

WRITING A LITERARY BIO:

Often, organizations, literary journals, and reading series will ask for a literary bio and photo to use in their marketing materials. These materials should serve as a brief introduction to you as a writer so the audience can understand a little bit about who you are, your writing experience, what you're interested in, and what you have to offer.

Bio guidelines:

- 99% of the time, bios should be written in **third person**. This means do not use "I" but refer to yourself as your name. For example, "Lisa attends X school..." rather than "I attend X school."
- Use your full name, or author name, if it is different from your legal name.
- Different places will have different word limits for bios – it is **extremely important** that you respect their guidelines and don't send them longer bios than they request. They often have limited space in their materials or they want to make sure all writers receive the same fair treatment. If you send a longer bio, they may have to ask you to shorten it and resend it.
- If you need to make decisions about what to include and what to cut, consider including the biggest or best achievements, and/or showcasing multiple parts of your professionalism.

The rest of the bio will depend on you, your experience, and what you want to highlight for that particular venue.

Some possible elements of a literary bio (for teens):

- Any awards//honors you have received
- Any publications you may have
- Where you go to school
- What grade you are in (or age)
- Other achievements, accomplishments or interests
- Other roles you hold (or have held) at school or otherwise, like with clubs or other organizations you are a part of

- Relevant jobs or internships
- Projects you have started or are a part of
- Where you live
- Author website or professional social media
- Personal details or something about your personality or interests, background or life story

Bio examples (100 words or less):

Nancy Lynée Woo is an eco-centric poet based in southern California who harbors a wild love for the natural world. She has released a full-length poetry book entitled *I'd Rather Be Lightning* from Gasher Press, as well as two chapbooks. Nancy has received fellowships from PEN America Emerging Voices, California Creative Corps, Artists at Work, Arts Council for Long Beach, Las Vegas Writer's Block, and Idyllwild Writers Week. She has an MFA from Antioch University and a BA in sociology and environmental studies from UC Santa Cruz. You can find her online at nancylyneewoo.com and on social media @fancifulnance.

Claire Beeli is the inaugural Youth Poet Laureate of Long Beach. Her work is published or forthcoming in Rattle, Peninsula Arts, and Querencia Press, among others. Her other honors include being named a 2024 YoungArts winner in Poetry and Creative Nonfiction, as well as awards from the New York Times Learning Network, the Scholastic Foundation, and Sister Cities International. She is a senior at Wilson High School and will attend Princeton University in the fall.

Matilda Iem lives in Long Beach, and is a Cambodian American student of CSULB, majoring in Animation. As a Youth Poet, she largely writes about mental health, using the perseverance and determination of animals to describe important lessons for people and has since published two short chapbooks. In her leisure, she enjoys art as much as she enjoys writing. Some of her work has been featured in the Khmer sections of Mark Twain Neighborhood Library Branch and local Reflections art contests.

Kieran Lundy is an 8th grader at Hughes Middle School in Long Beach, California. Beyond his impressive academic accolades, he is a truly dedicated artist and athlete. One of four inaugural youth poet ambassadors of Long Beach, Kieran has been sharing his writing for almost a year now. This includes reading poetry at a great deal of venues and for various causes, including the AAPI Festival of Books and the Long Beach Youth Festival. As an athlete, Kieran has played a pivotal role on the three football teams he's played for over the last year.

Helena Donato-Sapp believes in the power of youth voice, and uses her own in the work of justice and equity. She is an accomplished activist and educator internationally recognized for her work on Disability Justice, Anti-bullying, Black Girlhood, and Decolonizing Education. She is a published author, exhibited artist, working poet, and sought-after keynote speaker who has been featured on the Disney Channel and in Discovery Education. Helena is newly confirmed to the Commission for Women and Girls. Helena's awards include the Global Youth Award for Educational Leadership, the 2023-2024 Heumann-Armstrong Award, and the Yes I Can Academic Award, among many.

Sofia Uribe is a junior at Millikan High School where she is the treasurer of the Environmental Club. She plans to pursue environmental science and creative writing in the future. She adores reading novels, writing short stories, creating art, thrifting with friends, and singing opera. She has performed with the Long Beach Symphony, Long Beach Youth Choir, and had a featured role with the LA Opera. Sofia is currently working on a video project called "Breath Work" that focuses on air quality in Long Beach led by Long Beach Forward's artist-in-residence Nina Sarnelle.