

## The Big Read 2008: Essay Contest

### “To Kill a Mockingbird”

Gadsden Reads, a collaboration among the Mary G. Hardin Center for Cultural Arts, Gadsden Public Library, and Gadsden State Community College proudly invite you to participate in the 2008 “To Kill a Mockingbird” essay contest. Students should submit essays to the Mary G. Hardin Center for Cultural Arts no later than Monday, March 3. The winner will be awarded a brand new 8GB iPod Nano, complete with an audio reading of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Students should organize their ideas around a thesis about the novel. This statement or thesis should be focused, with clear reasons supporting its conclusion. The thesis and supporting reasons should be backed by references to the text.

Essays should address the following:

A true gift is, in one sense, an unexpected blessing bestowed by a person – or even perhaps by fate. Some of them may be objects, while some may be things that cannot be seen but are no less important. Early in the novel, the children find a mysterious shiny package in the knothole of a live oak tree (p.53). What gifts are given in *To Kill a Mockingbird*? Why might they be important to the unfolding of the story?

Please submit essays with a cover page including your name, phone number, email address, and essay title. Essays should be between 2-5 pages in length, double spaced, with 1 inch margins on all sides.

Winners will be announced at 3:00pm on Sunday, March 30 at the Center for Cultural Arts. Please contact [onebook@culturalarts.org](mailto:onebook@culturalarts.org) or (256)543-2787 extension 40 with additional questions. We would like to thank The Gadsden Times, Advanced Imaging of Gadsden, The National Endowment for the Arts, and The Big Read Project for making our 2008 Big Read possible.