

**\*This assignment is required by all Bak MSOA Students**



## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR Do the Write Thing Challenge**

Do the Write Thing *Challenge* gives middle school students an opportunity to examine the impact of violence on their lives and communicate in written form what they think should be done to reduce youth violence. **Personal responsibility is emphasized.** Students are encouraged to make a personal commitment to do something about the problem.

Youth violence has different forms and degrees. Law enforcement officials report that Palm Beach County students are routinely exposed to violent acts involving guns, drugs, and gangs. Sometimes bullying can be severe enough to cause devastating consequences like personal injury and suicide.

The goal of the *Challenge* is to deal with all forms and degrees of violence. It is not uncommon for student writings to focus on different things in different schools and the focus can change from year to year depending upon the national mood. However, student writings must be authentic. The Challenge is **NOT a creative writing exercise**. The top students selected from your school will be judged on **“real life”** responses to the questions identified in the program rules. No child should be encouraged to invent a violent situation that isn't real.

### **Program Rules**

1. Student entries, at minimum, should address three questions:

*How has violence affected my life?*  
*What are the causes of youth violence?*  
*What can I do about youth violence?*

All writings should address these questions in order to advance in the selection process. This is NOT a creative writing project. Students should address the questions honestly and should not invent situations.

2. Students may use any form of written expression (e.g. essays, poems, plays or songs) as long as the language is positive and not derogatory. Students may submit only one entry per year. Each entry must be the exclusive work product of only one student. Entries should be approximately 500 to 1000 words in length. Written forms of expression such as poetry that are shorter by their nature may contain fewer than 500 words.
3. Entries must either be typed (preferred) or they may be written legibly in black ink on 8 1/2" x 11" paper. Only one side of the paper may be used and all pages should provide the name of the student as well as page numbers.

4. Entries must be in English.
5. If the student participant uses a quotation or another person's material in his or her entry, the entry must identify whose work is being used by citing the person's name or citing the source of the material. Writings based upon plagiarism will NOT be advanced in the judging process.
6. Each entry must be firmly stapled to a "Cover Sheet" with the **consent statement signed** by the participating student *and* a parent or guardian. Entries without a signed Cover Sheet can NOT advance in the judging process. Just as importantly, entries without a cover sheet do not count for purposes of determining full participation by the school. The Cover Sheet should be photocopied and distributed by the teachers with the program rules.
7. Entries must be submitted in the form that they are received from the student writer. Everybody who makes a good-faith effort to participate is eligible for recognition as a Top 10 student. However, this rule does not preclude teachers from using the submission as a graded project or school assignment. School credit, if any, is given at the discretion of the teacher.<sup>2</sup>

# COVER SHEET AND STUDENT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM



**Please Print Legibly in Black or Blue Ink**

Your child has been invited to participate in the “Do the Write Thing Challenge” as part of a school assignment. Our Middle School is eligible for a cash prize and trophy based upon the number of students from our school who participate. 10 students will be selected as the “Top 10” students from our school and they are eligible to have their work published and could win a trip to Washington D.C. Parents/Guardians and students are asked to complete this Cover Sheet and sign the Consent Statement below.

**Student’s First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Student’s Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student’s Gender:** (circle) **Male** or **Female**

**School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Current Grade:** (circle) **6<sup>th</sup>** **7<sup>th</sup>** **8<sup>th</sup>**

**Father’s Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Mother’s Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone Number:** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student’s Primary Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student’s Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Which parent will be attending the recognition luncheon if your child is selected as one of the “Top 10” students representing our school? \*\*\*\*\*Due to space limitations only ONE parent or guardian will be allowed to attend. No exceptions. (Circle only one)

**Mother** **Father** **Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher’s Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Teacher’s E-Mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDENT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT STATEMENT

The National Campaign to Stop Violence (NCSV), which sponsors the “Do the Write Thing Challenge,” will publish selected student writings and quotations in a book and in a discussion paper on youth violence. Before publishing your writing, the NCSV requires your written consent and the written consent of a parent or guardian. If you and your parent or guardian agree to permit the NCSV to publish your writing, please sign below to confirm the following: We agree to give ownership of the attached student writing to the National Campaign to Stop Violence so that it can be considered for recognition and be published and give permission for NCSV to disclose our name to the media and publicize our participation. Nothing in this form shall limit our own right to also personally use the attached writing.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student’s Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent’s Signature Date

### VISIT US ONLINE:

The National Campaign to Stop Violence has created a program called “Staying Connected.” This program allows us to keep in touch with “Do the Write Thing” participants, parents, teachers and volunteers through email announcements. Please register for this program at [www.dtw.org](http://www.dtw.org) and provide your email address below. If you have problems registering online, please call 1-800-256-0235.

<i>For official use only</i> Essay #:
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