

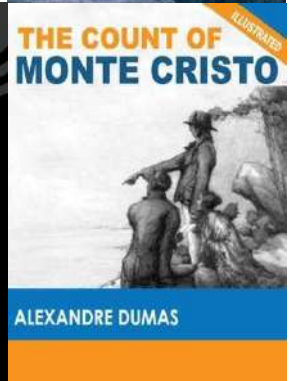
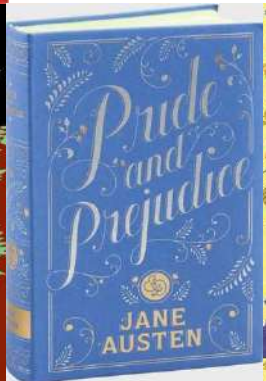
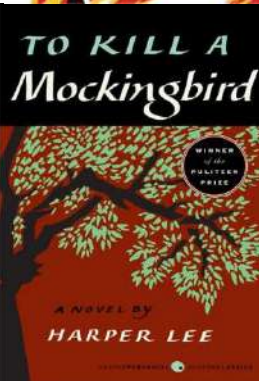
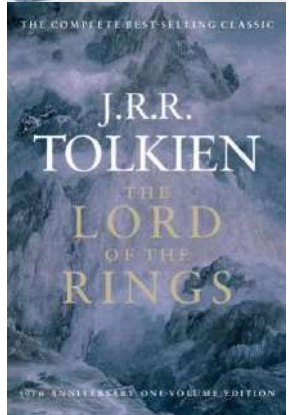
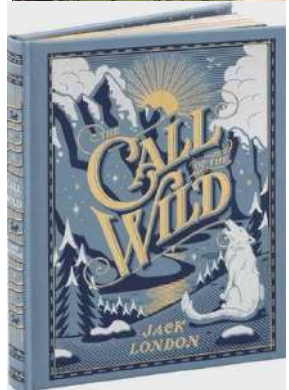
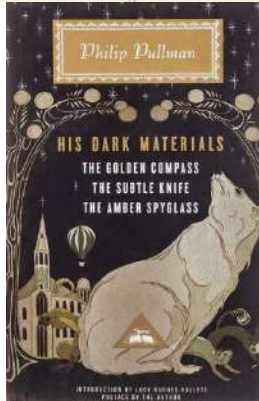
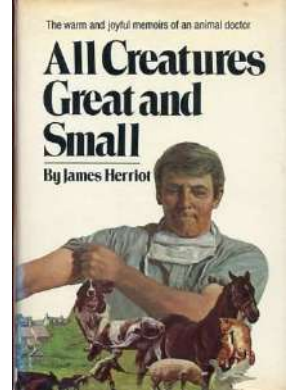
**Rotary** **YOUNG WRITER** **COMPETITION**

**Rotary GB&I**

**2024**

**AWARDS**

**Presented by**  
**Rotary Club of Burnham On**  
**Crouch & Dengie Hundred**  
**to**  
**Young Creative Writers**  
**of**  
**Ormiston Rivers Academy**





**A Booklet Celebrating**

**Rotary GB&I**

**2024**

**AWARDS**

**Presented by**

**Rotary Club of Burnham On Crouch &  
Dengie Hundred**

**to the**

**Young Creative Writers**

**of**

**Ormiston Rivers Academy**

**Rotary Young Writer Competition 2024**



**Ormiston Rivers Academy**

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# Introduction

The Young Writer competition is designed to support and encourage creativity and imagination in writing.

As readers may see, what transpired this year in Burnham was much more. There is an abundance of authentic personal drama, humour, insight and heart break. All seem uplifted in the spirit of the Theme.

The Theme for the Young Writer 2023-24 competition was simply 'Rebuilding'. It could be fiction or non-fiction and need not conform to the dictionary definition of the word. This provided the widest opportunity to share each entrant's creative talents by showing what it meant to them.

The 'Rebuilding' theme could be interpreted as broadly as wished and did not need to conform to the dictionary definition of the word.

The task of each entrant was to write a handwritten or typed story in prose or poem under the theme. This could be fiction or non-fiction, as long as it related to the theme.

***Prose entries could be up to a maximum 550 words and poems up to 40 lines. (No pictures or drawings were allowed.)***

The criteria for judging entries were laid down as:

- imagination relative to the subject
- the ability to engage interest
- the ability to be consistent in the power of argument.

Writers competed in two age groups: Intermediate level (aged 11 to 13 years old as at 31st August 2023) or Senior level (14 to 17 years old).

## Judging the Writing

At all stages of the competition the judges cannot be Rotarians. They must be selected for their appropriate skills.

We appointed members of the Pauline Hallanzy Book Club to undertake the judging. This was eminently appropriate since not only are they qualified to do so but they also happen to be the book club founded by its namesake who had been a much-loved and respected English teacher at the school.

Importantly, copies of each entry were passed to the judges without the name of the young writer. The anonymity ensured there would be no bias.

The decision of the judges would be final and not subject to any appeal.

In addition to the difficult job of assessing each of what turned out to be twenty-six entries in prose and poems, the judging team were asked to give reasons for their decisions and to comment on each.

To be frank, we had not anticipated the challenge of choosing between such variety, from inventive fiction to deeply personal revelation to personal insights into the challenges of modern life as they see it and feel it. We applaud the Book Club for this and for their ability to interpret some of the handwriting!

## **Winners and Commendations**

The judges' reasoning, comments and evocative 'snippets' are shown under each of the young writers' entries published below.

The winners of the Burnham local competition in each age group were entered into the Rotary district competition. (With district permission, two winners were entered from our local competition at the Senior level.)

The District then entered their winners into the National Final organised by Rotary GB&I. The deadline for entries to the National level is 30th April 2024. (The National Winners are therefore not known at the time of publication of this edition of the booklet.)

## **Recognition**

At all stages of the competition, entrants receive a certificate of recognition. This may say, 'Winner', 'Commended' or as appropriate.

As said above, the qualities of the entries in Burnham were found to be remarkable. The writings provide insights into the abilities and perspectives of the younger generation. They draw applause and an emotional response in equal measure. That's a sign of great writing.

As the District organiser said when announcing results at that level:

*The quality of entries this year was very good and much better than in previous years, so that the judging was very difficult.*

*The entries were varied - some prose, some poetry, one rap. There were very powerful pieces of writing, all creative and original, some funny, some [drawn] clearly from experience or from ability to empathise. We certainly have some excellent young writers in [the District] D1240!*

*The theme **rebuilding** for the writing competition has provided scope for much imagination and insight.*

Bearing in mind that Rotary District 1240 covers most of Essex, parts of East London and East Hertfordshire and comprises 63 Rotary Clubs and Satellite Clubs, it is very pleasing that its Senior Young Writer Competition was won by a Burnham competitor and another of our entries was given a Special Commendation by the District.

# 2024 Young Writer Competition Results

(all Burnham unless otherwise stated as District)

## Senior Age Group - 14 to 17 years

**WINNER: Burnham and District**

*Do I Make a Pretty Boy?* by Alisha

**WINNER: Burnham**

*From Ashes to Hope* by Jessica Lacey

## Intermediate Level: Age Group - 11 to 13

**WINNER: Burnham and Special Commendation by District**

*Broken Heart* by Lexi-Jaye Defriend

**Highly Commended**

*Case Number #910513072* by Haidyn Vincent

**Special Commendations**

*Rebuilding Me – Stronger and Happier* by Daisy Garrett

*The Boy Who Was Different* by Jake Morgan

**Commendations**

The Judges also awarded Commendations to all other entries. They deserved this and judges recorded memorable 'Snippets' from each of these, all in the 11-13 age group.

## Young Writers in Prose and Poems

A compilation of all the entries is published below, in alphabetic order according to name where parental permission has been given.

Although the competition entries were judged as submitted, some very minor editing has been made for purposes of publishing for posterity, as would be normal.

Where entries to the Competition were penned in hand-written script, a copy of this is included alongside or below the re-set printed version. This sticks as closely as reasonable to the original layout.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

The Rotary Club of Burnham On Crouch & Dengie Hundred is proud to publish this impressive compilation of the 2024 Competition entries.

We congratulate the Ormiston Rivers Academy and its young writers for such an impressive collection of literary art, courageous and creative poems and short stories.

What follows is for them.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Spikes the Dragon

Upon a massive hill was a castle but this wasn't any castle it was the tallest pointiest castle. In the castle lived Margery(mum) Josh(dad) and their daughter Victoria. She was always non-stop talking about how much she'd wanted a pet. Her parents were thinking about it, it's all Victoria ever wanted.

Victoria's parents one-day decided to get her a pet (because she spoke about it so much). When I showed Victoria what the pet was, she didn't know what it was. "Is it is a wild animal?" said Victoria with a big gulp scratching her throat.

It was missing an eye. It was around 12ft tall, big teeth, massive tail. It had spikes on its back. They all still didn't know what it was. "What is it" said Victoria with a confused look of her face. "I don't know" the parents said in shame.

"Why did you buy me a wild animal-looking thing if you didn't know what it was?" "Ummmm" said mum, "well (cough) a man in a van was giving them away". A man in a van thought Victoria.

Oh well what should I call it .....

OHHHH I know: SPIKES! Her parents walked off into the kitchen with a grin. "Come on spikes." But the big textured creature sits there. "I said come on spikes." It just sits there. Victoria got fed up and walked away. "Ugh you stupid animal, you are no pet!!!" she shouted in anger.

The creature looks at the hole that was in the door. "What is it?" said Victoria. There was a gem, a green gem. I wonder what this is. She looks into the shiny green coloured gem. The gem falls out of her hand; everything goes fuzzy.

She wakes up. What was that anyway? "Come on spikes". The creature followed her. Yay. Victoria had a jump of joy! "Spikes sit". The creature sat straight away. Yay she was so happy. From then the creature listens to everything she says. When it wears the gem it causes good luck.

She won't give up. She'll learn on her own.

**Young Writer – name withheld**

### **Commendation: Memorable Snippet**

*- Why did you buy me a wild animal looking thing if you didn't know what it was*

# Relationships

**R**elationships

**E**ncourage

**B**eing resilient

yo**U**rself

**I**s important

So **L**ove yourself as you are

**D**ecrease negativity

**I**ncrease your mindset

**N**ever give up

And **G**ive our love and kindness on your way.



Young Writer – name withheld

## Commendation: Memorable Snippet

*Give out love and kindness on your way*

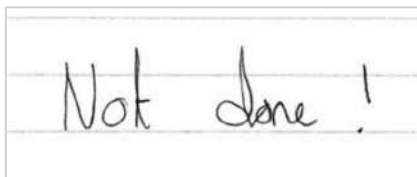
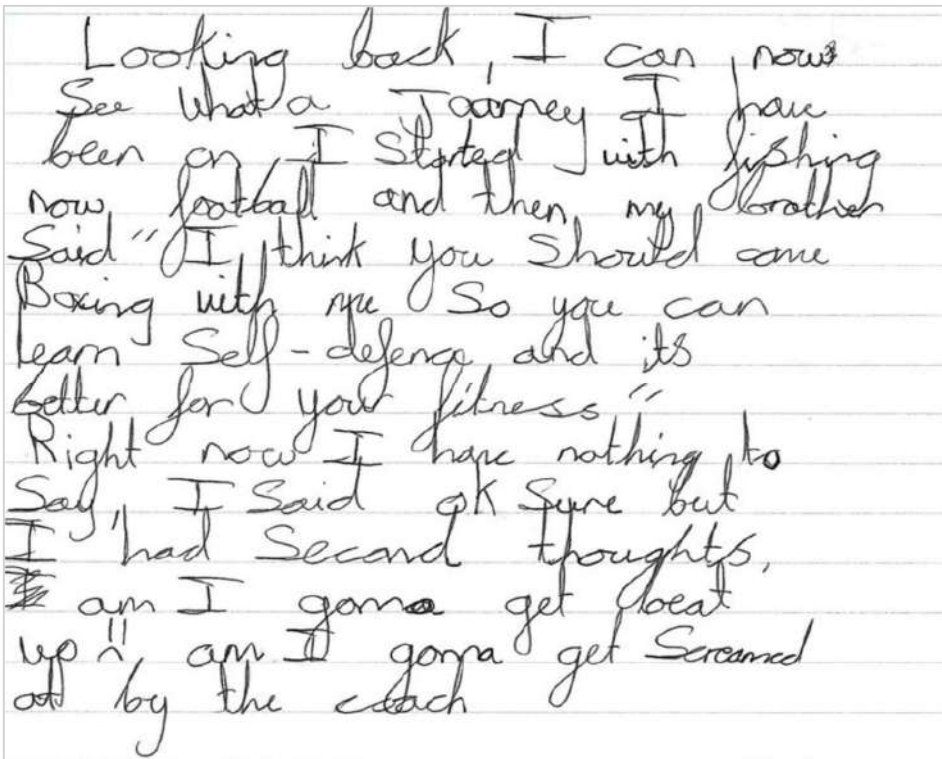
## Finding Something New

Looking back, I can now see what a journey I have been on.

I started with fishing, now football. And then my brother said, "I think you should come boxing with me so you can learn self-defence. And it's better for your fitness."

Right then I have nothing to say. I said, "OK, sure". But I had second thoughts. "Am I going to get beat up? Am I going to get screamed at by the coach?"

Not done! [*Building work in progress.*]



Young Writer – name withheld

### Commendation: Memorable Snippet

- Looking back I can now see what a journey I have been on

## Family here, family there

Family here, family there, family almost everywhere.

Family is the most valuable thing you will own in life.

Sometimes you don't realise how important family are until  
they're gone.

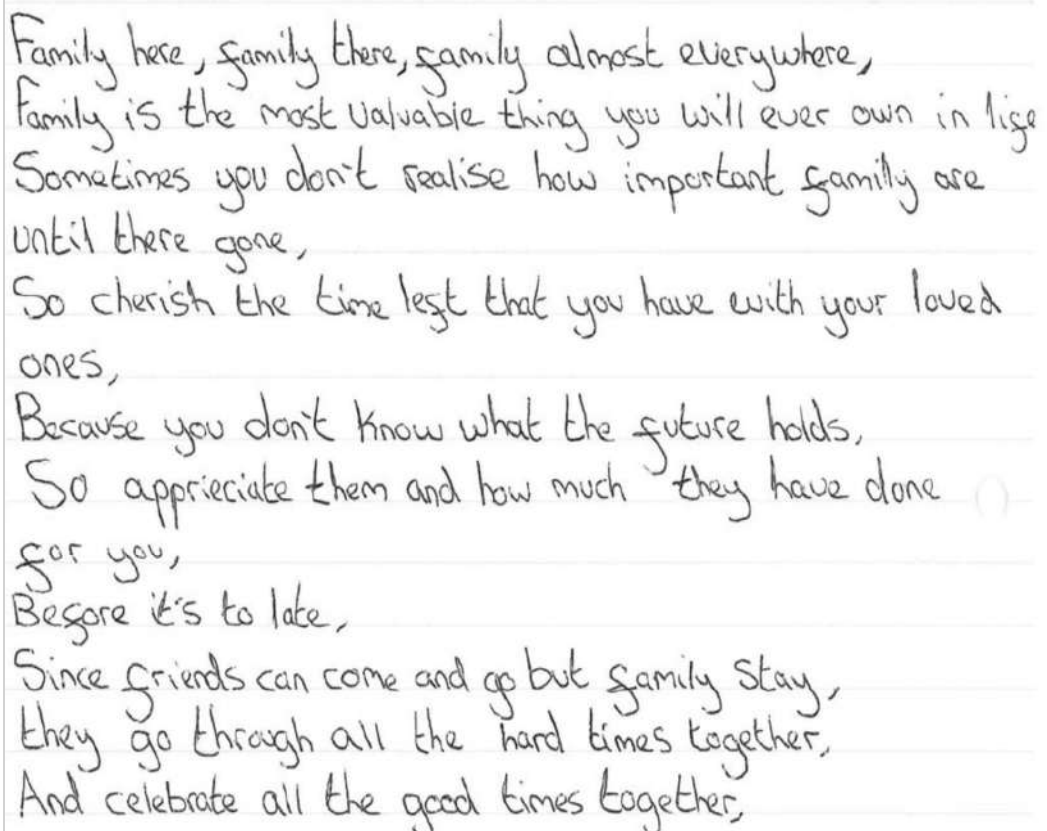
So cherish the time that you have with your loved ones,  
because you don't know what the future holds.

Appreciate them and how much they have done for you,  
before it's too late.

Since friends can come and go but family stay.

They go through all the hard times together,

And celebrate all the good times together.



Family here, family there, family almost everywhere,  
Family is the most valuable thing you will ever own in life  
Sometimes you don't realise how important family are  
until there gone,  
So cherish the time left that you have with your loved  
ones,  
Because you don't know what the future holds,  
So appreciate them and how much they have done  
for you,  
Before it's too late,  
Since friends can come and go but family stay,  
they go through all the hard times together,  
And celebrate all the good times together,

**Ava Bell**

### **Commendation: Memorable Snippet**

*Family is the most valuable thing you will ever own in life*

## It started with a boy

It started with a boy. We both liked him. But unfortunately, he only liked one of us and we didn't know who. We would argue, push, chase and punch each other until I had had enough. The one day I decided to do something that would change both our lives. . . and not in a good way! I went up to Amelia and pushed her to the ground and shouted "I hate you. I wish you were never my friend." As usual she retaliated and shoved me against the wall. But then I went a step too far. I thought quickly and pushed her with all my force. And oh how I regret that. After I pushed her back with all my strength in my body I froze watching her fall back into a pile of bricks. So I tried to save her but I was too late. She lay on the floor with her head covered in blood and broken bricks screaming and crying. An hour later she was rushed to hospital. After she recovered her mum didn't trust me anymore and they moved away. But she forgave me.

Rebuilding

It started with a boy, we both liked him but unfortunately he only liked one of us and we didn't know who? we would argue, push, chase and punch each other until I had enough... this one day I decided to do something that would change both our lives... and not in a good way! I went up to Amelia and pushed her to the ground and shouted "I hate you, I wish you were never my friend!" as usual she retaliated and shoved me against the wall. But then I went a step too far... I thought quickly and pushed her with all my force. And oh how I regret that. After I pushed her back with all the strength in my body I froze watching her fall back into a pile of bricks... I tried to save her but it was too late... she layed on the floor her head covered in blood and broken bricks screaming and crying. An hour later she was rushed to the hospital after she recovered her mum didn't trust me any more and they moved away but she forgave me.

Young Writer – name withheld

### Commendation: Memorable Snippet

- It started with a boy we both liked him but unfortunately ...

## **To learn there must be rubble**

To learn there must be rubble,  
Be it family or a building.  
Resistance comes from trouble  
And to learn we must start  
Rebuilding.

When falling out with a friend  
Or squabbling with family  
Or be it with yourself,  
Rebuilding these helps us with learning.

Even when, for buildings,  
They crumble and fall,  
We lay the bricks and start again  
To be euphoric for us all.

When it comes for friends and family  
Leaving you alone,  
Take a rest and calmly  
Retie the thread once more.

Nothing is perfect,  
Not me nor you  
But these time when we fall apart,  
We build and learn.

To learn there must be rubble,  
Be it Family or a building,  
Resilience comes from trouble,  
And to learn we must start,  
Rebuilding.

When falling out with a friend,  
Or squabbling with family,  
Or be it with yourself,  
Rebuilding these helps us with learning.

Even when, for buildings,  
They crumble and fall,  
We lay the bricks and start again,  
To be euphoric for us all.

When it comes for friends and family,  
Leaving you alone,  
Take a rest and calmly  
Retie the thread once more.

Nothing is perfect,  
Not me or you.  
But these times when you can fall apart,  
We build and learn.

**James Bryant**

### **Commendation: Memorable Snippet**

- *To learn there must be rubble,*
- *Be it family or a building,*
- *Resilience comes from trouble ...*

## Looking back I can now see..

Looking back, I can now see what a journey I have been on.

I have made new friendships and I have improved confidence when speaking in front of my class. Putting my mind back in the past now, I can realise that I needed to re-build myself and start afresh.

Remembering what I'd said back then made me regret what came next. Re-building was tough for me but I never gave up. I knew that if I wanted to re-build our friendship I had to start again. Although it was tough I succeeded and got to the end.

It's almost like thought tracking but more of a vivid dream. Every time it comes around the world starts to spin rapidly. I dread my mind day and night about how foolish I was back then. I've always thought I would never get over it and it could haunt my mind forever but then I started to rebuild myself on what's almost like a new foundation. It started to get better after a while. All my doubts about this worry disappeared.

Looking back, I can now see what a journey I have been on. I have made new friendships and I have also improved my confidence in speaking in front of my class. Putting my ~~mind~~ mind back in the past now, I can realise that I needed to re-build myself and start fresh.

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Ella Burnham

### Commendation: Memorable Snippet

- Rebuilding was tough for me but I never gave up

## ***Do I Make a Pretty Boy?***

Do I make a pretty boy  
or do you still view my binded chest  
and choppy hair  
as an 'ugly girl' phase?  
My skin hugs me  
in the way I wish it couldn't.  
Excuse my flaws  
through a fogged mirror.  
My knees bounced under the desk  
and the raw skin on my arms turned red and scarred  
as I continued to scratch away  
at the parts of me I hated.  
Bathe me in androgyny  
and the slurs you wish to claim.  
Serve me to the anatomists  
but they'll dig up my bones with the wrong name.  
It's better than witnessing the discard from others  
they choose over making someone else happy  
because if you knew the shit we go through  
you'll know transphobia kills.  
And this is where it starts.

**Alisha**

Judges' comments follow on the next page.

## Comment

From the beginning the reader is held by the powerful question of the first stanza:

*'Do I make a pretty boy  
or do you still view my binded chest  
and choppy hair  
as an 'ugly girl' phase?'*

We were struck by the eloquence and sophistication of the writing.

This is a well-constructed piece which vividly conveys vulnerability and pain. It demonstrates a perceived betrayal of the body from the desired image, and the self-infliction of raw wounds to punish self:

*'the raw skin on my arms turned red and scarred as I continued  
to scratch away at the parts of me I hated'.*

This is an anguished and emotive statement of transgender process, exploring a rebuilding of vulnerable self, whilst feeling judged and condemned by ignorance and societal pressure.

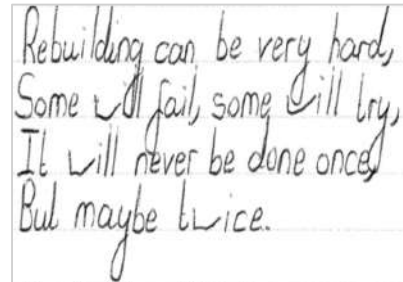
It is an intimate view of personal struggle. We are moved by the difficult challenges and the agony expressed by this young person.

## ***Rebuilding can be very hard***

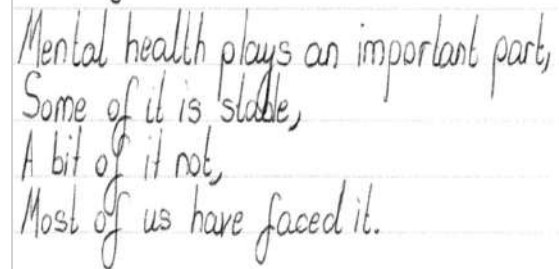
Rebuilding can be very hard  
Some will fail, some will try  
It will never be done once  
But maybe twice.

Mental health plays an important part  
Some of it is stable  
A bit of it not  
Most of us have faced it.

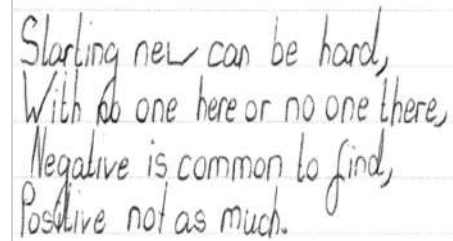
Starting new can be hard  
With no one here or no one there  
Negative is common to find  
Positive not as much.  
Even if you have been ruined  
There are always people out there  
People that you can find  
People just like you.



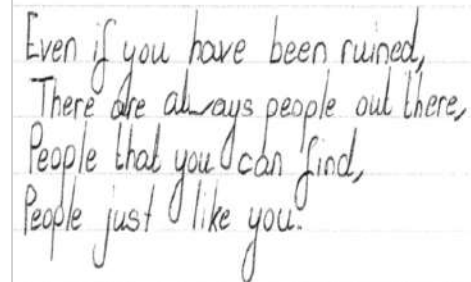
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Mental health plays an important part,  
Some of it is stable,  
A bit of it not,  
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Starting new can be hard,  
With no one here or no one there,  
Negative is common to find,  
Positive not as much.



Even if you have been ruined,  
There are always people out there,  
People that you can find,  
People just like you.

**Young Writer – name withheld**

### **Commendation: Memorable Snippet**

- *Starting new can be hard,*
- *With no one here or no one there ...*

## Broken heart

*It snapped like a fallen tree.  
Lost dreams.  
They shattered like glass windows.  
Fragile mind.  
It's going to explode because,  
I can't take this anymore.*

*The pieces are strewn across the floor.  
My mind an empty space.  
Step by step, piece by piece,  
I'll try to rebuild myself.  
I'll leave some bits in the dark,  
And I won't bring them back.  
If they return, I'll break again.*

*After months of building, debating and fixing,  
I'm finally rebuilt.  
But I'm not the same as I was.  
I'm fragile and weak from my hard work,  
I'm tired and hurt by the past.  
And just when I thought my battle was won,  
Everything got so much worse.*

### **TAP!**

*Everything crumbles down.  
Once again, I'm broken,  
But I can't fix it now.  
One of the pieces is missing.  
And I'll never get it back.*

**Lexi-Jaye Defriend**

Judges' comments follow on the next page.

## Comment

The opening verse grabs the reader with its graphic language –

*'It snapped like a falling tree.'*

The poem then continues to describe how heartbreak has shattered the writer –

*'The pieces are strewn around the floor  
My mind an empty space.'*

The writer describes how they try to rebuild themselves

*'step by step, piece by piece'*

but will leave some

*'bits in the dark.'*

They don't explain these parts but they know they have the power to break them again.

The writer recognises that they have been profoundly changed by experience, will never be the same –

*'I'm fragile and weak from my hard work.'*

Then just as they feel they have recovered –

*'TAP'*

and

*'everything got so much worse'.*

Again, what happened is not explained but the part that we think makes the poem is that they realise that the part of themselves they left buried in the dark is integral to their recovery and fears –

*'I'll never get it back'.*

This is sophisticated thinking for a young person; that the parts of trauma that we bury are part of our selves and until we deal with them, we will never be whole.

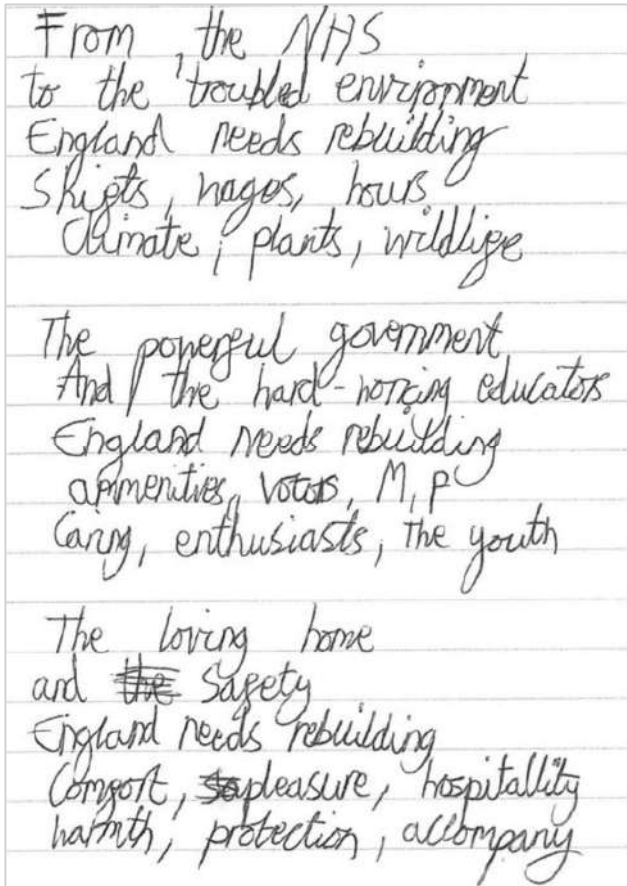
A very impressive and moving piece of work.

## Rebuilding England

From the NHS  
to the troubled environment,  
England needs rebuilding.  
Sights, hedges, houses,  
climate, plants and wildlife.

The powerful government  
And the hard-working educators.  
England needs rebuilding  
amenities, voters, MPs,  
Caring enthusiasts, the youth.

The loving home  
and safety.  
England needs rebuilding.  
Comfort, pleasure, hospitality,  
warmth, protection, and company.



From the NHS  
to the 'troubled environment  
England needs rebuilding  
Sights, hedges, houses  
Climate; plants, wildlife

The powerful government  
And the hard-working educators  
England needs rebuilding  
amenities, voters, M, P  
Caring, enthusiasts, the youth

The loving home  
and ~~the~~ safety  
England needs rebuilding  
Comfort, ~~the~~ pleasure, hospitality  
warmth, protection, accompany

Young Writer – name withheld

### Commendation: Memorable Snippet

- From the NHS
- to the troubled environment,
- England needs rebuilding

## **It was just one normal day at the park...**

It was just one normal day in the park with my friends. When, all of a sudden, I had a fight with my friend about she wasn't actually fiends with my other friend Ella. Then I went off into the forest sobbing. I was so upset that I threw a pile of leaves on my head. Then suddenly I heard rustling bushes and kids talking. So I quickly hit in the bush but then when the kids walked past I realised it was my ex-friends who made me cry. They were Jo, Emmie, Ella and Freya. Ella was the one who put me in this position. Then it started to get dark, so I ran home as quickly as possible so when I arrived home, I had dinner and went to bed.

The next morning after the fight I felt weird after not having a friend anymore. I mean, we did so many things together. We played games, we played in the park and that's what I remember. So, after thinking about what happened the other day I just got up and dressed and went downstairs for breakfast. As I was walking down the stairs I could smell yummy, delicious bacon and eggs sizzling in the frying pan with a side of orange juice. When I finished breakfast, I got up and went to my room to play games. Three hours later Mum called me down for lunch. I had a turkey sandwich with lettuce and ham. After lunch I went to the living room to watch TV. As I was watching TV I suddenly realised that I had done something wrong. So, I got up and went to me ex-friend's house to apologise to her. When I got to her home, I knocked on the door. Then she opened it and said to me, "Hi!". Then I said back to her, "Hi, I'm sorry about yesterday. Can we be friends again?" Then she said, "Of course we can."

We both hugged each other and became best friends again.

**Young Writer – name withheld**

Original writing and judges' memorable snippet appear on the next page.

**It was just one normal day at the park...(Continued)**

It was just one normal day at the park with my friends. When all of a sudden, I had a fight with my friend about she wasn't ~~about~~ actually friends with my friend Ella ~~So then~~ but then I ran off into the forest sobbing I was so so upset that I threw a pile of leaves on my head. But suddenly I heard rustling bushes or kids talking. So I quickly hid in the bush but then ~~I found~~ when the kids walk past I realised it was my ex-friends who made my cry their names were Jun, Emmie, Ella, and Freya. And Ella was the one that made me in this position. ~~So then I just ran~~ but then it started to get dark so I ran home as quickly as possible and then when I arrived home I had dinner and went to bed.

Its the next morning After the fight I felt weird After not having a friend anymore. I mean we done so much things together. We played games, we played At the park thats all I remember. So then After thinking abt what happend the other day I just got up and got dressed and went downstairs for Breakfast. As I was walking down the stairs I could smell the yummy delicious Bacon and eggs sizzling on the frying pan with a side of Orange Juice. When I finished Breakfast I got up and went to my room to play Games. 3 hours later ~~my~~ mum called me down for lunch I had a turkey sandwich with lettuce and Ham. After lunch I went to the ~~the~~ living room to watch tv but As I was watching tv I suddenly realised I've done something wrong so I got up and went to ~~the~~ my ex-friends house to Apologize to her. When I got to her house I knocked on the door, then she opened it and she said to me ~~she~~ "Hi?" then I said back "Hi im sorry ubt yesterday & we be friends again?" then she said "OFC we can" then we both hugged it & and became best friends again.

**Young Writer – name withheld**

**Commendation: Memorable Snippet**

*- I was so upset that I threw a pile of leaves on my head*

## Rebuilding me – stronger and happier

As I put the pieces together  
I think of who I want to be  
I think hard, I look deep  
I just want to be me

As I put the pieces together  
I think of all my goals so far  
I want to succeed my ambitions  
I want to go above the bar

As I put the pieces together  
I see an idea of who I want to be  
I love my friends, I love my family  
Who do I want to be?

As I put the pieces together  
I know who I want to be  
I don't want to be someone famous  
I look at the pieces, who do I want be?

As I put the pieces together  
I see who I want to be  
I want to be the person I love most.  
I want to be me

**Daisy Garrett**

### **Comment: Special Commendation**

Sometimes a poem grabs you from the first line and continues to do so with its skillful use of repetition –

*'As I put the pieces together'.*

There is a clear sense of progression, growth, verse by verse building to a greater understanding of self.

The second line of each verse demonstrates this wonderfully;

*'I think ... I see ... I know'.*

The words just work. This poem was well crafted, thoughtful and clear and this earned its SpecialCommendation.

## **I once went to war**

I once went to war  
where my friend beside me, he was dead.  
Suddenly, the ground exploded beneath me,  
and I ... I woke up ... in a hospital bed.

My anger, shock, frustration, fear,  
it was enough to get the curse.  
Now, whenever I remember that hell,  
I stay shocked about my friend - it hurts, just hurts.

Now ... I can't even sleep,  
without the fear of being shot.  
I'm sinking into my bed, fearful of the world,  
If I could tell myself anything, it would be to not ...

... Go to war! Everybody says,  
we're sure you'll be alright.  
But why are woman sending us off to war,  
when they haven't seen the conditions - not even a sight?

**Alex Jones**

### **Commendation: Memorable Snippet**

*- I'm sinking into my bed, fearful of the world*

## **From Ashes To Hope**

In the land of fire and ice,  
Where the mountains touch the skies, A tale of resilience begins,  
As nature's fury breaks and spins.

Beneath the ash, a nation weeps,  
As fiery rivers from the deep,  
Iceland's hearts begin to bleed.

Nature's fury may leave its trace,  
But resilience blooms in every space,  
The dreams we share,  
With hope as big as the mountains flare.

Villages that once stood tall,  
Now rise from the ashes, stand so small,  
Each stone laid a triumph song,  
A melody of courage, pure and strong.

In Iceland heart, where fire meets the cold,  
We'll rebuild our dreams, forever bold.

**Jessica Lacey**

**Senior Age Group Winner**

Judges Comments follow on next page.

## Comments on 'From Ashes To Hope'

We were all impressed by this vivid account of the recent volcanic eruption in Iceland and the resultant destruction ...

*'As nature's fury breaks and spins.'*

The writer describes with eloquence the devastation of the land and the distress and fear in the aftermath:

*'Beneath the ash, a nation weeps,  
As fiery rivers from the deep,  
Iceland's hearts begin to bleed.'*

Following 'nature's fury', the poem goes on to describe the emergence of resilience which

*'blooms in every space with hope as big as the mountains  
flare',*

although

*'Villages that once stood tall,  
Now rise from the ashes, stand so small,'*

The resilience becomes an assertion that Iceland's people will

*'rebuild our dreams, forever bold'.*

The writer has applied imagination and creativity in this poem and has interpreted the set theme of *Rebuilding* within Iceland's community following natural disaster - well done.

## My friendship poem

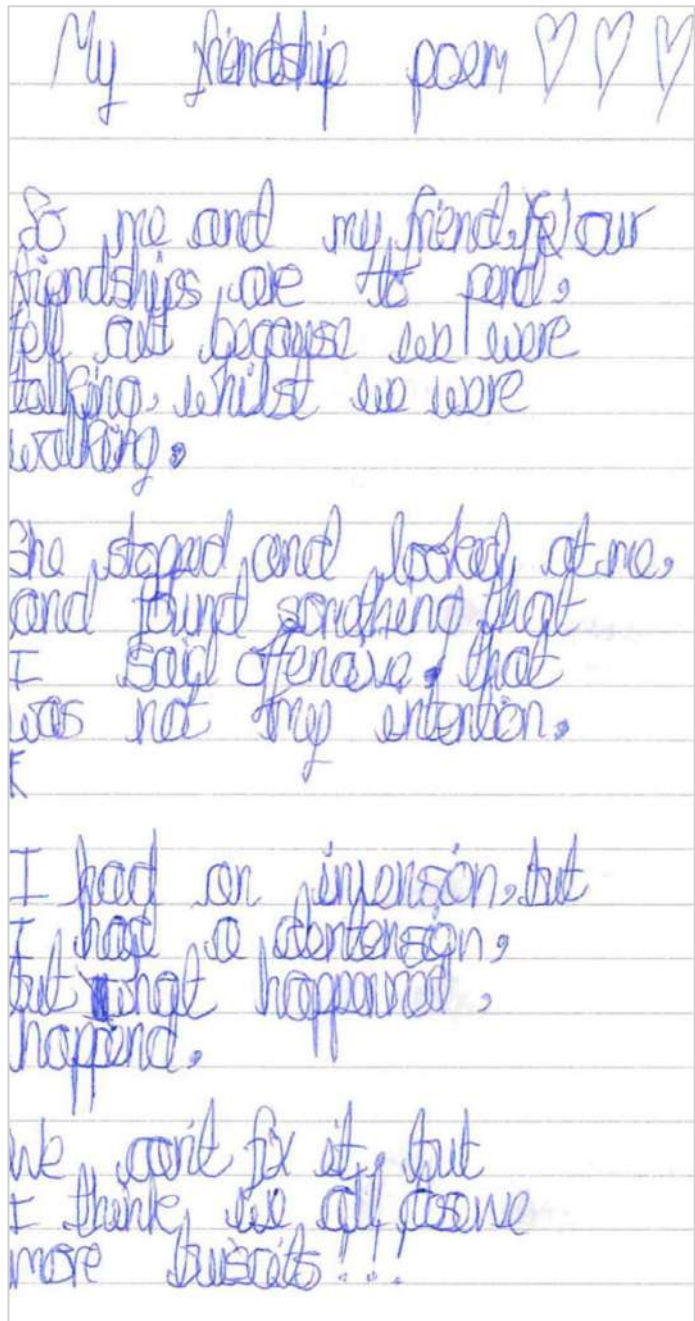
So, me and my friend, our  
Friendships are too p???,  
Fel?? And because we were  
talking whilst we were  
walking.

She stopped and looked at me  
and found something that  
I said offensive that  
was not my intention.

I had an expression,  
But I had no intention.  
But what happened  
happened.

We can't fix it  
but I think we all deserve  
more biscuits!!!

I hope you like my poem.



Young Writer – name withheld

### Commendation: Memorable Snippet

-...we were talking whilst we were walking

## Rebuilding: picking up the pieces

As I sit in a room –  
All dark and alone,  
In an endless gloom  
I'm in a bad zone.

People have tried to help,  
I just push them away.  
I give out a yelp.  
I don't want to stay.

I try to get out of this,  
I try, I do.  
But when I can't feel her kiss  
I forget about my crew.

About to end it all,  
I feel something new.  
I get up from my fall  
and try to see you.

I picked up the pieces,  
I tried to keep going.  
Someone heard me, perhaps Jesus.  
I feel as if I'm glowing.

I am the proof.  
Look at me and you'll see.  
Never stop going.  
You will succeed like me.

As I sit in a room –  
all dark and alone,  
In an endless gloom,  
I'm in a bad zone,

People have tried to help,  
I just push them away,  
I give out a yelp,  
I don't want to stay,

I try to get out of this,  
I try, I do,  
But when I can't feel her kiss,  
I forget about my crew,

About to end it all,  
I feel something new,  
I get up from my fall,  
And try to see you,

I picked up the pieces,  
I carried on going,  
Someone heard me, perhaps Jesus,  
I feel as if I'm glowing,

I am the proof,  
Look at me and you'll see,  
Never stop going,  
You will succeed.

Young Writer – name withheld

### Commendation: Memorable Snippet

*I picked up the pieces, I carried on going*

## Rebuild, Remake, Rediscover

2023 started with great expectations, same friends, same ambition,  
same life.

But with the ups of the year came downs and bumps along the way.

I rebuilt, remade, rediscovered.

I lost a few friends but gained a few more. I carried on,  
Rebuilt, Remade, Rediscovered.

At the time when I lost the two friends, it felt like the end of the world  
but now looking back I don't regret a thing. I have better friends now  
who help, care and look after.

I Rebuilt, Remade, Rediscovered.

My ambition changed from one thing to another, singing to acting,  
drawing to baking, an influencer to actress. Throughout the year people  
tried to knock me down. It's not a real job they would say. But I ignored  
and carried on. Now I'm happier than ever.

I Rebuilt, Remade, Rediscovered.

2023 ended in a much different way. New friends, new ambitions, new  
life. My expectations changed a lot but I don't regret a single choice I  
made.

I Rebuilt, Remade, Rediscovered.

**Alice Mapes**

### **Commendation: Memorable Snippet**

*-I Rebuilt, Remade, Rediscovered*

## The Boy Who Was Different

This boy was no ordinary boy. He was different to others and didn't like the fact that when he walked into a place people would look at him strangely. He told his Mum he didn't like how God had made him and wished that his life could change. The boy would always wear long sleeves to hide that he was missing one arm. He always wore long trousers to hide his missing leg hoping he would be able to fit in.

His Mum would tell him not to hide who he was and instead show his true identity. Life isn't about hiding in the shadows watching everyone else have a happy life while yours is fading. This shocked the boy and made him think for a while.

The next morning the boy told his Mum that he would wear shorter trousers and shorter sleeves so each day he would start to reveal his true identity. His Mum was proud that her boy was facing his fears and was now starting to emerge from the shadows. On the second week his fake leg starts to mend. Students start talking about this and as the days go on they start to realise. Kids start sitting with him at lunch and ask him how he got the false leg and how cool it was. The boy felt so excited and told his Mum. He said, "You were right and I was wrong. I should never have hid who I really was."

his boy was no ordinary boy. but he was different to others and didn't like the fact that when he walked into a place people would look at him strangely. He told his Mum he didn't like how God had made him and wished that his life could change. The boy would always wear long sleeves to hide that he was missing an arm. He also wore long trousers to hide his missing leg hoping he would be able to fit in.

The boy's Mum would tell him not to hide who he was and instead show everyone his true identity. Life isn't about hiding in the shadows watching everyone else have a happy life while yours is fading. This shocked the boy and made him think for a while.

The next morning, the boy told his Mum that he would wear shorter trousers and shorter sleeves so each day he would start to reveal his true identity. His Mum was proud that her boy was facing his fears and was now starting to emerge from the shadows. On his second week his fake leg starts to mend. Students start talking about this and as the days go on they start to realise. Kids start sitting with him at lunch and ask him how he got the false leg and how cool it was. The boy felt so excited and told his Mum. He said, "You were right and I was wrong. I should never have hid who I really was."

**Jake Morgan**

**Special Commendation** (Judges comments are on the following page.)

## Comments

### The Boy Who Was Different

This touching and insightful short essay uses an example of physical differences to illustrate the discomfort and possibly self-imposed marginalisation that a sense of '*not being the same*' can engender.

The boy conceals the aspects of himself that cause him to feel shame.

With the encouragement of his mother "*not to hide who he was*", he bit by bit reveals his "*true identity*".

The clever use of incremental changes to his clothing, that gradually expose the ways in which his limbs are unlike those of his peers, could be applied to any aspect of a person, visible or otherwise that they feel '*marks them out*'.

The story develops beautifully, as the slow revelation of the very things of which the boy was originally ashamed provokes the positive interest of his peers.

This in turn builds his confidence.

Ultimately, the essay tells us, differences can be celebrated.

## I lost everything

The first day of my life when I was born I came home from hospital. I had everything: my Mum, Dad, Grandma and everyone else I should have had.

As I grew up I went to school. I made friends. But one of them was different. She was my best friend.

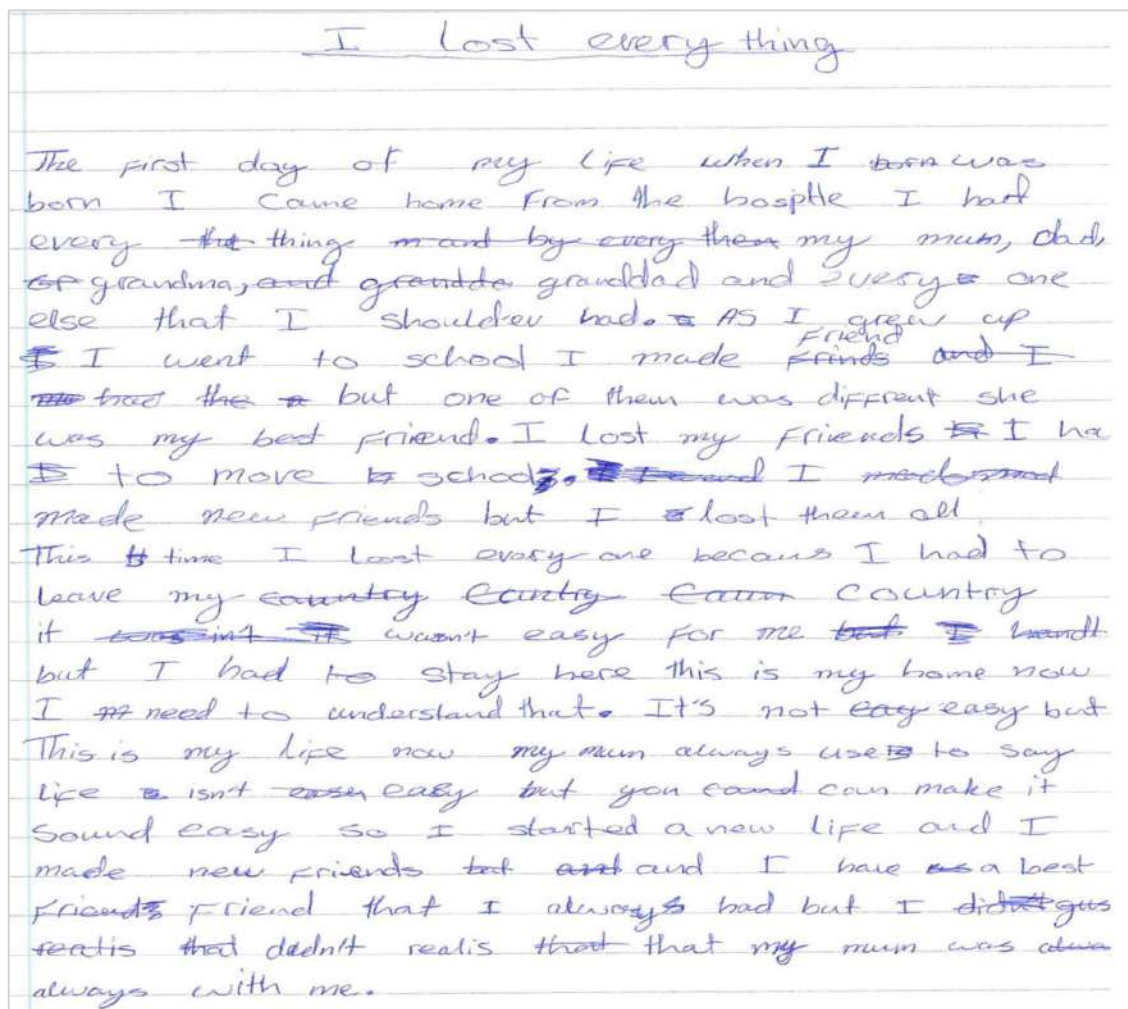
I lost my friends. I had to move school. I made new friends but I lost them all. This time I lost everyone because I had to leave my country.

It wasn't easy for me but I had to stay here. This is my home now. I have to understand that. It's not easy but this is my life now.

My Mum always used to say that life isn't easy but you can make it sound easy. So, I started a new life and made new friends.

And I have a best friend that I always had but I didn't realise.

That is my Mum who was always with me.



**Zahra Mukhtur**

### Commendation: Memorable Snippet

*The first day of my life when I was born I came home from hospital I had everything. . . .*

## Courage

In year six you have nothing to fear but as soon as you leave for secondary school,

it is as scary as a tiger merged with a crocodile.

All you have to do is rebuild courage,

which can take a while like rebuilding the king's palace,

but it could be quite like making one layer of lego for a house.

It doesn't matter how long it takes,

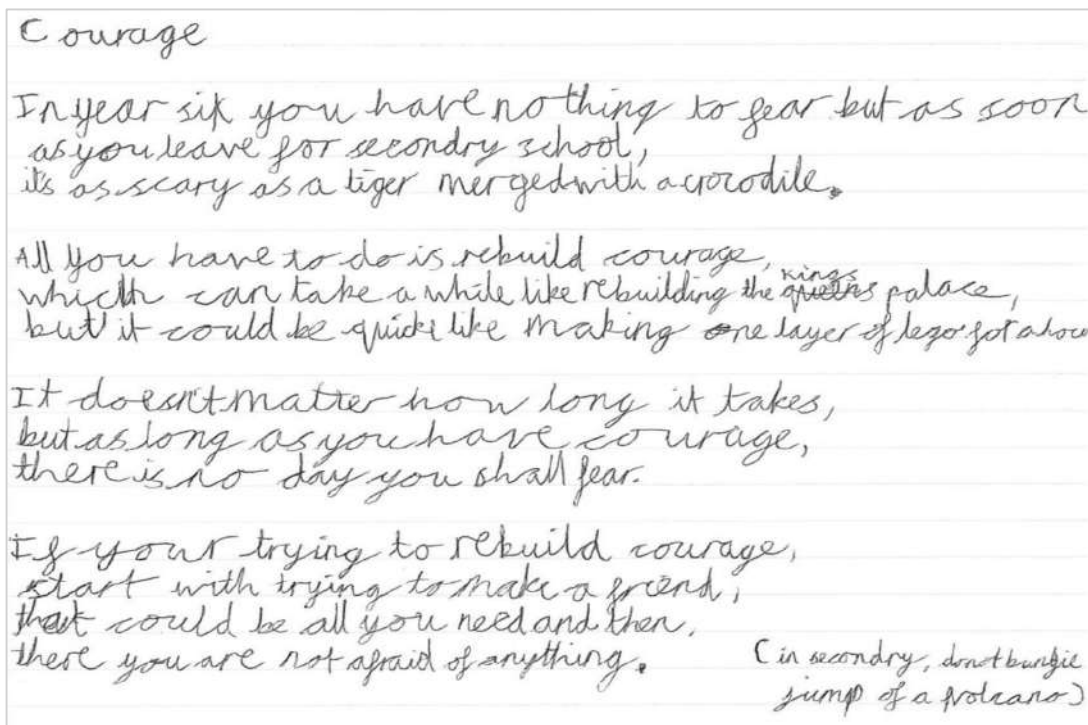
but as long as you have courage, there is no day you shall fear.

If you are trying to rebuild courage,

start with trying to make a friend,

that could be all you need and then,

you are not afraid of anything.



Riley Nother

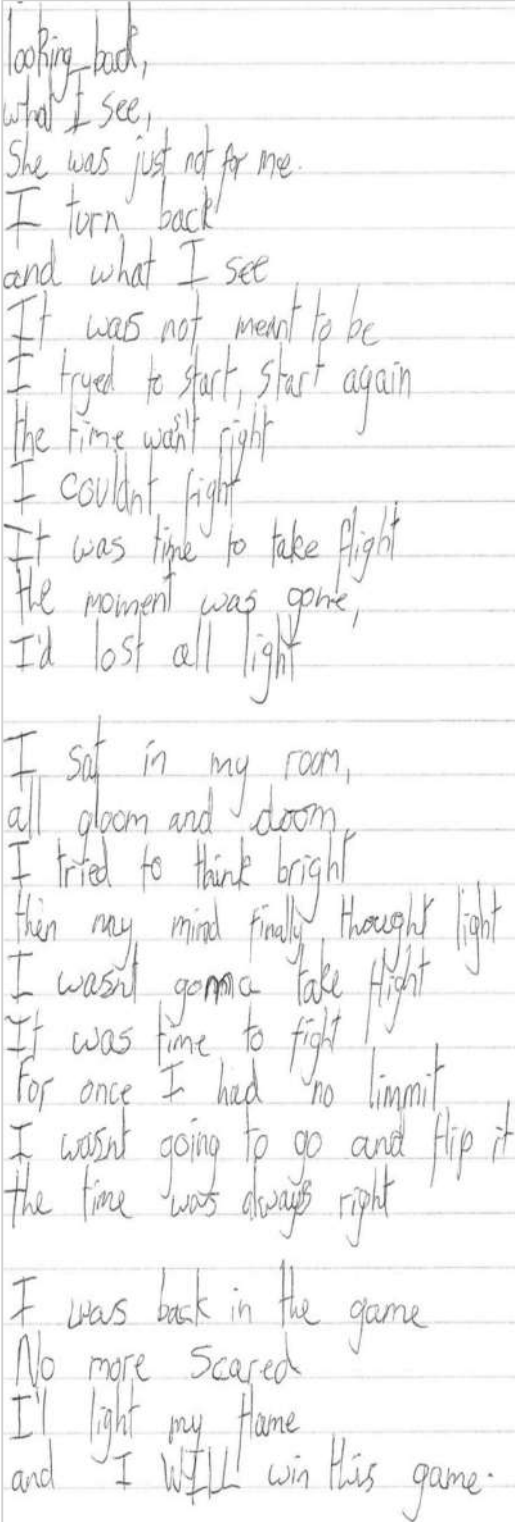
### Commendation: Memorable Snippet

*It's as scary as a tiger merged with a crocodile*

## Light my flame

Looking back,  
what I see,  
she was just not for me.  
I turn back,  
and what I see,  
it was not meant to be.  
I tried to start, start again;  
the time wasn't right.  
I couldn't fight,  
It was time to take flight.  
The moment was gone,  
I'd lost all light.

I sat in my room,  
all gloom and doom.  
I tried to think bright  
then my mind finally thought light.  
I wasn't gonna take flight,  
it was time to fight.  
For once I had no limit,  
I wasn't going to go and flip it,  
the time was always right.  
I was back in the game,  
no more scared.  
I'll light my flame  
and I WILL win this game.



Looking back,  
what I see,  
She was just not for me.  
I turn back  
and what I see  
It was not meant to be  
I tried to start, start again  
the time wasn't right  
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It was time to fight  
For once I had no limit  
I wasn't going to go and flip it  
the time was always right

I was back in the game  
No more scared  
I'll light my flame  
and I WILL win this game.

**Kacey Robertson**

### **Commendation: Memorable Snippet**

*- I'll light my flame  
and I WILL win this game*

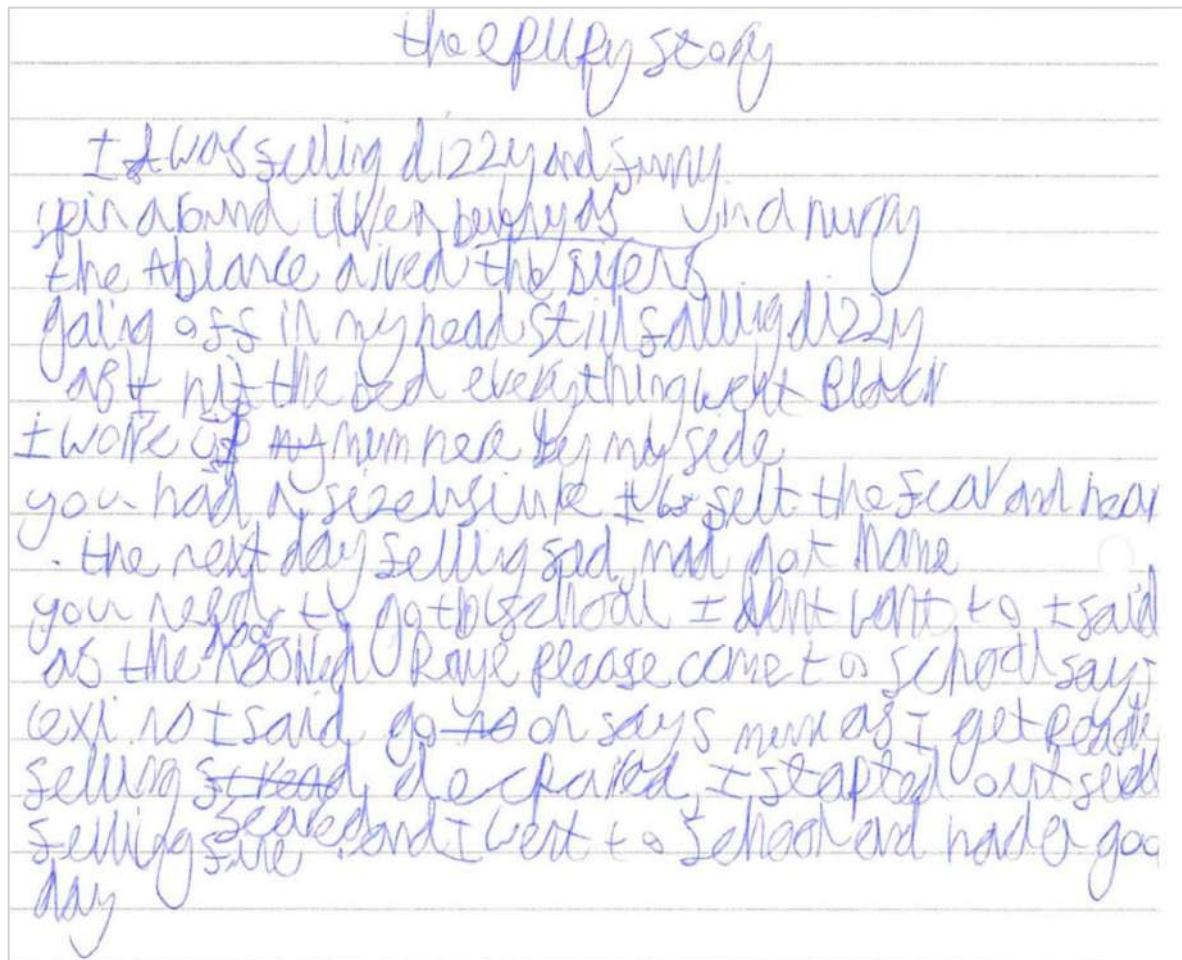
## The epilepsy story

I was feeling dizzy and funny, spinning around like bees in a hurry.

The ambulance arrived the sirens going off in my head? I was still feeling dizzy as I lay in the bed. Then everything went blank.

I woke up with my Mum here by my side. "You had a seizure" she said. I felt the fear and hear the next day I was feeling sad and mad at home.

You need to go to school. I don't want to I said as the phone rang and said "please come to school" in a text. "No" I said. "Go on" says Mum as I get ready feeling deflated. I stepped outside feeling scared and I went to school and had a good day!



Young Writer – name withheld

### Commendation: Memorable Snippet

*The ambulance arrived the sirens going off in my head*

## Summer Camp Calamity

It has been two long years since we heroes of this story escaped the devastating clutches of the beast of the mansion and it caused us to stop our friendship.

But now we decide to try again. We agree to meet at Dandyville summer camp. But . . . what if?

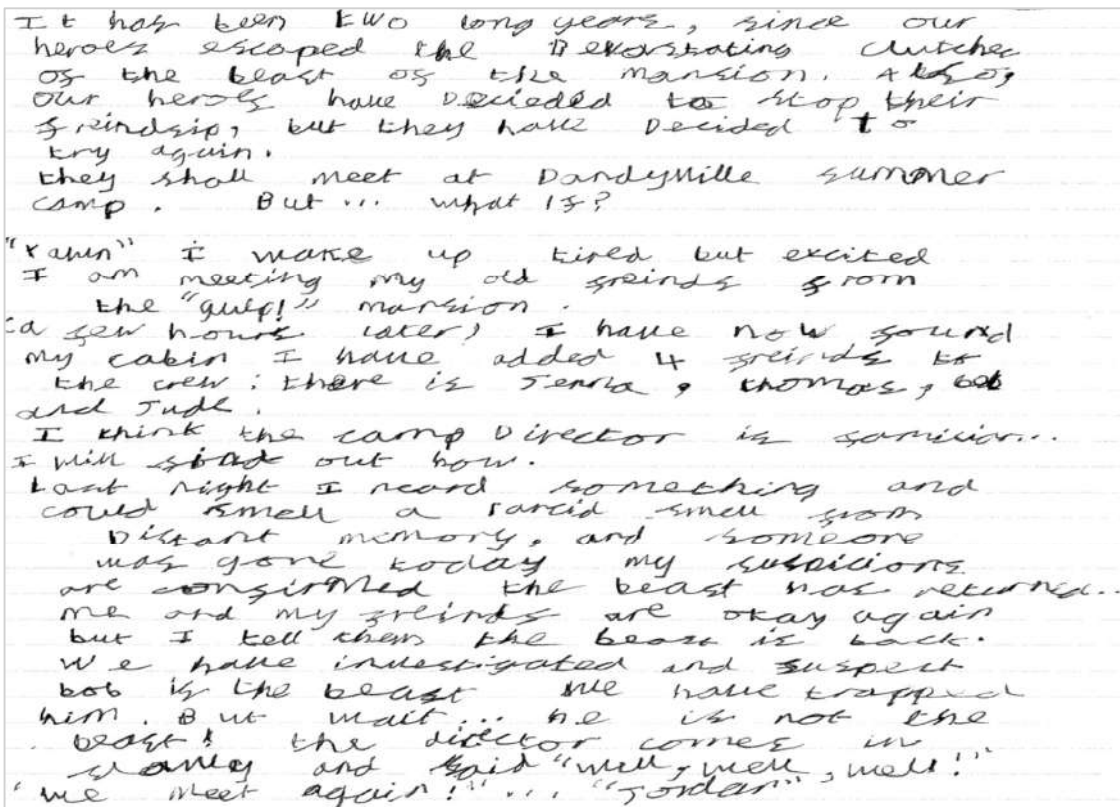
I wake up tired but excited. I am meeting my old friends from the, "gulp", mansion.

A few hours later I have now found my cabin and I have added the four friends to my crew: Jenna, Thomas, Bob and Jude.

I think the camp director is familiar. I will find out why.

Last night I heard something and could smell a rancid smell from distant memory. Someone gone is back today. My suspicions are confirmed. The beast has returned.

I tell my crew the beast is back. We investigate and suspect that Bob is the beast. We have trapped him. But wait . . . he is not the beast! The director comes in slowly and said "Well, well, well. We meet again." [All is dandy.]



It has been two long years, since our heroes escaped the devastating clutches of the beast of the mansion. A lot of our heroes have decided to stop their friendship, but they have decided to try again. They shall meet at Dandyville summer camp. But . . . what if?

"Yawn" I wake up tired but excited. I am meeting my old friends from the "gulp!" mansion. A few hours later I have now found my cabin. I have added 4 friends to the crew: there is Jenna, Thomas, Bob and Jude. I think the camp director is familiar. I will find out how. Last night I heard something and could smell a rancid smell from distant memory, and someone was gone today. My suspicions are confirmed. The beast has returned. Me and my friends are okay again but I tell them the beast is back. We have investigated and suspect Bob is the beast. We have trapped him. But wait . . . he is not the beast! The director comes in slowly and said "Well, well, well! We meet again!" . . . "Jordan"

Young Writer – name withheld

### Commendation: Memorable Snippet

*It has been two long years, since our heroes escaped the devastating clutches of the beast of the mansion . . .*

## One Second

*Life is chaotic.*

*One second you are with your friends and having a chat.*

*The next second you are running for your life in panic.*

*How do I know?*

*I have experienced it.*

*One second you are having fun in the park.*

*The next second you can run into a tree.*

*One second you are asleep.*

*The next second you are woken up at 10pm for dinner.*

*One second you are at school eating.*

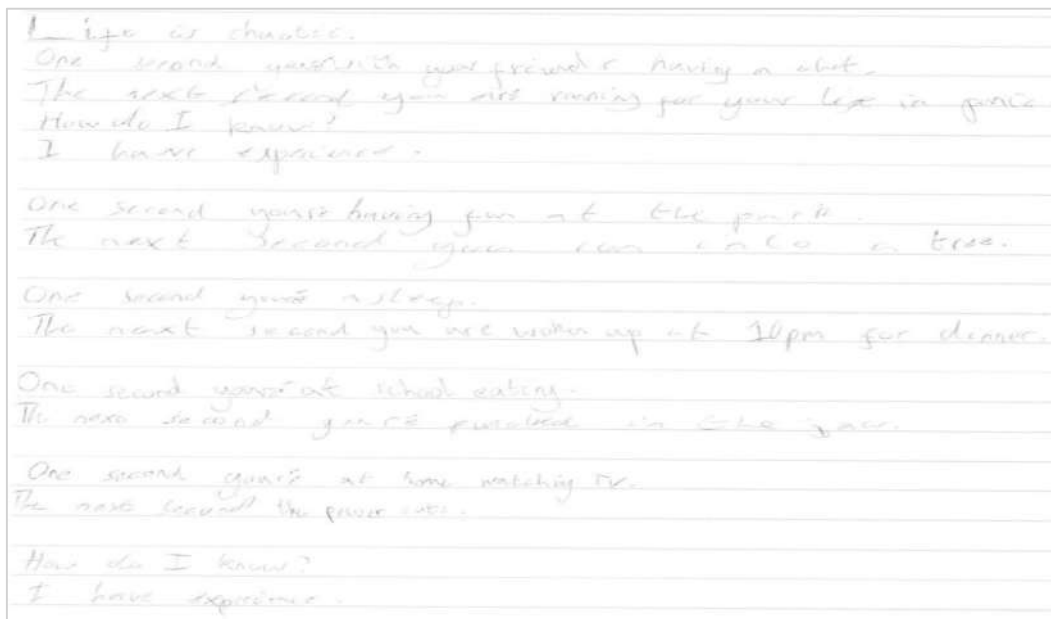
*The next second you are punched in the face.*

*One second you are at home watching TV.*

*The next second the power cuts.*

*How do I know?*

*I have experience.*



**Young Writer – name withheld**

### **Commendation: Memorable Snippet**

*One second you're having fun in the park,*

*The next second you can run into a tree*

## Case Number #9105

Case Number- #910513072

Planet-653

Quadrant-13

Translated From-A65213

### **Report**

The restoration of planet 653 is progressing gradually. We have begun using molten *steel* in order to fill the large crevices on the surface of the planet. This has had reasonable success and has accelerated stage 1 progress remarkably. We believe it will be completed within the next two *weeks* and will proceed to promptly move onto stage 2 which will involve setting up artificial *oxygen*. You will receive *bi-monthly* updates on this planet's progress.

Assistant To Head Researcher  
Universal Planet Restoration Society

### **Personal Observations**

This Planet seems to have ruins left on it; this leads me to believe there was once a semi-advanced civilization around 500,000 years ago based on our estimates. The abnormal levels of *Co2* in the atmosphere suggest they had access to industrialized equipment. I will continue to conduct my own personal research into the former inhabitants.

Case Number-#910514143

Planet-653

Quadrant-13

Translated From-A65213

### **Report**

Stage 3 is now well under way and the preservation of ancient ruins has been moving smoothly. It is clear that what remains of planet 653's inhabitants has withstood the test of time remarkably well, leaving some artefacts to be dated as far back as *450,000* years ago. The research done on these ruins has yielded impressive results that could help preserve our own infrastructure. Due to the time stage 3 will take to complete, all future reports will be given every *3 months*.

Assistant To Head Researcher  
Universal Planet Restoration Society

### **Personal Notes**

As mentioned previously the exact fate of planet 653 remains something of an interest bordering on obsession for me. The fact their infrastructure was so advanced and yet they failed to notice the danger they were in baffles me. All evidence points to an incredibly advanced civilization well on their way to a Stage 47 planet, and yet here remains a desolate shell of

a *world*. I will continue to note my research as we progress with the planet's restoration.

Case Number-#910514643

Planet-653

Quadrant-13

Translated From-A65213

### **Report**

We have made several attempts to complete stage 4 and have been unable to completely restore planet 653's environment. While we have seen success with small *birds* and *mammals* the full extent of planet 653's wildlife will forever be a mystery. Due to this, we will be setting up permanent research stations and moving on. We have been informed of an inhabited planet in need of help in quadrant 134 which we will be looking into further.

Assistant To Head Researcher  
Universal Planet Restoration Society

### **Personal Notes**

It seems I was overall unsuccessful in my search for answers as to the fate of planet 653, yet I still believe our research was remarkably successful. For one thing, we learnt that 653 seemed to have been a stage 35 planet, an oddly high number for a *world* in such a state. On top of this, the glimpse into the ways in which these creatures acted and lived is more than enough to satisfy my curiosity.

**Haidyn Vincent**

### **Highly Commended: Case Number #910513072**

The consensus of the judges is that this is a mature and outstanding piece of writing.

It is well constructed, and draws on a wide vocabulary and clever construction to explore an interesting and unusual example of science fiction.

We would very much encourage the writer to extend and develop the story further. It shines with potential but was hampered by the constraints of the competition word limit.

Please carry on - do not be discouraged, the work is truly impressive and 'too big' for the brief as it stood.

Well done.

## **Certificates and Prizes**

An illustration the style of certificates of achievement as presented to each entrant is shown inside the back cover.

The Burnham Winners also each receive a Book Token to the value of £20 to be redeemed at The Maldon Book Shop in the High Street, Maldon.

District and National Certificates of Achievement are also awarded for young writers who progress to those competitions.

## **Acknowledgements**

*The Rotary Club wishes to thank the pupils and staff at the Ormiston Rivers Academy for taking part this year.*

*Laura Sams, English Teacher, has been a marvel. Laura has somehow managed to squeeze in all the toing and froing inevitable between us and within the Academy throughout the six-month process. Not only has she devoted so much energy between her full-time duties but, critically, Laura has so shown uplifting enthusiasm and inspiration for the pupils. This shines through in the qualities of the writings.*

*We must praise the members of the Pauline Hallanzy Book Club for their empathy and literary expertise while going way beyond merely picking winners. The challenge of reviewing so many, varied entries cannot be over-estimated. Thanks to Sue Jones their work was undertaken with passion and enjoyment. Their reasoning and comments have been fed back by the Academy to the writers and adds to the value of this booklet for other readers.*

*Not least, my thanks and my personal appreciation must be given to Sheila, my better half, for her wise advice as a teacher herself and for the proof-reading and comments on design at each stage.*

*Also of note, Sheila and Sue offered to assist individual children with their reading and comprehension at the Academy. Coordinated most helpfully by Carol Yerbury, the librarian, this is ongoing as an approved, voluntary arrangement and is much appreciated.*

*With apologies for the errors in this booklet. Any mistakes or omissions are entirely mine.*

Dr Chris Nutt

for

**The Rotary Club of Burnham On Crouch & Dengie Hundred**



**Rotary** **YOUNG**  
**WRITER** **COMPETITION**

*Certificate*  
*of achievement*

Rotary Club of  
Burnham On Crouch & Dengie Hundred

*Awards this certificate to*

Young Writers of Ormiston Rivers Academy

Rotary Young Writer Competition 2024

**Commended for**

Creating 26 Entries by Prose and Poems  
on the Theme of

**Rebuilding**

Examined by the Pauline Hallanzy Book Club

Presented by

Sue Jones

For Book Club

Dr Chris Nutt

For Rotary Club

