



***BETWEEN THE LINES*: The Writing Experience** **Now Accepting Applications for Summer 2014**

BETWEEN THE LINES WRITING CONTEST

What is the BTL writing contest?

Between the Lines invites young aspiring writers from Arabic speaking countries in the Middle East and North Africa. A workshop series at the University of Iowa from June 21 – July 5, 2014 for 10 writers ages 16-19 from Arabic-speaking countries, 12 young Russian writers and 12 young American writers. These students will be immersed in the premier creative writing culture of the United States as part of an exchange that will broaden and sharpen their writing skills and build bridges among Russian, American and Arabic-Speaking young, creative leaders. The workshops will be conducted in English, Arabic and Russian. The program is designed to further written communication and multi-national collaboration skills among emerging young leaders and to maximize their impact as young literary voices in their own communities. The program will also include seminars on literary topics, cultural visits, and other local events. At the culmination of the on-site program, the students' writings (in English, Arabic and Russian) will be collected into a printed booklet to be used for educational purposes.

The program will also include an opportunity for two overseas teachers to accompany the students as chaperones, one male and one female. A substantive educational program created by the IWP will enable the chaperones to further their teaching skills during their time in the United States.

Who can apply?

Students:

- Must be between the ages of 16 and 19 as of June 21, 2014.
- Must be Proficient in Arabic and English (reading, writing, and speaking).

The ideal candidates should be able to:

- Demonstrate an interest in and ability to write creatively (prose and/or poetry in both Arabic and English)

- Fully engage their imaginations in a variety of class settings
- Confidently work alongside other BTL students in Arabic-language classes as well as American students in English-language classes

Each applicant must supply the following:

- a) A writing sample of 6-8 pages of prose and/or poetry in Arabic. (Topic of your choice).
- b) A writing sample of 6-8 pages of prose and/or poetry in English. School essays and other non-fiction writing will not be accepted. (Topic of your choice).
- c) A brief one-paragraph statement of purpose in English describing why writing is important to their life, and what they hope to learn at BTL.
- d) A writing sample of 2-5 pages of prose and/or poetry in either language in response to one of the following writing prompts:
 - One day, you (or your main character) sit down at your kitchen table only to find that there is someone already there. Who is sitting across from you? Why are they there? Write a short story or poem.
 - Write a story or poem inspired by the following statement: "Searching for love is good, but finding love when you weren't looking for it is better."

All writing samples must be sent in 12-point font and have one -inch margins all around. The final selection of participants will be determined by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and International Writing Program (IWP). The U.S. Embassy will be selecting three principal participants and two alternates.

Chaperones:

Chaperones will accompany the BTL participants to and from their home countries and to serve as Arabic-speaking liaisons between the students and the IWP staff. Chaperones will also work with IWP on BTL-related projects. As with student nominations, the IWP and ECA will select the top two candidates out of all applications sent by participating posts. Chaperones should be between the ages of 25-40 as of June 21, 2014 and proficient in English (reading, writing, and speaking). A BTL chaperone should ideally be a teacher who is interested in creative writing and has not had previous exposure to the United States. The chaperones should be able to fully participate in a formal English language program on creative writing teaching methods that will also include American teachers. Moreover, the chaperone must be reliable, mature, and willing and able to take on the dual responsibilities of their own program and the overall duties of overseeing the students.

Each chaperone nominee must submit a resume/CV and a brief statement of purpose (both in English) describing his or her proposed goals for the program and how his or her participation would benefit the program. The resume/CV and statement of purpose may also be sent along with the emailed application. Note: If additional chaperones are needed for travel, IWP will make suitable arrangements. Once in the United States, additional chaperones will be made available through the University of Iowa's existing summer programs.

How do I apply?

- Applications to be submitted electronically at PAYouthAlgiers@state.gov
- Deadline to submit an application is **February 20, 2013**.

Due to the large number of applicants, we will only reply to those short- listed for first-stage interviews.

Finalists:

- Will be invited for an interview at the embassy
- Must bring a copy of their Arabic and English writing samples to the interview.