights movement. When he was in college, he participated in many sit-ins in racially segregated areas, buildings, and public areas. He also participated in the Freedom Rides, a movement that directly challenged racial segregation on Southern interstate buses and their terminals. Because of this, Lewis was constantly arrested and beaten. But that didn't stop him as he would continue to participate in these sit-ins and Freedom Rides. A primary reason I want to meet John Lewis is because of this. He knew what he wanted and what he needed, and he didn't back down when he was beaten constantly and even arrested in multiple instances. John Lewis is a major inspiration to me because he is just truly a good person, and this shines through each of his actions. His most famous action being 1965's March 7th march, a terrible day in which he led over 600 peaceful protestors on a march to support Black voting rights. The marchers departed from Selma, Alabama toward the state's capital Montgomery. While they were still in Selma, they attempted to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge, but they were stopped by many police officers and different law enforcement officers. The officers tear-gassed, beat, and even ran over the protestors with their horses. John Lewis himself was beaten until his skull became fractured, but he didn't give up. He got back up and kept striving and supporting his mission of making America an even better and more equal place. Instead of going to the hospital to treat his injuries, he spoke to news reporters and requested the President's help. In his times of strife, he continually got back up and pushed through all of the fight to continue his mission. Even though he was badly beaten, he couldn't give up. He had to spread the message. He was an inspirational activist, an inspirational person, and an even more inspirational politician.

John Lewis was an amazing politician. In 1963, he was elected to become the chairman of the SNCC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, a group dedicated to persuade Black college and high school students to participate in peaceful protests, such as sit-ins. As chairman, he helped register African American voters and organize community events during many civil rights projects. He also played key roles in many different marches and protests as a political leader and figure, even helping lead the famous March on Washington, where MLK gave his "I Have a Dream" speech. As a politician, John Lewis is a major inspiration as he is always trying to do good, even if he isn't directly involved. He could've been a famous march leader and prominent civil rights activist, but he decided to stay behind the scenes and become a part of the movement's "Big Six" in other ways. Lewis was also the director of the Voter Education Project, furthermore helping African American voters. He was also placed as director of other important federal agencies including the Peace Corps and VISTA. He also even decided to run for office and became a councilman and a member of the House of Representatives. He also received many other accolades, including the Nonviolent Peace Prize, the JFK Profile in Courage Award, and the NAACP's Spingarn Medal. He also received the Presidential Medal of freedom. While his achievements and trophies are inspiring, he was able to receive so much praise and recognition and not become extremely arrogant, a feat that is even more inspiring.

John Lewis' life was tough, but it made him into a great person. He was born February 21, 1940 in Alabama. During this time, Alabama was extremely racist and segregated. Growing up as a Black American was always hard for Lewis, especially because he was always dissuaded from pursuing civil rights and to just abide by the laws. Lewis was the son of two Alabama sharecroppers. As a kid, he always attended segregated schools and he always wished they weren't. He was always encouraged by others, including his parents, to live with the Southern Jim Crow laws of the time. As he got older, he started to become more inspired by the civil rights activists. He had big dreams of helping out his people and desegregating schools all around. But once again, he was dissuaded. John Lewis is a major inspiration to me because of all of the stuff he went through. He was constantly told to live and abide by the rules, but he knew they were wrong. He knew they needed to be changed. He knew he needed to do what he needed to do. Lewis didn't listen to the people that told him to give up. His unrelenting passion and determination to be a good person is what inspires me the most and the reason I would've loved to meet him.

John Lewis is one of my heroes, and I would've loved to meet him. He was an amazing and kind person that showed his love through his civil rights career, his career as a politician, and his everyday life. He deserves the utmost respect from everyone for all he has gone through and all he has been able to accomplish. When people say to not meet your heroes, they are not talking about John Lewis

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