



# Jesse White

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## SECRETARY OF STATE

# NEWS

**For Immediate Release:**  
August 10, 2009

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### **JESSE WHITE ENCOURAGES STUDENT READERS TO ENTER “LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE” CONTEST**

**SPRINGFIELD** – Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White is urging students in grades 4-12 to enter the 2010 “Letters About Literature” contest, a national reading and writing contest sponsored by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and the Illinois Center for the Book in partnership with Target.

"Every year students across the nation write letters to authors, living or deceased, describing how a book positively impacted their life," said White, who serves as honorary chair of the Illinois Center for the Book. "Anyone who has read these letters can see how literature inspires and touches the lives of our young people. Students truly enjoy this contest, and I hope thousands of Illinois students will participate this year."

There are three levels of participation - Level I for grades 4, 5 & 6, Level II for grades 7 & 8 and Level III for grades 9 - 12. Each participating state will select a winning letter for each competition level. The three Illinois winners will receive a \$50 Target gift card, a plaque and cash award from the Illinois Center for the Book. They will also advance to national competition, where two national winners and four national honorable mentions will be selected for each competition level. National winners will receive a \$500 gift card from Target and the national honorable mentions will receive a \$100 gift card.

The six national winners will also receive a \$10,000 grant for their school or community library for reading promotion for children and young adults. 12 national honorable mentions will receive a \$1,000 grant for reading promotion for their community or school library.

The deadline to enter the competition is **December 12, 2009**. State winners will be announced in April 2010. For more information about the competition, contact Bonnie Matheis at 217-558-2065 or [bmatheis@ilsos.net](mailto:bmatheis@ilsos.net). Information can also be found at <http://illinoiscenterforthebook.org/projects/projectse.html>

Target sponsors “Letters About Literature” as part of its national reading initiative, "Ready. Sit. Read!," which is aimed at fostering a love of reading among children at an early age. Since opening its first store in 1962, Target has partnered with nonprofit organizations, guests and team members to help meet community needs.

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