

Creative Writing – Intermediate Report

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In 2017, seventy-seven Intermediate Creative Writing entries from twenty-five schools were assessed by a team of eleven judges. In comparison to 2016, this was a thirty-five percent increase in the number of entries received. Fifteen entries were not received. The overall standard of Intermediate Creative Writing entries was again consistently high in 2017 and judging has continued to be very competitive. There were four allowed topics. The Global Coalition of Traders topic did not attract any entries. The 2050 Nobel Prize goes to ... topic attracted six entries, and It's the little things ... topic attracted seventeen entries. The Second Earth – Our Future topic was selected by the overwhelming majority of entrants.

Eight Major bursaries of \$55 and twenty Minor bursaries of \$45 were awarded. This represents an increase from the previous year of twenty-two per cent in the total number of bursaries awarded, with a fourteen per cent increase in the value of the total award amount, thanks to the generosity of sponsors and donors. Eighteen entries gained the new Distinction certificate. The standard of entries was such that all other entries were awarded a Merit Certificate, with hardly an exception.

In this year of the Future Earth theme, key judging criteria discriminators for the award of a Major bursary were the integration of science ideas into writing, the amount of scientific content included in the writing, and originality and creativity. It is important that students gain a thorough understanding of the section Guidelines page in the STS Handbook prior to commencing their writing project. The additional page on How to cite references and write a bibliography will alert entrants to the requirement to list both the date and time that they access websites. If students have this in mind from the commencement of their entry, then they should be able to fulfil this formatting and authentication requirement.

When the student's Entry Name is not holus bolus one of the topics for the year, it is important that the student identify their chosen topic at the beginning of their creative writing piece. All creative writing must be on one of the topics, and each entrant needs to ensure that which of the four allowed topics they are writing about is clear to judges. In 2017, there were a small number of entries that did not include science relevant to any of the Future Earth topics.

Major and Minor bursary winning entries consistently gained nearly full scores for Presentation. One judging criteria discriminator was whether or not the entry Appendix included at least five key science ideas, and a two to three sentence explanation of them; others were spelling, grammar and word length, and a satisfactory conclusion. Entrants can ensure that the section coordinator and judges are able to do their task smoothly by stapling their entry as A4 sheets in a manila folder with the Face Sheet attached to the front cover of the folder. However, in 2017, there were still a minority of entries received that did not adhere to this requirement. Importantly, students can use the Entry guidelines as a self-assessment checklist prior to submitting their entry.

Well done to all the 2017 Years 9 and 10 authors on their creative writing achievement and congratulations to all who achieved bursary and certificate awards. The judging team from nine schools across Victoria did a sterling job of evaluating the entries using the judging criteria for Scientific Content and Presentation, and writing comments for each entrant. We are most appreciative of their volunteer time and expertise, and careful judging. Thank you to all the learning area directors and coordinators, and Science teachers across the schools for their valuable support and encouragement. We are also grateful for the involvement of parents and other mentors, which is invaluable.