

Creative Writing – Intermediate Report

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The overall standard of Intermediate Creative Writing entries was again consistently high in 2016 and judging has continued to be very competitive. There was an increase in the number of schools with students participating in the Intermediate Division of Creative Writing. Fifty-seven entries were judged from students at twenty-six schools across Victoria. In comparison with 2015 entries, this was an approximately forty percent increase in the number of entries and thirty per cent increase in the number of schools. Rather than the choice of 2016 Drones, Droids and Robots topics being evenly spread across the topics as in 2015, this year the breakdown of topic choice was approximately four to three to three to one. Now a part of our everyday lives appealed to thirty-seven per cent of entrants, Going where humans fear to tread and Servant or master each attracted twenty-seven per cent of writers, and nine per cent of students created stories on The Universal Declaration of Robot Rights.

Three Major Bursaries of \$60 and twenty Minor Bursaries of \$50 were awarded. This represents an increase from the previous year of just over fifty per cent in the total number of bursaries awarded, thanks to the generosity of sponsors and donors. The standard of entries was such that entries not achieving a Major or Minor Bursary gained a Merit Certificate, with hardly an exception.

It's important that students gain a thorough understanding of the section Guidelines page in the STS Handbook prior to commencing their writing project, as well as the additional page on How to cite references and write a bibliography. They can use the Entry guidelines as a self-assessment checklist. One judging discriminator continues to be the Completeness of referencing and bibliography, including for web sites the four requirements of name of article/source, date article placed on the web or last updated (if available), URL address, and date and time accessed. In 2016, there has been a strong relationship of the creative writing to the theme, and Originality and creativity generally scored highly. Major and Minor Bursary winning entries consistently scored nearly full scores for Presentation. The creative writing of students gaining Bursaries also stood out by including an appropriate amount of relevant scientific content and accurately integrating scientific ideas into original and creative stories. Importantly, Bursary winners followed the Entry guidelines. Their Appendix included at least five key science ideas and a two to three sentence explanation of them.

Well done to all the 2016 Year 9 and 10 authors on their creative writing achievement and congratulations to all who achieved Bursary and Merit Awards. A team of ten judges from schools across Victoria did a sterling job of evaluating and commenting on the entries, and we are most appreciative of their volunteer time and expertise. Many thanks as well to all the teachers for their valuable support and encouragement, and parents and other mentors, too.