



The International Letter-Writing Competition for Young People

Theme of the 2010 competition
“Write a letter to someone to explain why it is important to talk about AIDS and to protect yourself against it.”



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The Universal Postal Union (UPU) has organized the International Letter-Writing Competition for Young People since 1972. Over the years, millions of young people from all over the world have taken part in this competition, which develops their skills in composition and the ability to express their thoughts clearly, fosters their enjoyment of letter writing, and helps strengthen the bonds of international friendship – one of the basic missions of the UPU.

Why the theme of AIDS?

- Almost 30 years since the discovery of the human immunodeficiency (HIV) virus that causes AIDS, there is still no cure for this disease.
- There are 7,400 new cases of infection each day, and 33 million people are now living with HIV/AIDS. Prevention remains the best method of protecting against infection.
- 45% of newly-infected people worldwide are aged between 15 and 24. It is therefore essential to raise awareness among young people, who have a lot of questions to ask about the disease and the challenges it presents.

→ The world community has only six years left to fulfil its promise to stem the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015, and to start to reverse the current trend, one of the UN Millennium Development Goals.

→ This initiative ties in with the worldwide HIV prevention campaign launched in post offices jointly by the UPU, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the International Labour Organization and UNI Global Union.

Resources for teachers

There are many sources of information about HIV/AIDS, particularly for young people and teachers. Here are a few examples:

- www.unaids.org/learnmore/en/index.html
For comprehensive information about the epidemic, including its prevention and treatment, the UNAIDS website provides data, reports and other useful resources.
- http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=36400&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

UNESCO's EDUCAIDS site (a worldwide HIV/AIDS education initiative), aims to promote, develop and encourage global responses to HIV and AIDS from the education sector. The site provides teachers with many resources in English, Spanish and French.

AIDS and young people: a practical guide to countering misconceptions and uncertainty – just, safe responses. This is a UNESCO bro-

chure intended for teachers and anyone else wishing to carry out an HIV/AIDS prevention campaign aimed at young people. To obtain a free hard copy or CD-ROM in English or French, contact Boyan Radoykov

→ b.radoykov@unesco.org

→ www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/hiv aids/access-meds/children/resources/

The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance lists nu-

Participation

So you have decided to enter your students in the competition? Congratulations! Please keep to the theme, comply with the competition rules, and follow the instructions given by your national organizer. The best letter selected at national level will be sent to the Universal Postal Union to represent your country in the International Letter-Writing Competition.

Competition procedure

- 1 The Universal Postal Union invites its 191 member countries to take part in the International Letter-Writing Competition for Young People.
- 2 Countries first organize a national competition through their Post, ministry or regulator to select a letter to represent them at international level.
- 3 Participating schools submit their letters to their national competition organizer, and not direct to the UPU.

International prize

- The first three international prize winners receive a gold, silver or bronze medal struck by the International Bureau of the UPU, as well as a certificate and other prizes.
- Additional prizes are generally awarded nationally, at the discretion of the competition organizers.

- 4 The winning letter in the national stage is submitted to the UPU by the end of April 2010, to be entered in the international competition.

- 5 The UPU announces the winners of the international competition no later than August 2010.

Competition rules

- The competition is open to young people up to the age of 15.
- The compositions submitted must be recent, unpublished letters.
- Compositions must be in the form of a letter and contain the elements of a letter (place and date, addressee's address, opening and closing salutation and signature).
- Compositions must keep strictly to the theme, and not exceed 800 words.

Questions and further information

If you have any questions about the competition, please contact your national organizer or consult the page of the UPU website devoted to the letter-writing competition

→ www.upu.int/letter_writing/en/index.shtml