Sam Houston State University

Spring 2021 Common Reader Essay Contest

*American Like Me: Reflections on Life Between Cultures edited by America Ferrera*

**Purpose**

This essay invites an opportunity to earn a scholarship as you explore and write about your connection to themes of identity in American *Like Me: Reflections on Life Between Cultures, edited by America Ferrera*.

**Essay Prompt**   
As we read American Like Me, we might imagine our own stories, our encounters with our own American-ness, whether largely formed or in the process of being formed. Here is your opportunity to write your own chapter.

Who are you?   
What is American like you?   
Do you define yourself by your talents, by your faith, by your family, by your country?   
How does your identity inform your thinking and your actions?   
How does your identity work within our Bearkat community?

Exploring questions like these may help us appreciate our history, ourselves, and each other in our Bearkat Community.

**Eligibility**

The contest is open to all SHSU students currently enrolled full time at Sam Houston State University in undergraduate or graduate master’s programs in the spring 2021 semester.

**Application**

Essays may be submitted anytime, and must be submitted by 11:00 pm, Sunday, May 2, 2021 to [commonreader@shsu.edu](mailto:commonreader@shsu.edu). All submissions must be electronic submissions, and must be sent as email attachments (Microsoft Word documents, RTF files, or PDF files only).

**Rules of the Contest**

1. All applicants must be enrolled full time at Sam Houston State University in undergraduate programs in the spring 2021 semester who have read the book.
2. Essay must be submitting students’ original work. If you submitted an essay to this contest in fall 2020, your work must be substantially different.
3. All essays must be typed, double-spaced, on white, 8 ½” x 11” paper and free of any remarks or grade. (See sample below.)
4. All submissions must include the student SAM ID, student classification, and date of submission in the upper left hand corner of the paper. **The essay itself must not contain the student’s name since essays will be evaluated anonymously.**
5. A student may submit only one entry.
6. Submit your essay from your official SHSU email to [commonreader@shsu.edu](mailto:commonreader@shsu.edu)
7. Winners will be notified by the Sam Houston State University Common Reader program.
8. There is no minimum length requirement. The maximum length is 1000 words.

**Award Categories**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student Classification | Scholarship Amount | Number of Scholarships | Total |
| First-Time Freshman for academic year 2020-21 | $500 | 3 | $1500 |
| First-Time Transfer for academic year 2020-21 | $500 | 3 | $1500 |
| Other Undergraduates for academic year 2020-21 | $500 | 3 | $1500 |
| Total Awards |  |  | $4500 |

Submit your essay from your official SHSU email to [commonreader@shsu.edu](mailto:commonreader@shsu.edu)

Due by May 2, 2021

(See below for sample essay submission set up.)

**SHSU Common Reader Spring 2021 Essay Contest**

SAM ID\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Classification: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Submission\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Your original essay here –Maximum 1000 words)