

5th Grade History Writing Contest

Directions:



Imagine you are the pioneer Sheldon Peck writing a letter to Abraham Lincoln. Challenge yourself to “step back in time” to **1848** and pretend you live in Babcock’s Grove (now Lombard). What might you, as Sheldon Peck, write to Mr. Abraham Lincoln in a personal letter? Would you talk about being an artist, your family, life on a pioneer farm, or how you want to see slavery abolished? Now create this letter to enter our history contest!

Rules:

1. Letters should be 250 to 400 words on 1 or 2 pages and must be your **original, handwritten** work.
2. Complete and attach the separate entry page to your letter. Fill in all of your information on the form. You and your parents must sign the entry. This information will be used to contact winners and invite them to the award ceremony.
3. The contest begins February 1 and ends Wednesday, February 28, 2018, at 4 p.m. All entries must be received by Lombard Historical Society, 23 W. Maple Street, Lombard **by 4pm on February 28**. You may mail or hand deliver your letter. Or, your teacher may collect them to deliver together.

Prizes:

Prizes are awarded by the Lombard Historical Society (LHS) Peck Homestead to the winning historical letter entries:

- First Prize: \$50.00 and publication of winning entry
- Second Prize: \$30.00 and publication of winning entry
- Third Prize: \$15.00 and publication of winning entry

The first three places will also receive a gift Family Membership to Lombard Historical Society.

An Award ceremony will be held at the Peck Homestead Sunday, March 18, at 2:00 p.m. Winners, their families, and teachers will be invited by phone to attend the ceremony. Refreshments will be served.

Project information:

This local history project is sponsored by the Lombard Historical Society’s Sheldon Peck Homestead and is open to all students enrolled in fifth grade in any Lombard private or public (such as district 44 and 45) elementary school. The school address must be in Lombard. Fifth grade home school students, who have a Lombard mailing address, can enter with appropriate fifth grade level student identification. **Visiting the Peck Homestead will give students an advantage in this project!**



Sheldon Peck Background Information

Sheldon Peck is a famous early American artist who lived in Lombard (then called Babcock's Grove) from 1837 until his death in 1868. Sheldon Peck painted ordinary people's portraits in a time before cameras were prevalent. Peck's paintings hang in art museums; the record price for a Peck painting sold for \$820,000. He is considered one of the most important folk art painters in the United States. View copies of Sheldon Peck portraits at the Sheldon Peck Homestead – his pioneer home.

Sheldon Peck and his family built their house (now the oldest house in Lombard), raised sheep, and farmed land at Grace and St. Charles Rd. Sheldon started a school in his house. Sheldon also helped people travel to freedom using a secret escape route called the Underground Railroad. In 1848, he sold a corner of his land to build the first railroad through town.

Sheldon Peck Homestead Museum Information:

- 355 E. Parkside, Lombard (near Grace and St. Charles) across from the Lombard Commons Park. Entry is free and donations are welcome. Park along Grace, or at the Commons.
- Open Tuesdays/Thursdays from 1 - 4 pm, and Saturdays 10 - 2pm. A tour of the Sheldon Peck Homestead is optional and is not required to enter the letter-writing contest, but may be helpful. We have redesigned the Peck to add more hands-on activities, so we hope you will visit!

More Information

For more info about the contest, contact Contest Chair Leslie Sulla at relsulla@comcast.net, or 630-916-7783.

Suggested Resources:

Visit the Helen Plum Memorial Library for books on Abraham Lincoln, the Underground Railroad, and the pre-Civil War era.

Network to Freedom (UGRR information and a list of verified UGRR stops): www.nps.gov/subjects/ugrr

The Lincoln Log (day-by-day chronology of his life): www.thelincolnlog.org/