

FRED B. BENJAMIN PEACE WRITING CONTEST
For Maryland Middle School Students

Description: This is an annual, statewide writing contest for middle school students in Maryland focusing on the themes of peace and social justice. The contest, now in its 25th year, is sponsored by Anne Arundel Peace Action, Maryland Peace Action Education Fund, Benjamin Peace Foundation, and the Peace and Social Concerns Committee of Annapolis Friends Meeting.

Eligibility: All 7th and 8th grade students enrolled in public or private schools in Maryland **or home-schooled students at the same grade levels** are eligible to enter.

Requirements: Students must write no more than 1,200 words on the following topic:

It is arguable that the most important development in the early 21st century has been the emergence of social media. There can be little question that platforms such as Facebook, Twitter (now “X”), Instagram, Snapchat and many others have revolutionized the avenues with which citizens can communicate with one another. However, these vehicles have been criticized for interfering with privacy, giving voice to extremists, and causing emotional harm. What role has social media played in your life? Do you think that it has been a mostly positive or negative force—and why? Has social media contributed to or obstructed world peace?

Entries will be evaluated primarily on the basis of accuracy, creativity and originality.

The entry should be double-spaced and one-sided and accompanied by a separate cover sheet which includes all of these:

- Student’s name, address and phone number (or e-mail address)
- School’s name, address and phone number
- The name of the teacher sponsor, if applicable

Personal identifying information must not appear anywhere on the entry. Cover sheets should be attached to the entries by paperclip. No staples anywhere, please.

Deadline: Send entries and cover sheets to Peace Writing Contest, 310 Riverview Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403-3328. Entries must be postmarked no later than May 15, 2024.

Awards: Winners will be selected by a panel of three distinguished judges. Winners will receive prizes of:

First place: \$500
Second place: \$300
Third place: \$200
Fourth place: \$100

Winners will be recognized at an awards ceremony. Attendance is not required to receive an award.