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**NATIONAL NOVEL WRITING MONTH:
THE LARGEST WRITING CONTEST IN THE WORLD!
And kids can do it too!**

Oakland, Calif. — <http://ywp.NaNoWriMo.org> — October 1, 2007 — There are some who say writing a novel takes awesome talent, strong language skills, academic training, and years of dedication.

Not true. All it really takes is a deadline – a very, very tight deadline – and a whole lot of encouragement.

Welcome to **National Novel Writing Month**: a nonprofit literary crusade that encourages aspiring novelists all over the world to write a novel in a month. At midnight on Nov. 1, more than **100,000 writers from over 70 countries** – poised over laptops and pads of paper, fingers itching and minds racing with plots and characters – will begin a furious adventure in fiction. By 11:59 PM on Nov. 30, thousands of them will be novelists.

NaNoWriMo is the largest writing contest in the world. In 2006, over 79,000 adults, and 15,000 kids and teens, took part in the free challenge. And while the event stresses fun and creative exploration over publication, thirteen NaNoWriMo novelists have had their NaNo-novels published, **including Sarah Gruen, author of New York Times #1 Best Seller, *Water for Elephants*.**

Around 18% of NaNoWriMo participants "win" every year by writing their novels and validating them on the organization's website before midnight on Nov 30. Winner's receive no prizes, and no one at NaNoWriMo ever sees the manuscripts submitted.

So if not for fame or fortune, why do people do it?

"The 50,000-word challenge has a wonderful way of opening up your imagination and unleashing creative potential like nothing else," says NaNoWriMo Director (and eight-time NaNoWriMo winner) Chris Baty. "When you write for quantity instead of quality, you end up getting both. Also, it's a great excuse for not doing any dishes for a month."

In 2004, we created a site just for our young writers! National Novel Writing Month's **Young Writers Program** (<http://ywp.NaNoWriMo.org>) gives teachers, students, and 12-and-under authors a safe and kid-oriented place to spend an exhilarating month bashing out their books. The site provides forums for kids to share writing tips and ideas, creative writing curriculum for teachers, librarians, and parents, and encouragement from the YWP staff.

If you would like more information about National Novel Writing Month's Young Writers Program, or would like to talk to participants from NaNoWriMo chapters in your area, please visit our website at www.NaNoWriMo.org, or contact Tavia Stewart at Tavia@NaNoWriMo.org.