

**Ethan Scheuer (5th Grade: Cleveland, Ohio)**  
**Level I Semi-finalist**  
**Letter to Gary Paulsen concerning his book, *Woodson***

Dear Gary Paulsen:

I will never forget the words, the thoughts, and the love that you put into your book, *Woodson*. It was a sea of happiness, soreness, and sympathy that glued the pieces of your story together. From the love of Storm to the dream of racing in the Iditarod, everything was pitch perfect. Only one small problem: the book had to end.

The story you wrote led me into life and death. I was at school in language arts class when my teacher said we were going to do literature circles. She had four books, and we each had to choose two of them. One of my choices was *Woodson* because I knew it was written by you and I have read *Hatchet* and I loved that. Me, my friend Cody, and some other boys got picked for *Woodson*.

We had to read almost every night, but it didn't bother me like some other books we had to read. I might have cried once. I loved the dogs so much that I felt like they were my own. I loved Storm the most.

Your book made me realize that there's much more to life than you think. That wolves eating away at the guts of a deer is disgusting to a normal onlooker, but fascinating to a biologist. The way you talked about blood, and how it was important to you. The way Storm was able to communicate with you—it just made me realize that there's more to life than normally 80-90 years of work. It's the way things live, that's what life is.

I never had a dog, but I really want one. My brother is not very fond of dogs. Plus, we would not want to leave him/her home on vacations. My friends have dogs, and I get to play with them, so that's good enough for me. Sometimes, when my grandparents come with their dog I get to take it for long walks.

Thanks for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

**Ethan Scheuer**