

David Potts (6th Grade: Sidney, Ohio)
Level I Semifinalist
Letter to James Dashner concerning his book, *Death Cure*

Dear James Dasher:

When I first read your novel, the *Death Cure*, it made it clear to me that your *Maze Runner* series perfectly executed the writing techniques of a fantastically creative author. It also made me realize that you are one of the best authors I've ever encountered. I have read lots and lots of books, and not just picture books, either. I have read the *Harry Potter* series, the *Hunger Games* series, and the *Missing* series. So let me tell you a bit about myself. My name is David Potts. My grandma, who lives with us, and is a retired English teacher, has passed down a love and an appreciation of reading to myself and my seven siblings.

This book taught me the value of friendship. Even after going through all their hardships, Thomas was still friends with Minho, Brenda, and Frypan. Thomas was a very courageous character in all the books, but most courageous in the last book, the *Death Cure*. He led all the mummies out of the maze when the building was crumbling around him. He also saved Teresa when she got eaten by the griever. He was not only courageous, but also a brave hero. Teresa also showed an act of heroism when she sacrificed herself for Thomas, although his death was tragic. Your book has inspired me to think differently about one current event, the shootings at Sandy Hook. It made me wonder if there are truly "WICKED" people in our society. Rat Man did horrible, torturous things to Thomas and his friends in the name of finding a cure for the "Flare." The shooter did a horrendously horrible act of violence against innocent people to calm the "WICKEDNESS" in his brain (killzone).

Reading your book left me with some unanswered questions. The first question I would like to ask you is why did Teresa have to die? I mean, seriously, she sacrificed herself when she could have tackled Thomas and come out unharmed. Secondly, where did you get your idea for the griever character? Finally, when you write your books, do you base them off of real life situations?

To conclude my letter, I would like to give you a big thanks for all your well written books. I was glad to have the opportunity to reflect on the true meaning of friendship. I now recognize more wickedness in the world today. I admire the courageous characters in your books. I hope these insights will help me become a better person as I grow up. I have to admit, you made the book realistic: I started crying when Teresa perished. Would you please consider, if you find the time, answering some of my questions? This would be greatly appreciated. There is no doubt in my mind that you are the best author EVER!!!

Sincerely,

David Potts