



The Discovery Project

Presented by Centaur Publishing

Discover the story only you can tell.

Build confidence, curiosity, character, and creativity—one handwritten story at a time.

The July Story Challenge 2026

 **Win a \$50 Amazon Gift Card!**

Two Story Missions • Four Winners • Two Age Groups • Free to Enter

Welcome

The Discovery Project was created by author Kristine Benevento and presented by Centaur Publishing to encourage young people to discover the story only they can tell.

What if one story changed the way you see yourself?

Not because someone else told you who you are... But because you discovered it for yourself.

Every child has a story. Every child has strengths waiting to be discovered.

Some stories change the people who read them. The best stories change the people who write them.

Children today spend much of their time looking at screens. We're inviting them to spend a little time looking within. The stories we tell ourselves help shape the lives we live. When we slow down, reflect honestly, and ask better questions, we often discover strengths we didn't know we had. That's why we created The Discovery Project.

The Discovery Project was created to encourage young people to slow down, think deeply, write honestly, and discover something meaningful about themselves.

This isn't simply a writing contest. It's an invitation to build curiosity, character, confidence, imagination, and thoughtful communication through the power of handwriting.

Who May Enter

Entries are welcome worldwide where permitted by law. Winners must be able to receive a digital Amazon Gift Card by email.

- Ages 9–12
- Ages 13–16

Participation is free. Stories must be written in English.

Challenge Schedule

Story Mission #1: July 1 – July 15 (11:59 PM ET)

Story Mission #2: July 16 – July 31 (11:59 PM ET)

Winners announced: August 7

Story Mission #1

The Moment I Saw Myself Differently

Tell us about one moment that surprised you. What happened? What did you discover about yourself? How has that discovery changed the way you think or act today?

When you finish writing, ask yourself:

"What did writing this story teach me about myself?"

Story Mission #2

The Person I'm Choosing to Become

People often ask, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

We're asking something different. Who do you want to become? What qualities matter most to you? Why? Who has influenced you? What choices are you making today that will help you become that person tomorrow?

When you finish writing, ask yourself:

"What's one thing I can begin doing today to become that person?"

Why Handwriting?

Research shows handwriting activates more areas of the brain than typing. It improves memory, learning, creativity, attention, organization, and critical thinking. We ask you to handwrite your story because we want you to slow down, reflect, and discover ideas that might otherwise be missed.

Write a rough draft.

Rewrite it.

Read it aloud.

Improve your handwriting.

Use a dictionary.

Use a thesaurus.

Stretch your vocabulary.

We don't expect perfection.

We do expect your best. **There are no right or wrong answers.**

We aren't looking for perfect children.

We're looking for honest writers who are willing to think deeply and do their best.

Story Requirements

- Handwritten
- Original
- Written entirely by you
- Based on the Story Mission
- Written in English
- Include a title
- Recommended length: 600–1,200 words
- One entry per Story Mission

If your handwriting is difficult to read...

Slow down.

Neatness matters.

Not because perfect handwriting wins.

Because you are showing respect for your reader.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI, including ChatGPT and similar programs, may not be used to write, rewrite, edit, improve, or generate any portion of your story.

You may:

- Use a dictionary
- Use a thesaurus
- Look up spelling
- Rewrite your own work
- Ask a trusted adult to point out spelling or grammar mistakes

We want to hear your voice.

Adult Support

A trusted adult may encourage you, proofread, and help scan or email your entry. They may not write, rewrite, or change your story.

Judging

Stories are judged anonymously on:

Depth of Thought 25%

Creativity 20%

Storytelling 20%

Grammar & Spelling15%

Penmanship10%

Overall Effort10%

Prizes

Each Story Mission awards:

Ages 9–12

- One \$50 Amazon Gift Card (delivered by email)

Ages 13–16

- One \$50 Amazon Gift Card (delivered by email)

Four winners total.

How to Submit

Email: centaurpublishing1@gmail.com **Email subject:** Story Mission #1 or Story Mission #2

Late submissions cannot be accepted.

In the event of a tie, the judges will determine the winner based on the overall goals of The Discovery Project.

Attach clear photographs of your handwritten pages or one PDF scan. Stories should be written on one side of each page whenever possible. Please number each page. Make sure every page is flat, well lit, and easy to read.

Do NOT put your name anywhere on your story.

Include in your email:

- Child's full name
- Child's age
- Story title
- Story Mission number
- Parent or legal guardian's name
- Parent or legal guardian's email
- Where the story was written
- How you heard about The Discovery Project

Publication Permission

By submitting an entry, the parent or legal guardian grants Centaur Publishing permission to publish the story, in whole or in part, on the website, social media, newsletters, or promotional materials.

Only the child's first name and age will be published.

The author retains copyright.

Writer's Honor Code

Before you sign your name, please remember what this project is about.

This isn't just about winning. It's about discovering the kind of person you are becoming.

I choose honesty over shortcuts. I choose effort over excuses. I choose curiosity over giving up.

Because my character matters more than winning.

Writer's Promise

By signing below, I promise that:

- ☐ I wrote this story myself.
- ☐ This story is my own original work.
- ☐ I did not use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to write, rewrite, or improve my story.
- ☐ I did not copy another person's work.
- ☐ I gave this story my very best effort.

Writer's Name: _____

Writer's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Certification

I certify that:

- ☐ The information provided in this submission is true and accurate.
- ☐ The participant meets the age requirements.
- ☐ The story was written entirely by the child.

- ☐ No AI was used.
- ☐ No adult wrote or rewrote any portion of the story.
- ☐ I have read and agree to the contest rules.
- ☐ I understand that the judges' decisions are final.
- ☐ I grant Centaur Publishing permission to publish the story if selected.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Entry Checklist

- ☐ Story is handwritten
- ☐ Story has a title
- ☐ Story is 600–1,200 words
- ☐ Name is NOT on the story
- ☐ Story Mission number included
- ☐ Photos are clear
- ☐ Email information included
- ☐ Honor Code signed
- ☐ Parent/Guardian Certification signed

Questions

centaurpublishing1@gmail.com

© 2026 Centaur Publishing. All rights reserved. Thank you for choosing to be part of The Discovery Project. We can't wait to discover your story.