

The New York Times Learning Network
2020 Student Editorial Contest Finalists
(in alphabetical order by the writer's last name)

Top 12 Winners

High School

"Lessons From Failure" by Sophie S. Ding
"Collar the Cat!" by Abel John
"Not American Yet" by Alexander J. Lee
"Spotify Is Killing Beethoven ... Here's How You Can Save Him!" by Yuanlin Liu
"No Love of Milton if Not for Loving Frivolous Fiction" by Isabelle Lu
"The Class of 2021 Could Change College Admissions Forever" by Erin Tan
"This Land Was Made for You and Me" Nicole Tian
"How Animal Crossing Will Save Gen Z" by Ananya Udaygiri
"How Pragmatism Is Poisoning the Democratic Will of America's Youth" by Edward Xu

Middle School

"Bringing Ethics to Your Plate" by Alexa Troob
"Harnessing Boredom in the Age of Coronavirus" by Elan Cohen
"Switching Letters, Skipping Lines: Troubled and Dyslexic Minds" by Hayden Miskinis

Runners-Up

High School

"Death Is Hard. Let's Talk About It" by Frances Brogan
"You Can't Be Free if You're Dead: Why Freedom Isn't Free" by Xinni Chen
"From Silence to 'Stigma Free': Why We Need to Talk About Suicide" by Veronika Coyle
"Redefining a Life: Changing the Conversation About Gun Violence" by Anna Grant-Bolton
"Every Student Should Apply to Community College, and Yes, They Are Real Schools" by Emma Kaminski
"Freedom Isn't Free: The Price to Preserve Democracy" by Tara Kapoor
"To Smash the Glass Ceiling, First End the Double Standard" by Yui Kurosawa and Carolyn Rong
"It's Time to Take Responsibility: Addressing the Indigenous Health Crisis" by Mira Mehta
"The Eagle of Freedom: Birdcage Edition" by Nicholas Parker
"Farewell, My Mary Sue" by Yu Qi Xin
"Why Aren't We More Worried About Teacher Attrition in Public Schools?" by Sarah Schecter
"The Show Must Go On: Theater Needs to Survive This Pandemic" by Clara Shapiro
"It's Time to Hold Ivies Accountable" by Jiahn Son
"It's OK Not to Come Out: Oftentimes Pride Is a Privilege" by Sophia
"China Must Protect Its Whistleblowers" by Xiyue Tan
"Drawing Circles Around Animals" by Betty W.

Middle School

"Library Is to Librarian What Apple Is to Core" by Mariacristina Calcagno
"Reassessing the Value of Home Ec in 2020" by Ela Desai
"Young Adult Literature: Finding Its Place in the World" by Jason Hausenloy
"Plastic: Not Always the Villain of the Piece" by Kairav Iyer

"Two Languages, a World of Possibilities" by Qinrong Qian

Honorable Mentions

High School

"Zoning Will Not Make Houston a Flood-Resilient City" by Alex Brody

"When Encouragement Became a Shove: The Accidental Unfairness of the 'Girls in STEM' Movement" by Alyce Brown

"Making Time for Slow Food Rituals" by Meitong Chen

"Covid-19 Unmasks Our Broken Healthcare System" by Camilo Carmona

"A Pariah with a Platform: Woody Allen's Unrelenting Cultural Presence" by Jordan Ferdman

"A Chord and a Melody — Hope's Recipe" by Kaavya Ghoshal

"Economic Inequality is Crippling the American Dream" by Jarom Gordon

"Thanksgiving, or Thanks-taking: Reassessing How We Teach American History in Our Classrooms" by Hannah Han

"Society's Downfall: Self-Centered, Manipulative Maniacs" by Tejas Jadar

"A Triplet's Experience with Autism: Debunking the Myths" by Allison Kalmick

"Memes and Meaning: It's About All of Us" by Clara Kolker

"Treating Others The Way You Want To Be Treated: The Golden Rule Of National Apologies" by Joanne Inyoung Lee

"The College Board Board Game: Monopoly" by Maggie Morrison and Oren Schwartz

"Instagram's Creeps: They're Closer Than You Think" by Ukyung (Heidi) Nam

"The Tear in the Union" by Jakob Oehler

"Gen Z, Covid-19 and a Call to Action" by Ben Osagie Otoadese

"Covid-19 is Canceling Standardized Tests: It's Time to Test the Value of the SAT" by Hannah Sellers

"Embracing the Multitudinous Self" by Tula Simon

"Solitary Confinement: A Mind-Altering Horror Movie" by Emma Sullivan

"No, You're Not 'Not Racist'" by Emily Sun

"Earth's Well-Deserved Break" by Benjamin Wolf-Wagner

"Spare the Sleepy Students: Schools Should Start Later" by Jessica Yu

"The Newest Right: Internet" by Adrian Zhang

"A Universal Crisis Calls for a Universal Basic Income" by Elizabeth Zhu

Middle School

"Why Can't We Just Talk?" by Alexander Birchfield Eick

"America Under Crisis: Universal Basic Income and a Chance to Eradicate Poverty" by William He

"Mask Culture: Long-Term Habit Rather Than Short-term Reaction" by Zizhen Li

"Trying to Fit a Square into a Round Hole: Addressing the Covid-19 Pandemic Without Addressing the People's Needs" by Grace Liang

"All Veterans Deserve a Best Friend" by Margot Polen

"Humans, the Real Virus of the World" by Laura Thangi

Round 3 Finalists

High School

"Paying the Price for a 'Hello' From the Other Side" by Alexis Ahn

"Preventing Language Death: Restoring Justice and Equality in Language" by Qianhua An

"Body and Soul" by Asher Baron

“‘Convicted’ Shouldn’t Mean Restricted from Voting” by Helen B.
“In Defense of the Sports Bra” by Georgia Bernbaum
“Tainting Traditions” by Amanda Bogardus
“Mortal Elucidation: Comprehending the Fatal Importance of the November Election” by Henry Bontempo
“How Feminism Made Me Feel Guilty for Being Feminine” by Gillian Cartwright
“Save the Manuals” by Samuel Celico
“The Girl With the Smelly Lunch” by Melody Chang
“Behind the Heartless Nature of Virtual Reality, There Lies an Unexpected Warmth” by Chiao-Chun Chen
“The Beautiful Tragedy of Being Bilingual in America” by Stella Raine Chu
“Beware of Price Discrimination in the Age of Digital Omnipresence” by Daniel Chuang
“Give Us the Ballot...by Mail” by Mary Cipperman
“Happiness Class is More Beneficial Than Math Class Has Ever Been” by Whitney Cohen
“In a Land of Choices, Voter’s Deserve One Too” by Abhi Desai
“Teach For Equity, Not For America” by Aditi Desai
“Widening the Angle: Hollywood’s Problem with Perspective” by Rachel Dettelbach
“AŞTERIŞK?” by Robert DiChiara
“The Coronavirus Is Not the Only Virus Spreading” by Nicole Fang
“The Boys” by Julia Fechner
“How Lori Loughlin’s Case Sheds Light on a Critical Legal Right” by Mia Felt
“A Sustainable Death: How We Can Still Help After We’re Gone” by Riley Flanigan
“Rewrite the Narrative: Learning for the Sole Purpose of Learning” by Bridget Frost
“Don’t Forward This Article to Twenty Friends” by Noa Garmaise
“Music Is Under Attack” by Jackson Gigot Puent
“Becoming ‘Math People’” by Noah Goldstein
“The Value of Interdisciplinary Learning in Secondary Education” by Danielle Gruber
“Diversity on the Screen: Why Representation Both in Front and Behind the Camera Is Necessary For Progress In The Film Industry” by April Guo-Yue
“Niksen: How Doing Nothing Can Do A Lot” by Allison He
“‘Ppali Ppali’ Reduce the Curve: How a Culture Saved a Country” by Haeun Jasmine Jeong
“Resolving the ‘Required Volunteerism’ Paradox” by Philippe Jin
“The Coronavirus Isn’t the Only Reason We Need Vote By Mail” by Gavin Johnson
“Students Should Get Personal Days Too” by Samantha Johnson
“How Food Porn Can Help Us Feel Less Lonely” by Bella Kim
“Why the Increasingly Partisan Justice Department Necessitates an Elected Attorney General” by Joshua Lassin
“A Tale of Two Crises: Seeing Climate Change Through the Lens of Covid-19” by Darynne Lee
“Atrocious Crimes, Inadequate Punishments” by Janghoon Lee
“Why Quarantine Boredom Is Good For You” by Junyi Li
“We Are Not ‘White’: Understanding the MENA Community in the Census” by Farah Lindsey-Almadani
“Fast Fashion’s Hidden Toll” by Yihan Liu
“No Bones About It” by Feier Ma
“Family Vlogging: The Easiest Way to Endanger your Children’s Future” by Nishka Manghnani
“Blaming Innocent Minorities for Social Problems Has to Stop” by Bincheng Mao
“ALICE Leads Students Down the Rabbit Hole” by Ava Marginean
“Let’s Talk About Sex: The State of Sex Education in America” by Lena McEachern
“A Two-Faced Technology: How Facial Recognition Software Threatens Your Privacy” by Erin McKay
“Not Enough Ado About Theatre Education” by Maggie Munday Odom
“Does Being an Introvert Mean You Can’t Be a Leader?” by Oishani Nandi
“Subtitles: The Easiest Language to Learn” by Mandy Ng
“An Erroneously Criticized Phenomenon: Social Functions of Memes on the Internet” by Jinhao Pan
“Will Another Theocratic Nation Rise in Asia?” by Vraj Patel
“GMOs: An Antidote to Disaster” by Tommy Pennington
“The Psychology of Nostalgia” by Lauren Peters
“What’s in a Name? Immigrants and the Anglicised Name” by Yong Qi Deng

“American Prisons Need Change, Now” by Brendan R.
“Dinosaurs, Peanut Butter and Apathy: Learning to Love My Autistic Brother” by Amabelle (Belle) Sandford
“I Am Not Who the Census Says I Am: Why Hispanics Can't Answer the Race Question” by Minna Santiago
“Reducing Our World: Restricting Our Wonder” by Cameron Schmitt
“Rotten Apples” by Josie Schneider
“Ending Bosnian School Segregation” by Ana-Maria Skaricic
“China’s ‘Big Auntie’ Has to Die” by Siyan Su
“The Violet Wave” by Elfriede Suarez Reichenberger
“We Need More Inclusive Sex Ed” by Cobin Szymanski
“The Virtual Renaissance” by Matt Tengtrakool
“Is the Methodist Church Doing Enough to Modernize According to Its Constituency?” by Maddie Thomas
“Should Students be Able to Grade their Teachers?” by Shealyn Tirendi
“Evolve or Die: It’s Time for a Change in Tone in the Classical Music Industry” by Zoe and Maya Umlauf
“TikTok Takes Too Much Teen Cash” by Heqiao Wang
“So You Want to Build A School? The Hard Truth About Volunteerism” by Jessica Wang
“Artificial Intelligence, Real Responsibility” by Yuxin Wang
“Pharmacists Are a Valuable Resource. Let's Take Advantage of Their Expertise.” by Lily Weber
“A Sea of Dead Giraffes: Why Queer Literature Needs a Voice” by Lawrence Wright
“My President Needs a Lesson on the Power of Words” by Cheryl Yee
“Cheating? Time to Look in the Mirror” by Helen Yousaf
“Fueling Coronavirus: The American Healthcare System” by Kellen Zeng
“How Good Taste Hinders Creativity, and How it Doesn’t” by Kehan Zhang

Middle School

“No Space to Waste”
“Girls Deserve an Education, Too” by Yuval Alon
“Do We Really Love Animals?” by Shreya Birudavolu
“Time for E-Sports to Stop Being a Boys’ Club” by Jin Dingyan
“A Student’s Experience With Gun Violence Prevention: Helpful or Fear-Mongering?” by Lily F.
“Firearm Legality: Something Needs to Change” by Katherine Fisher
“Gnarly, Dude! The Revolution of Rock Is Here to Change Music” by Aryan Grover
“The Hidden Benefits of Doing Nothing” by Tenley Hill
“The Mystery of the Virus and the Disappearing Toilet Paper Rolls” by Vihaan Iyer
“What We Share Tears Us Apart” by Jian Kim
“I’m Mexican and I’m Not a Rapist” by Laila Kuri
“270 Votes ≠ A Deserved Presidency: Analyzing the Loopholes of the Electoral College” by Augustus “Augie” Landis
“Sharks or Humans: Who’s the Real Killer?” by Colin Lederer and Trevor Harvey
“Protect Our Children -- Unredact Books” by Milo H. Marston
“Is it Harder Being a Girl?” by Maanasa Murugesu
“Fast Fashion: Alluring or Alarming?” by Nicola Pak
“Why Teens Need Dark Literature” by Zoe Rodriguez
“The Unexpected Benefits of Social Distancing” by Aliya Shahnaz Kraybill
“I Got Social Media — but it Got the Best of Me” by Ella Shen
“Body of Lies” by Simone O. Sokol
“The Thinning of Society’s Skin” by Abigail Tang
“College Admissions: A Flawed Process” by Kai Tsai
“Online Education Is Here to Stay. Deal With It.” by Hannah Wang
“Let’s Talk About Periods” by Abigail Wharton
“School: Incubator of Morals” by Katie Xin
“Everyone Deserves a Home” by Karen Zhang
“Fight the Virus, Not the People” by Minzhi (Yoyo) Zhang