

# EZRA JACK KEATS BOOKMAKING COMPETITION

An Invitation to New York City  
Teachers and Librarians



# We invite you to bring the Ezra Jack Keats Bookmaking Competition to your classroom

The Ezra Jack Keats Bookmaking Competition has been an integral part of the New York City Department of Education curriculum for over thirty years. Generations of students have learned to love reading, improved skills and gained confidence by writing, illustrating and building their own books.

## The Chancellor, educators and students are unanimous in their praise

### Carmen Fariña, Former Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, says:

"The competition promotes self-expression, self-exploration and emotional growth....This is equally true for gifted and talented, general education students, English Language Learners, Students with Disabilities and those who fit several of these categories....The Ezra Jack Keats Bookmaking Competition makes a tremendous contribution to advance the work educators are tasked to do in classrooms every day."



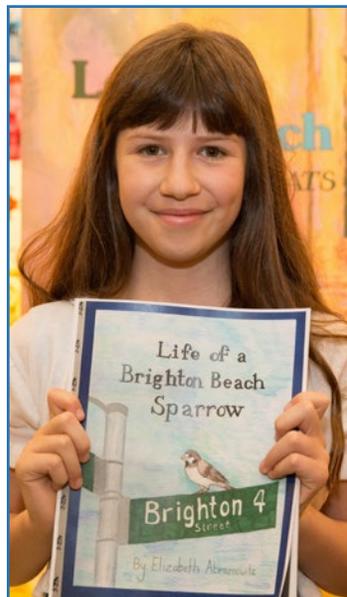
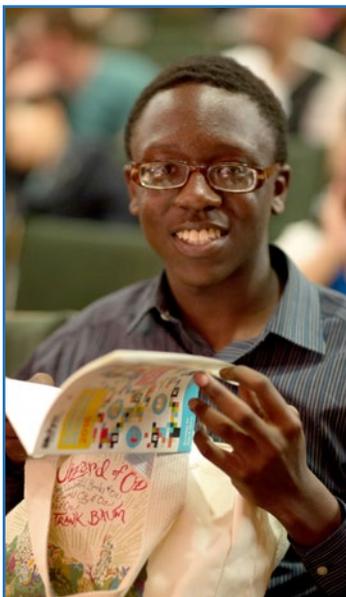
### The teachers say:

"It was the most joyful day in my whole teaching career when my students won. You never know what your students can accomplish until you give them the chance."

—Rachel Song, Art Teacher, P.S. 161, Manhattan

"The competition allows the children to validate their creativity, to validate their voice."

—Quiara Escobar, Art Teacher, P.S. 333, Bronx



### The kids say:

"I was the most difficult judge to satisfy. Now that the book is complete, I am proud of myself. I have done my best, as I had set out to do."

—Jack Strosser, Grade 7, J.H.S. 104 Simon Baruch, Manhattan

"It was really fun. I at one point forgot it was actually for a book competition. You learn a lot from making a book, and it's a great experience."

—Shelley Polanco, Grade 4, P.S. 333, Bronx

"I was able to dig deeper into my thoughts and worries. It helped me build up my confidence about myself."

—Dyanara Banana, Grade 12, James Madison H.S., Brooklyn

## The administrators say:

"We take the competition and we embed it into the curriculum. The independence and critical thinking required address attributes of literate learners emphasized in the Common Core Learning Standards."

—Karen Rosner, Coordinator of Visual Arts,  
Office of Arts and Special Projects, NYC Department of Education ▶

"Whether it's a contest winner or not, you have some really beautiful work. You never know where this leads. Sometimes the smallest thing that a child can do affects the child much later in life. You may not even be aware of it as a teacher."

—Carney Haberman, Assistant Principal, I.S. 259, Brooklyn



## How the Bookmaking Competition can benefit you and your students



### For teachers, bookmaking:

- Allows for differentiation: all the students in a class, with a range of skills and needs, may enter at their own level and succeed.
- Addresses literacy requirements in a creative and innovative way.
- Brings teachers recognition and credit for their students' success.
- Creates an opportunity for teachers in different disciplines to collaborate on one project.
- Results in tangible documentation of student achievement.
- Offers teachers greater insight into their students' thoughts and dreams, which informs their instruction.

### For students, bookmaking:

- Inspires reluctant as well as motivated readers by allowing them to present their own thoughts, ideas and experiences.
- Improves reading, writing, visual literacy, fine motor control and analytical skills.
- Makes every student an active, critical reader. A student author-illustrator can look at a published book and say, "I would have done it differently," or "I see why it's like that."
- Provides tactile reinforcement for students who learn best by doing.
- Builds self-esteem and confidence through mastering tasks, achieving a goal, and being recognized and appreciated.
- Strengthens a sense of community. Undervalued students become successful participants in a class project, and perhaps have their talents recognized by their peers.

## It's easy to enroll

All the information necessary to participate is available now on the website of the [Office of Arts and Special Projects, NYCDOE](#). For more on the bookmaking program and a peek at students' outstanding books, visit the website of the [Ezra Jack Keats Foundation](#) today.

## The process and prizes

The New York City Bookmaking Competition is open to public school students in grades 3 through 12. Many students do both the illustration and writing, others share the work with a friend. (Collaboration on a book is limited to two students.) The books are judged at three levels: elementary, middle school and high school. One book is chosen as the winner in each school and sent on to the competition judges, who then select a city winner, borough winners and honorable mentions for each level.

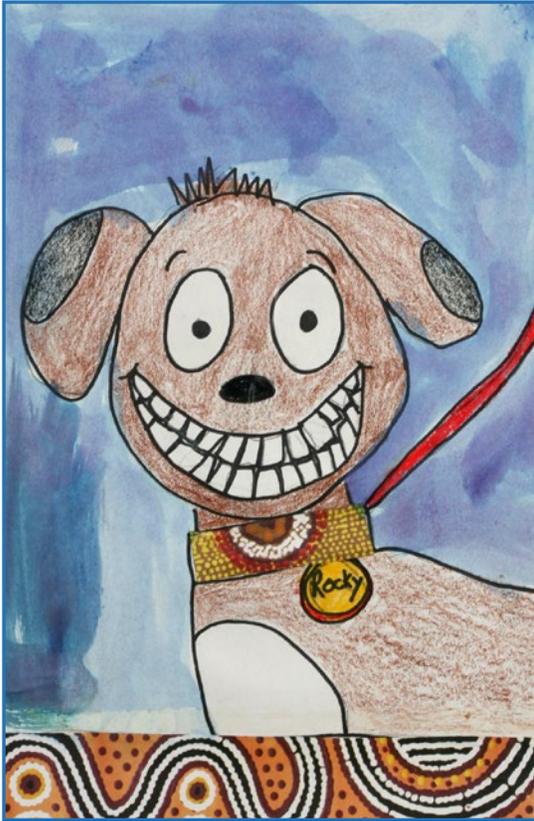


The competition culminates in an awards ceremony honoring the winning and honorable mention students, teachers and librarians. The prizes are:

- City-wide winners: a medal and \$500.
- Borough winners: a medal and \$100.
- Honorable mentions and school-wide winners: a medal and a certificate of commendation.
- All students attending the ceremony: a goody bag containing age-appropriate books donated by Penguin Random House.
- Supervising educators of city, borough and honorable mention winners: a commendation and a gift certificate for books from Penguin Random House.

A catalog of the winning books is distributed at the ceremony. There is also an annual exhibition of books, in the Children's Wing at the Central Library of Brooklyn Public Library.





## Artwork Credits

Cover, top right:

*In Praise of Plants: Part V*,  
by Aleksandra Stanisavljevic  
Grade 12, 2014 City-wide winner

Cover, middle left, clockwise:

*Atmosphere*, by Laura Wang  
Grade 12, 2015 Borough winner

*Rebirth, New York*, by Anne Wang  
Grade 7, 2012 City-wide winner

*In Praise of Plants: Part V*,  
by Aleksandra Stanisavljevic  
Grade 12, 2014 City-wide winner

Left:

*If I Had a Dog*, by Manjot Gill & Adam Rios  
9 years old, 2012 Borough winner

Below:

*A Miracle in the Pond*, by Fabia Mahmud  
Grade 5, 2013 Borough winner



**Ezra Jack Keats Foundation**

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[ezra-jack-keats.org](http://ezra-jack-keats.org)