



**CHILDREN'S TRUST**  
OF ALACHUA COUNTY

## Writers Alliance of Gainesville

Request Date:	12/10/2025
Requesting Organization:	Writers Alliance of Gainesville
Contact Name:	Jenny Dearing
Event Name:	Sunshine State Book Festival
Event Date:	01/24/2026
Event Summary:	<p>The Sunshine State Book Festival is the only opportunity in Alachua County for readers to meet authors and purchase books by local writers; for would-be writers to explore the ins and outs of writing; for families to introduce their children to a world of literature; for exposure to the cultural humanities of literature. Out of the 100 authors present, approximately a third of them will be children's book writers. This gives WAG the special opportunity to engage youth and encourage literacy. A dedicated children's area will be provided where six children's book authors will read their original works. The theme of the 2026 book festival is "From Pirates to the Present: Celebrating 250 Years of Literature in Florida," in honor of America's 250th birthday. There will be cultural programming including keynote speaker, Dr. Clark from the Florida Humanities Speakers Bureau, and a play by local actor, Pamela Marshall Koons on the life of Zora Neale Hurston. For the children, there will be a focus on the thrill of pirates and adventure. There is also a creative writing contest for middle and high school students, the Sunshine State Teen Lit Awards. This is a time to bring the community together and share the magic of reading with our children.</p>
Number of Attendees:	4,000
Expenses Summary:	Mural for children's area, face painter, printer materials for students, advertising
Requested Amount:	\$1000
Notes/Comments:	
Approved Amount:	\$1000
Authorized By:	