

Massachusetts Letters About Literature 2016

Massachusetts Center for the Book

www.massbook.org

Level I Honors Award

Dear Linda Sue Park,

My name is Chloe \_\_\_\_\_, I am 11-years-old and I go to school in the United States. Over the summer I read your book *A Long Walk to Water*. I was incredibly moved by this story of a girl that can't go to school because she has to walk miles to get water for her family. It seems unfair that such a huge responsibility is put on such a small little girl and that this prevents her from going to school. While reading your book I was surprised and almost angry that once the boys hit the age of ten they had the privilege of going to school and the girls still had to stay home and walk the eight miles every day to get water. Where I live girls and boys are treated as equals and both are given the opportunity to get an education.

In my family I have responsibilities just like Nya does but none that prevent me from going to school. My biggest responsibility is to make sure that I do well in school, finish all of my homework before I go play and to make sure I take my time and do a good job on all of my work. It is unfair that Nya's responsibilities take away from her going to school. Education is the most important thing in the world and for Nya to be pulled away from getting an education by chores and responsibilities is unfair. Education should be available to everyone in the world.

Where I live boys and girls are supposed to be treated as equals. After I read your book I started to think about some of the differences between how boys and girls are treated in the United States. For example, in hockey girls are not allowed to body check but boys are! Everyone thinks that we will get hurt. I started to realize that all around the world girls and boys are treated differently. Women are not allowed to do the same jobs as men, and sometimes when they do get the same jobs they get paid less!! Why?! I don't get it!

I have always just assumed that education was a right for everyone. I did some research after reading your book and was shocked to find out that millions of girls don't have the right to be educated. I don't like the thought of going to school knowing that girls around the world want to be educated but don't have the right to be. I feel guilty and that is why I know I want to make a difference in this world. I want everyone to be treated as equals and I want for everyone to have the opportunity for education.

After reading your book I have so many questions. Why do girls have to be the ones collecting water and why can't girls have the same opportunity to get an education just like boys? I don't understand why some cultures don't see boys and girls as equals. Your book has changed the way I think about school. I now feel much more appreciative of my rights to go to school and how I am able to so easily access fresh and clean water. Thank you for inspiring me to make a difference in the world and to step up and not wait for someone else to do the job.

Sincerely,

*Chloe*

Chloe  
Marblehead  
Grade 6