



Kern Council of Teachers of English (KCTE) One Book Project College Writing Contest

**based on *Whiskey Tender*
by Deborah Jackson Taffa**

Do you like writing? Do you like winning prizes? Do you like sharing your insights?
Then enter the KCTE One Book Project College Writing Contest!

Prizes

1st Place: \$300

2nd Place: \$200

3rd Place: \$100

Prompt: In her memoir, *Whiskey Tender*, Deborah Jackson Taffa writes, “I’d fallen in love with Native poets, Simon Ortiz, Luci Tapahonso, nila northSun, on my trips to the downtown library, and the more I learned the more I resented the absence of Native wisdom and culture in my formal education. Anytime my teachers talked about Native history, it had to do with the conquest of our people. There was absolutely no mention of our successes. There was, in fact, no mention of us as modern people or as a contributing culture at all. The silencing of our history, of all that we’d sacrificed for the United States, burned in my chest” (246).

Drawing inspiration from Taffa’s powerful words, write an essay exploring your own experiences with cultural representation, historical narratives, or the absence thereof in your education and community.

Your essay should explore themes of cultural identity, history and movement, systems of power, social movements, and equity. Use personal experiences, observations, and if applicable, additional research to support your arguments.

- Essay length: 500 - 1000 words
- Format: Double-spaced, 12-point font
- Citation style: MLA format for any outside sources used
- Submission deadline:

Remember to support your ideas with evidence from *Whiskey Tender*. Cite specific examples from your experiences and observations to support your points. Your essay should demonstrate critical thinking about the complexities of cultural representation and historical narratives in education and society at large.

Entries must be received electronically by 5 p.m. on Friday, October 10, 2025.

For complete contest rules, please visit:

<https://www.csub.edu/english/one-book-project.shtml>