

# LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE

MASSACHUSETTS LEVEL I HONORABLE MENTION 2009

Dear Theodore Taylor,

I wanted to yell when I read how Phillip treated Timothy. It seemed that from Phillip's perspective Timothy was a dog. Your book *The Cay* made me realize how bad racism was in the 1940's. I hoped all the way through the book that Phillip would change from a disrespectful, racist child to an appreciative young man. Timothy helped Phillip to truly appreciate people for who they are, not for their race or for their religion but for who they are on the inside. It took blindness for Phillip to truly appreciate Timothy.

*The Cay* changed the way I think about racism. I thought racism was just about drinking from different water fountains and sitting at the back of the bus, but now I realize that back then black people were not even treated like people! Recently Barack Obama won the presidential election, and it is my hope that Obama will change the country as president. This theme of change can relate to Phillip and Timothy in *The Cay*. Phillip changed his racist ways because of his relationship with Timothy and became a better person. Obama has promised change for America. I hope that Obama will change the United States of America for the better. I have a message for people everywhere, to blacks and whites, Jews and Christians: it doesn't matter what color you are or what religion you practice, we are all gifts, just in different packaging.

Sincerely,

*Jake*

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