

# 2025 Georgia National Fair Fair Bear Writing Competition for Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Grades



## Story Theme:

### “Fair Bear is a First Responder”

A first responder is someone who is trained to respond to an emergency or disaster to care for people in need, and they are very important to our city, state, and country. A first responder usually gets to the scene of an accident very fast and they help provide immediate assistance in any way they can. First responders can be a lifeguard, police officer, fireman, ambulance EMT, member of the military, or any other person that helps in emergencies.

Students are asked to write about Fair Bear working as a first responder. What type of first responder is Fair Bear? Where did he get his training? What kind of service does he provide? What is the outcome of the emergency he helped with?

Teachers, this is an excellent Creative Writing exercise that allows the student to write about something that is so important to our community. It's easy to enter and a great opportunity to win prize money for your school!



**Postmark Deadline**  
**February 20, 2025**

# The “Bear” Facts

You are invited to write a story about a very special American black bear who lived from about 1980 to 1993 in middle Georgia near the Georgia National Fairgrounds. The bear was seen off and on by people who lived in the area. None of the people who saw the bear could believe it was really a bear at first! Once, the black bear was seen in a neighborhood subdivision located in a wooded area across the interstate from the Fairgrounds. Another year the bear was seen on a nearby road south of the Fairgrounds, paws on the top wire of a fence, watching the cars go by. In June 1993, the last reported encounter was described by a Perry resident who was jogging through the Fairgrounds just before dark. “I heard tractor-trailer trucks putting on brakes on the interstate and I looked to see why they were slowing down. I saw a large black animal standing by the fence near the west gate entrance to the Fairgrounds. I stopped jogging to get a better look at the animal and realized it was a black bear. The bear was standing with its paws on the fence watching me. Then the bear climbed over the fence and again stood on its back feet to get a better look at me. I didn’t try to get a better look at the bear; I ran!” The bear’s path often crossed I-75 near the Fairgrounds, which is a very busy interstate. “Fair Bear” has become the Georgia National Fair mascot.

Fair Bear has been the subject of the Georgia National Fair writing competition for 4th, 5th and 6th graders since 1994.

## FOURTH GRADE

### First Place

Savannah Acey  
Marshpoint Elementary School  
Savannah-Chatham School System  
Teacher: Mr. Kenneth Miller

### Second Place

Presley Floyd  
Bleckley County Elementary School  
Bleckley County School System  
Teacher: Mrs. Chelsea Evans

### Third Place

Elizabeth Rowe  
Irish Gifted Academy  
Dublin City School System  
Teacher: Ms. Pam Woodard

## SIXTH GRADE

### First Place

Tison Cave  
Ware County Middle School  
Ware County School System  
Teacher: Ms. Misty Thrift

### Second Place

Zihan Wang  
Henderson Middle School  
Butts County School System  
Teacher: Ms. Ashley Pierce

### Third Place

Madelyn Rogers  
East Laurens Middle School  
Lauren County School System  
Teacher: Mrs. LaDonna Ranke

## FIFTH GRADE

### First Place

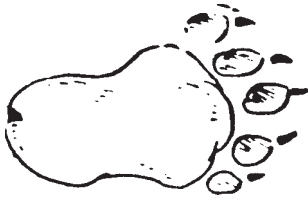
Simeon Sturup  
Thomas County Middle School  
Thomas County School System  
Teacher: Mrs. Rena Crew

### Second Place

Riley Jones  
Byron Elementary School  
Peach County School System  
Teacher: Ms. Heather Long

### Third Place

Blakelee Evans  
East Laurens Elementary School  
Laurens County School System  
Teacher: Mrs. Tamaro Smith



## FAIR BEAR CONTEST RULES



**Suggested Time Line:**     *Classroom winners determined by December 8, 2024*  
*School-wide winners determined by January 21, 2025*  
*System-wide winners determined by February 18, 2025*

*Questions? call 478-988-6555*  
*or email [skusuda@gnfa.com](mailto:skusuda@gnfa.com)*

**Entry Deadline:** *System winners must be mailed to the Georgia National Fair and postmarked by February 20, 2025.*

This writing competition is open to all 4th, 5th and 6th grade students currently enrolled in Georgia public schools and private schools accredited by the Georgia Accrediting Commission, and must reflect the theme, "Fair Bear is a First Responder".

Each entry must be an original story prepared by the student.

All entries become the property of the Georgia National Fair. Winning entries may be used in future publications of the Georgia National Fair.

### STUDENTS:

1. Neatly hand write a **200 to 500 word** story based on the theme – "Fair Bear is a First Responder" on standard ruled notebook paper, using only the front side of each page. **Typed or computer generated work will be disqualified.**
2. Rewrite your essays after your teacher corrects your first efforts and submit the corrected copy for the competition. Remember - spelling/grammar errors will result in point deductions.
3. **Do not** put your name on the front of the pages of your final copy.

### TEACHERS:

1. Entries submitted must be original and must have been written by the student under a teacher's supervision and may be completed as part of the regular classroom writing program, not as homework.
2. The name of the school and the student's name must be included on the **BACK** of each page of the student's paper.
3. A completed official entry form must be attached to each entry.
4. School winners (limit one per grade level) must be mailed to your system office by January 21, 2025. Your school system Curriculum Coordinator/Language Arts Coordinator must sign the entry forms even if there may not have been a system-wide competition.
5. Mail "Total Entries By School" form to Georgia National Fair (Fair Bear Writing Competition, Georgia National Fair, 401 Larry Walker Parkway, Perry, GA 31069).
6. Entries will not be returned. Please make copies prior to submitting students' work.

### SYSTEM COORDINATORS:

1. Receive and judge fourth, fifth and sixth grade entries from all schools in system and choose a first place winner from each grade level.
2. Each school system may submit only one entry for each grade level. Stories will not be accepted directly from individual schools within a system. Each story submitted must have a completed entry form attached.
3. System winners must be mailed to: Fair Bear Writing Competition, Georgia National Fair, 401 Larry Walker Parkway, Perry, GA 31069, and must be postmarked by February 20, 2025.

### JUDGING

1. It is recommended that the procedures listed in the Official Rules Booklet of "The Young Georgia Authors' Exposition and Recognition" (found at: <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/English-Language-Arts-Program.aspx> ) be used as a guide for selecting the system winners in the three levels of the "Fair Bear" Creative Writing Competition.
2. Entries for the final judging will be scored using the guidelines on the following page, and must use the theme - "Fair Bear is a First Responder".
3. Judges for the final phase of the competition will be selected from language arts professionals in Georgia. Each grade level of competition will be judged separately.
4. The judges will not have access to each other's scores while judging nor shall they know the writer's name or school system.
5. The writing entry with the highest score at each grade level will be the first-place winner; next highest score at each grade level will receive second place; and the third highest score at each grade level will receive third place.
6. The first-place winners from the three levels will be read by a panel of judges to determine the Grand Prize Winner. The Grand Prize Winner will receive grand prize awards in addition to the first-place awards.
7. A list of grade level winners will be posted online by April 15, 2025. Winning principals, teachers and students will be notified by mail by April 20, 2025.
8. Awards will be presented during a special ceremony at the 36th annual Georgia National Fair on Saturday, October 4, 2025, where the Grand Prize Winner will be announced.

### Fair Bear Competition Judging Guidelines:

**Content and Organization** (maximum 30 points)  
(Response to assigned task (**see rule 1**), clearly established controlling idea, relevant and clearly developed supporting ideas, sense of order, flow of ideas, sense of completeness)

**Sentence Formation** (maximum 20 points)  
(Appropriate end punctuation, complete sentences, appropriate coordination and subordination)

**Conventions of Written Language** (maximum 20 points)  
(appropriate usage and mechanics)

**Style** (maximum 20 points)  
(Effective diction, varied and effective sentence structure, tone consistent with topic and purpose, sense of audience)

**Creativity** (maximum 10 points)

**Total** (maximum 100 points)



## AWARDS

### SCHOOLS

GRAND PRIZE:     \$250  
                         Plaque

#### Final winners in each grade level will receive:

First Place:        \$150  
                         Certificate

Second Place:     \$100  
                         Certificate

Third Place:        \$75  
                         Certificate

### STUDENTS

GRAND PRIZE:     \$250  
                         Plaque

First Place:        \$100  
                         Certificate  
                         \*Trip for winner and family to 2025 GNF

Second Place:     \$75  
                         Certificate  
                         \*Trip for winner and family to 2025 GNF

Third Place:        \$50  
                         Certificate  
                         \*Trip for winner and family to 2025 GNF

All entries submitted in compliance with the rules and accepted for final competition will receive a certificate from the Georgia National Fair.

\*\$50 in Georgia National Fair Food Coupons, tickets for 15 rides (The Ride Passes are not accepted on the Agri-Lift or Euro Slide.) & four gate passes.

# 2025 GEORGIA NATIONAL "FAIR BEAR"

## Creative Writing Competition Official Entry Form



COMPLETE ALL INFORMATION

**\*Unsigned and/or incomplete forms will not be considered for judging.**

**\*ATTACH THIS FORM TO ALL ENTRIES.**

\*After system judging, mail winners to: Georgia National Fairgrounds & Agricenter,  
Fair Bear Competition, 401 Larry Walker Parkway, Perry, GA 31069

**DEADLINE - February 20, 2025**

Student's Grade Level

\_\_\_\_ 4th \_\_\_\_ 5th \_\_\_\_ 6th

ENTRY NO.

(To be completed by GNF)

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
First Name Last Name

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Work #: \_\_\_\_\_

School (Complete Name): \_\_\_\_\_ System (Complete Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Principal (Title, First & Last Name): \_\_\_\_\_ Superintendent (Title, First & Last Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ System Contest Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Coordinator Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher (Title, First & Last Name): \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

This entry is my own original work and represents my best writing efforts.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

We are familiar with this student's writing. We have read this entry. We are satisfied it is his or her own original idea and work and represents his or her best writing efforts.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
System Contest Coordinator's Signature

# 2025 Georgia National Fair Fair Bear Writing Competition Total Number of Entries By School

In an effort to take a true measure of participation in the competition, we are trying to collect data on the total number of participants. Please fill out this form at the school level and return it to the Georgia National Fair "Fair Bear" Program.

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

4th Grade - Total Number Participants \_\_\_\_\_

5th Grade - Total Number Participants \_\_\_\_\_

6th Grade - Total Number Participants \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: Georgia National Fair, 401 Larry Walker Pkwy., Perry, GA  
31069.