

VIDEO

Hear Me Out with Javier Zamora

by Javier Zamora, 826
Valenica alumni and
New York Times
bestselling author

GRADES 2–12

TYPE

MEMOIR
NARRATIVE
PERSUASIVE
POETRY

Author Javier Zamora invites you to raise your voice and write to the next President of the United States.

WHAT YOUR STUDENTS WILL LEARN

Students will learn how to craft a message for an intended audience — in this case, the next leader of the United States.

Note for educators: We encourage students to write their message to the next President in any language. All too often, elected leaders overlook the voices of young people. This is especially true when young people speak in a language(s) that isn't English. We aim to amplify the words and perspectives of all young people, and encourage expression in any language.

WHAT YOU WILL DO**Prompt from Javier Zamora:**

Across the country, young people like you are showing their elected leaders that they do not need to vote to start creating a brighter future. Your voice is powerful today, and now's your chance to have your voice heard. Imagine you had the opportunity to sit down with the next President of the United States. What would you most want them to hear?

Now, write that message. In your words, share what matters most to you and your community. Your writing can take on any form: a letter, poem, reflection, song, etc. Here are a few ideas

to get started:

1. Write a letter to the next President of the United States. Introduce yourself: what do you want the next leader of our country to understand about who you are and where you come from? What issues do you believe are most urgent for them to address, and why? What kind of leader does our country need right now? In your letter, share your story and include a call to action. ***(Recommended for students in grades 5-12)***
2. If you could create a new world, what would it be like? What does it feel like? How do people treat one another? What *wouldn't* be a part of your world? Write a poem that begins with the line or idea “If the world was. . .” and share your vision for a more just world with the next President. ***(Recommended for students in grades 2-8)***
3. Describe a moment from your life — big or small — that shows the next leader of the country how it feels to be **you** growing up in the United States right now. Share your experience so that they understand the issue(s) which are most important to you and your community. ***(Recommended for students in grades 8-12)***
4. Music is often used to inspire generations of young people to vote, to act, and to raise their voice during an election year. Write a song about what would happen if **you** became president. . . what obstacles would you face, and what barriers would you break down? ***(Recommended for students in grades 8-12)***

Find the prompt in Spanish [here](#) or download the PDF — see the attached materials below.

About the Author:

Javier Zamora is a Salvadoran poet and activist. Javier Zamora was born in La Herradura, El Salvador in 1990. When he was a year old, his father fled El Salvador due to the US-funded Salvadoran Civil War.

His mother followed her husband’s footsteps in 1995 when Javier was about to turn five. Zamora was left at the care of his grandparents who helped raise him until he migrated to the US when he was nine.

In his debut New York Times bestselling memoir, [SOLITO \(Hogarth, September 2022\)](#), Javier retells his nine-week odyssey across Guatemala, Mexico, and eventually through the Sonoran Desert.

Javier is an alumni of [826 Valencia](#), and is currently an Advisory Board member for the organization.

MATERIALS

- [“Hear Me Out with Javier Zamora” video](#)
- Printed handouts for prompts 1-4 (optional)
- Extra paper or notebook