



The One Book, One Waco Essay Contest is open to any student enrolled in a McLennan County high school. All essays will be judged by the One Book, One Waco steering committee and are subject to the following criteria:

Expectations:

- 1) Write an original essay – no more than 500 words – on **one** of the three essay topics.
- 2) All essays should be grammatically correct.
- 3) Students must demonstrate a clear understanding of the book, the vision and mission statement of One Book, One Waco.
- 4) Students **may not** enter in more than one topical category.
- 5) Essays should include the student's name, school, grade, teacher and contact information.

Topics:

1. Books are an important part of Cass's life- they provide her an escape from her situation and a reminder of the past with her mother. Why is reading so important for society? Describe the impact that reading has had on your life. If possible, cite specific examples of situations in which reading has had a significant influence, and explain what role you think reading will play in your future.

2. When Sandra sees the children in the Dumpster, she initially fails to recognize their needs, and when she does recognize them she tries to convince herself to leave them to the social agencies. What barriers prevent us from recognizing the needs of the people around us or from doing something bold to address them? Do you think that one person can make a difference? As a citizen of the greater Waco area, how can you make a difference in our community? What advantages do you have as a young person? What are you some challenges you must overcome?

3. Discuss what SandraKaye meant when she said, *"It never occurred to me while I was rallying to help those less fortunate, that fortunes can turn at any time and only then do you find out what you're made of, what's beneath the surface."* (p172) Describe a time that you acted "outside of your comfort zone" to help someone in need. Explain your motivation, your thoughts/feelings at the time and your reflections looking back on the experience. What would you change if you could? How were you and the person the same? How were you different?

Three winners will be selected. Essay contest winners will be recognized at a dinner with the author at 5 p.m. March 30. Location is TBA.

Final Submission Deadline: 5 p.m. • March 17 to Alexis Weaver, aweaver@waco-chamber.com or by mail: PO Box 1220, Waco, TX 76703.