

Michael is 13 years old and entered his essay in hopes to speak his mind. An excellent student, his favorite class at school is P.E. because he gets to play sports and have a good time. In his future, Michael wishes to be a lawyer.

L E V E L T W O



Alanna Araujo, Age 13, Grade 8
Ranchero Middle School
Hesperia, CA

Dear Mr. Juster,

Nothing makes a story greater than escaping to another world. Freeing yourself from worries or troubles at home, just letting it all go. When your focus is a talking dog, or a never ending stairwell, you feel good, like when you open a birthday present. Books like these, which capture your mind, and wrap you in wonder, are designed especially perfect for readers like me. With runaway routes to letter lands, and levers to math mines, what else would you want to read? For this reason, literature choices include fantasy books, just like your own *Phantom Tollbooth*.

When I read this book, I realized a couple of things, not always in plain view to people. I mean, sure, you are told things like do not waste time, or have fun, but have you ever taken these simple words into consideration? I do not feel that I had, until I read this book. My alarm clock was a thought I would avoid, so I could sleep in late, and I would come to school, just because I had to. Milo, in a way was similar to me. Even with a room full of toys, and a satellite TV, I always felt bored. One day, a friend told me to read the book, so I picked it up from the library the next day. Usually, when I start a book, that's about all I do. However, I just could not stop when I began to read *Phantom Tollbooth*. Reading this book continually filled my mind with more and more surprising attributes. I began to wonder.

What would happen if colors of the world really did run based on an orchestra. All of the words put together run to make sense; not only the imaginary world I wondered by Humbug, Tock, and Milo, but ours as well. You think about time, and everything you could do with it—rather than kill it.

As an eighth grader at Ranchero Middle School, my life is simple. Aside from homework, most of my time is consumed snowboarding, and playing soccer. After high school, I plan to attend UCLA, and continue my life as a soccer player. Until then, I balance my time with my favorite subject, writing, and as much time on the fields and in the snow, as I can.