



We're lighting the way to a brighter future!

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CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL

17th ANNUAL CHILDREN'S BOOK FESTIVAL BOOKMARK CONTEST

Get your students excited about reading and the arts by having your class participate in the Children's Book Festival Bookmark Contest!

Celebrating its 17th year, The Children's Book Festival offers children in PreK through 6th grade and their families a **FREE, interactive literary adventure** designed to spark a love of reading. This engaging event encourages parents to share the joy of books with their little ones while providing families access to affordable new and used books to grow their own home libraries. The festival, the premiere event of The Learning Lamp, will be held March 28 and 29, 2026. New this year, headlining author presentations will take place in the beautiful **Grand Halle, 306 Broad Street, Johnstown**, while additional festival activities will continue throughout **Bottle Works Ethnic Arts Center, 411 Third Avenue, Johnstown**, creating an expanded, multi-venue experience for attendees. This event is **FREE** to the public. Plus, every child who attends will receive a **free book** to take home and enjoy.



This year's festival will include visits from:

- **Lauren Tarshis** – acclaimed author of the bestselling *I Survived* series, Lauren Tarshis brings history to life for young readers through gripping storytelling and unforgettable characters. With a talent for transforming real events into thrilling adventures, she inspires students to explore history, build resilience, and develop a lasting love of reading.
- **Aaron Reynolds** - award-winning author of *Nerdy Birdy*, *Creepy Crayon!*, and many other beloved children's books, Aaron Reynolds combines humor, imagination, and heart to captivate young readers. Known for his playful storytelling and energetic presentations, Aaron encourages children and families to embrace creativity, enjoy reading, and laugh along the way.
- **Joe Wos** – Award-winning Pittsburgh cartoonist who will bring his signature creativity and energy to the Children's Book Festival with interactive storytelling and hands-on cartooning workshops. Host of PBS's *Cartoon Academy*, Wos guides young artists through the steps of drawing cartoon characters while introducing artistic terms and fun educational facts. A professional cartoonist since



The mission of The Learning Lamp is to engage all children in the support they need to succeed. The Learning Lamp is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, donations to which are tax deductible to the fullest extent permitted by law. The official registration and financial information of The Learning Lamp may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free with in Pennsylvania; 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

age 14, Wos is internationally known for his syndicated *MazeToons* series, record-setting hand-drawn mazes, and live performances at more than 1,000 venues worldwide. His dynamic sessions promise to inspire imagination, creativity, and a love of cartoon art in children of all ages.

- **Rock N Roll Pet Store** - created by children's entertainer Mike Zaffuto. This unique experience blends music, magic, puppetry, and live animals to bring an imaginary pet store to life in an engaging and interactive way. With more than 35 years of experience performing at schools, libraries, fairs, and festivals, Mike's performances encourage creativity, imagination, and a love for the arts.

Attendees can also enjoy themed arts and crafts, participate in writing and illustration workshops, browse new and used book sales, and savor delicious treats from a variety of food trucks. The festival features a children's bookmark contest, where visitors can vote for their favorites. Winners in each age group will be awarded a basket filled with age-appropriate books.

ABOUT THE BOOKMARK CONTEST:

WHO MAY ENTER: Any public, parochial, private, or home school student may submit a bookmark for the contest. If a school is not participating, individual students may submit creations independently. **If teachers would like to enter their class into the classroom contest, all bookmarks created by the students in that class must be turned in together, and with the teacher's name entered on each entry form. Please note, all information on the back of the bookmarks must be filled out in order to enter the contest.** The divisions are:

- **Division #1: Grades Pre-K & K**
- **Division #2: Grades 1 & 2**
- **Division #3: Grades 3 & 4**
- **Division #4: Grades 5 & 6**

DEADLINE DATE: *Completed bookmark designs must arrive at The Learning Lamp, 2025 Bedford Street Johnstown, PA 15904 by 4 p.m. on Friday, March 13, 2026.* All entries will become the property of The Learning Lamp and The Children's Book Festival and will not be returned.

WINNER DETERMINATION: The division winners will be determined by popular vote of those attending the Festival, which takes place from March 28-29, 2026 at Bottle Works Ethnic Arts Center in Johnstown. Attendees will be asked to select one favorite bookmark in each division. ***NEW THIS YEAR! Division-winning bookmark designs will be turned into real bookmarks and handed out at next year's festival!***

NOTIFICATION: Winners will be notified during the week of April 13, 2026 and will receive a prize package including a basket of age-appropriate books. **Teachers of classrooms with 100% participation (meaning each student in the classroom creates and submits a bookmark) will be entered into a drawing to win a classroom set of age-appropriate books.** Winning classrooms will be selected in each division. All bookmarks become the property of The Learning Lamp and can be used at its discretion.

BOOKMARK SPECIFICATIONS:

Bookmark Size & Orientation

- Completed bookmarks **MUST** measure 3 inches by 9 inches; see template.
- Designs should be **vertical**—horizontal bookmarks cannot be accepted.

Entry Form

- The Children's Book Festival Official Entry Form should be securely attached to the **back of every bookmark**.
- Make sure all information is **typed or printed clearly**, and filled out in full—including contact information.

Design Theme

- ***Bookmark designs should represent the student's favorite book.***

Materials & Artwork

- Use **quality paper** like cardstock or heavy drawing paper.
- Entries must be **original and exclusive work of the student** entering the contest in idea, design, and execution.
- Only freehand-drawn letters are allowed. No stencils, stickers, tracing, or pre-printed letters.
- Computer-generated artwork is **NOT** permitted.
- There is no limit to the use and number of colors.
- Use any media—markers, crayons, paint, or collage materials.
- If using glued pieces, make sure everything is securely attached—loose pieces will not be accepted.

Important Notes

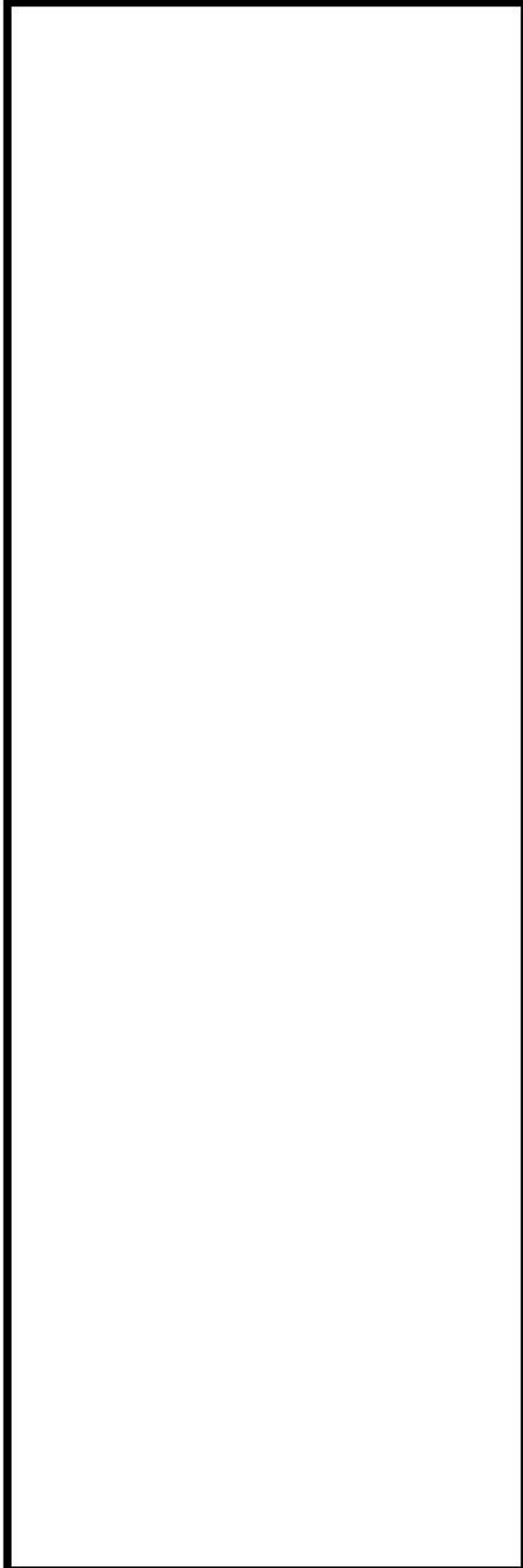
- Bookmarks that do not follow these guidelines **will not be displayed**.
- Any submissions deemed inappropriate **will not be displayed**.

A template for the bookmark is located on the next page.

Any questions can be directed to festival coordinator, Kerri Belardi at 814-262-0732 x245 or email kbelardi@thelearninglamp.org.

BOOKMARK TEMPLATE

3 inches by 9 inches (be sure to print actual size)
All entries must be on quality, sturdy paper.



OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

Print and fill out completely. Form should be attached to the back of submitted bookmark.

**2026 Children's Book Festival
Bookmark Contest**

Official Entry Form
(please attach to back of bookmark)

**ALL INFORMATION MUST BE FILLED OUT
TO ENTER CONTEST**

Division Entering: 1 2 3 4 (Circle One)

Student Name: (Please print)

Teacher Name: (Please print)

Classroom competition entry?
 Yes No

Grade: _____ **Age:** _____

School Name:

Zip Code:

County:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

Name of Parent or Guardian: (if non-school entry)

Home Phone Number: (if non-school entry)

Note: Upon submission, all entries will become the property of The Learning Lamp and the 2026 Children's Book Festival. Entries may be reproduced.