

LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE

MASSACHUSETTS LEVEL I HONORABLE MENTION 2009

Dear Norton Juster,

Is there purpose in going to school? Is there a point in learning if we all die in the end? Is there more than one way to say a word, and are we saying it that way? I have asked these types of questions many times over and gotten the same answer. “Gee, I don’t know. Why don’t you look into a book?” So I finally have, and the results astounded me.

Which book did I look in, may you ask? Not a thesaurus or a dictionary or even an encyclopedia. I looked in your book *The Phantom Tollbooth*. Did I find my answers? I did. But to truly get them you must look outside the book and into your own life. When I moved schools in third grade, I did a “Milo.” My friends were all out of reach and my life was completely changed. I stopped caring about making friends and just wanted the world to fast-forward so I could go to middle school. My house became a prison that I had to adjust to. Then I read *The Phantom Tollbooth* in fourth grade and I realized how idiotic I was being. *The Phantom Tollbooth* told me to just enjoy a change and go with it. Your book has excelled in every possible way, including “fixing” my mind. It touched firmly on an area normal authors skip over and that area is pure wit. As the Spelling Bee would say it, this book spells (S-P-E-L-L-S) out the new era of books for generations to come. *The Phantom Tollbooth* taps the inner wit of things told and untold. Your book made me want to do something new and random.

Sincerely,

Justin

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