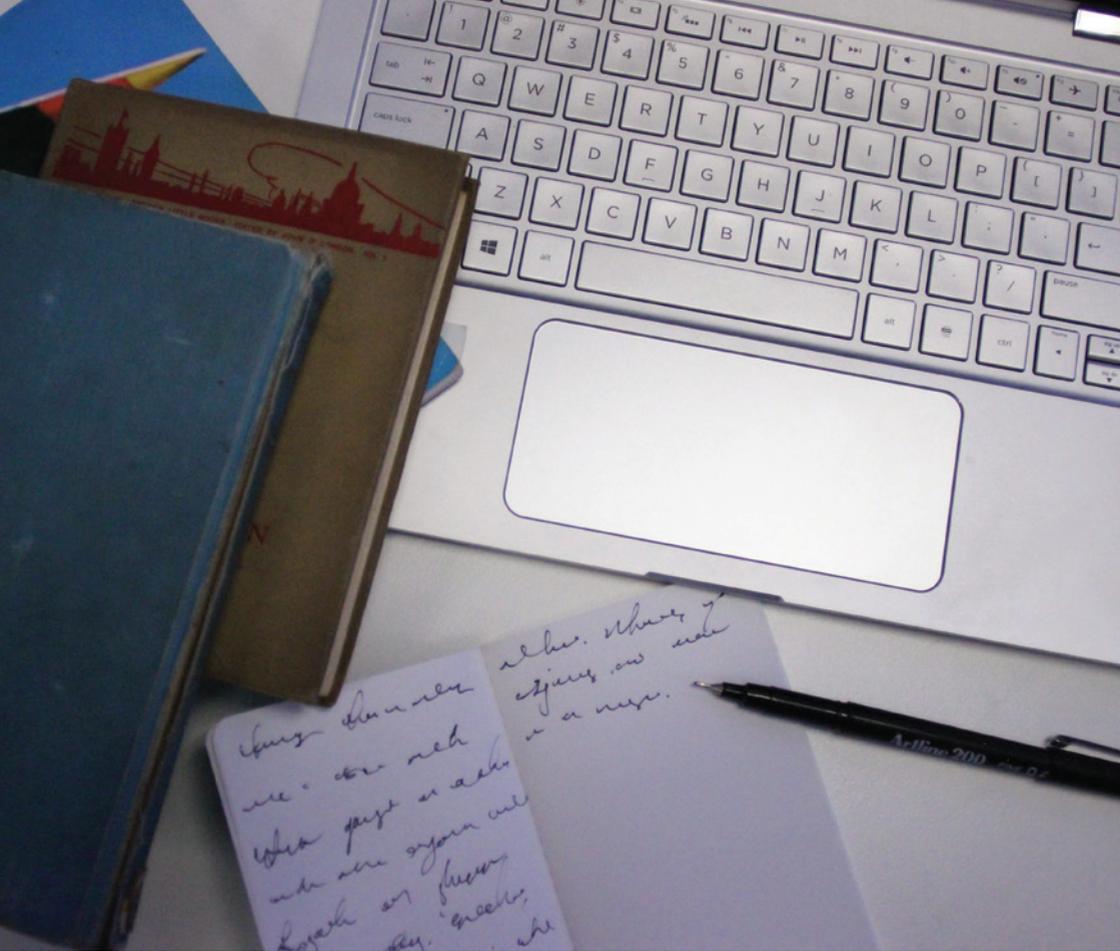


FRESH WORDS

YOUNG WRITERS
COMPETITION
2016



FRESH WORDS : YOUNG WRITERS COMPETITION 2016

Winning and finalist entries

The young people of the City of Casey have unleashed their inner story teller and put their imagination on paper in a range of categories including:

CREATIVE WRITING

POETRY/LYRICS

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Congratulations to all finalist and winning entries and thank you for your participation!

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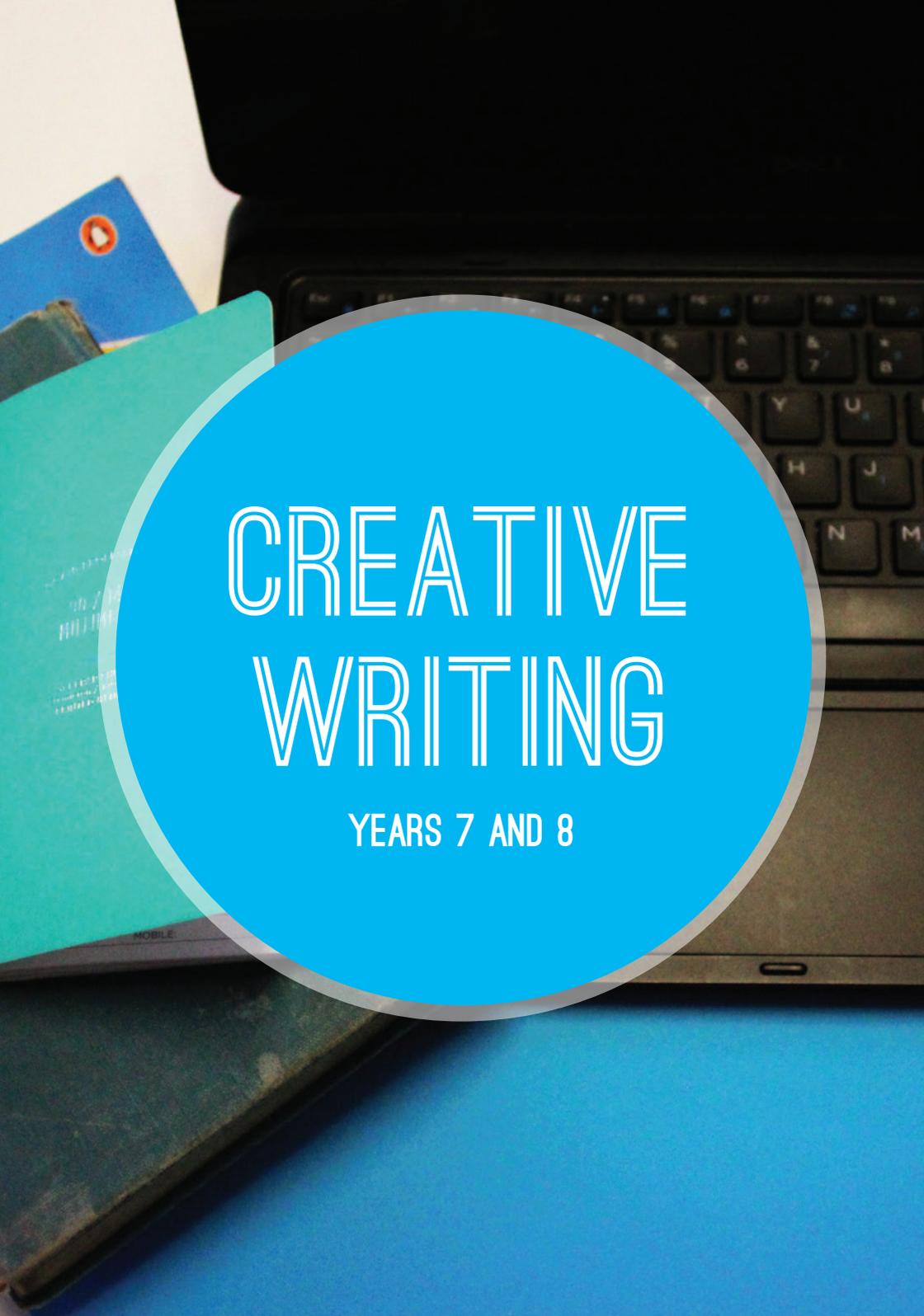
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WINNING
AND
FINALIST
ENTRIES

The background of the cover features a close-up of a laptop keyboard and several books. A large, semi-transparent blue circle is centered over the image, containing the title text. The text is white and uses a clean, modern, sans-serif font. The overall aesthetic is professional and educational.

CREATIVE WRITING

YEARS 7 AND 8

Words

by Maneesha Casey | Casey Grammar School

'Words are real. Even if you can't see them, or hold them. Once you send them out into the world, they have power. Never speak words you don't mean.'
- From Play Dead by Anne Frasier.

Words have power. Just one could cut you like the sharpest blade. Another one could clean the wound and dress it securely.

Every word is a single petal. A sentence is a flower, a paragraph a bouquet. Every language is a garden.

Gardens are beautiful, and the best kinds are wild. A jumble of foliage, once carefully attended, now thrives, savage and free.

Love, care, friends, family, are words belonging to the orchids, frangipanis and hibiscuses of language. Spiteful words are thorns of briar, twisting wickedly, always finding a way to embed themselves in your tender palm.

Sometimes a mischievous vine winds itself up, over and between the walls of languages, mingling with other words to make new ones. Individual foreign words being plucked to brighten our bouquet.

Everyone plants and waters the garden, some more so than others. Authors enrich the soil so that others may grow more fruitful flowers. This garden of evergreens with roots that run centuries deep, but also seconds shallow, is no more a garden but a wilderness in which to explore.

Books shelved on display, flowers ready for purchase from a florist. My bouquet punctuated by bright paper and colourful ribbon is just one stack of papers waiting for its place on the shelf. It sits open and waiting, the beginning thoughts of every book in the store...

We may utter the same tongue,

But just as many misunderstand Shakespeare,

You may not see the flowers that I scatter,

In graceful stanza spoken,

This adventure seems to end,

But,

You'll find this story is a Metaphor.

How Come Heroes

by Briana Ryan | St Francis Xavier College - Berwick

“How come heroes have to be...”

That was the question going through his mind. Ten – no, fifty- no, perhaps every time he read a book or saw a movie. That very thought was in his subconscious, haunting him whenever he caught somebody glancing at him or making snide remarks when they thought he couldn't hear. Deep down, he knew he wasn't that pathetic.

Truth be told, he was just like the rest – he owned dreams, ideas, knowledge and a heart. That's what made him human, right? That's what he'd been told. Yet now as he sat in his ideal teenage room, that many magazines contained pictures of, why did he think differently once more?

He was disappointed in himself – somewhere along the line, he had done something sinister and he was now serving the punishment. The fearful glances or snarky remarks reminded him of how he was forced to endure this 'special gift'. Why couldn't he be viewed like other boys his age?

He enjoyed basketball, yet nobody picked him to play on their team. He adored chemistry – everybody turned to the nearest student, picking them as their partner, leaving him all alone again. As popular as it had gotten, he loved dancing. That was one thing he could do freely – unless he was at the school dance or a party. Actually, he hadn't been to a party since primary school.

Groaning in frustration, he threw himself onto his bed, burying his face into the pillow he found comfort in. He was over it all – when wasn't he?

For a few minutes he lay there, silently screaming into the cushion. Yelling until his fingers relaxed their grip on the fabric, allowing the soft material to slip through his fingers. He forced himself to look up, eyes instantly glued on the book he had thrown onto the floor. He didn't bother to recall the title – all the books were the same. The heroes all had the same characteristics. They were normal; at least, what society called 'normal'. That very thought disgusted him even more so.

Countless times he had been told he was 'special' and 'different from the other kids'. Countless times had he grown sick of those endlessly repeated words. They were all out of pity – at least he believed them to be.

Tearing his dampened eyes away from the book's scattered pages, he forced himself up into a sitting position, back hunched. The kids had laughed at him again today. This time, he got an answer wrong. The teacher called on him to answer some question and he had uttered the wrong answer, when the taunting class erupted into giggles. It wasn't his fault. The answer part yes, but the comments effected him even more so than the embarrassment. Some weren't even that bad.

“Of course he gets it wrong!”

“Poor special kid.”

“Who’d actually think a person like him would get anything correct?”

The last one had tipped him over the edge.

Just thinking about it made the boy hug his pillow even tighter. Why couldn’t they be quiet, like his room? The silence was comforting to him. The silence didn’t judge him by his disability. It didn’t mock him and say “well, you were born with this disorder so suffer.” It actually embraced him and he considered it more comforting than any therapist had been.

It wasn’t until now, that he realised the dampened stains on his bedcover. His eyes already stung and he guessed they were puffy. They glanced back over to the book, this time with a dreading gaze – he wanted to finish the book, but he couldn’t stand how perfect the character was.

Sure, they had some flaws, but oh how he wished he only had such “flaws”. In every book he read – and he had read quite a few – they were only what society perceived as normal heroes. Why weren’t their heroes like him? Why couldn’t the heroes be born with a condition that labelled them ‘special’ to the public eye?

“H-How come...”

His voice was shaky; he would be sobbing soon.

He whispered with a pleading pain, holding back the torrent of tears once more.

“H-How come heroes have to be n-normal...”

Kin

by Sara Kam | Dandenong High School

Every day, she woke up early. Covered in cold sweat, sometimes screaming. No one heard her.

Looking at the full length mirror in front of her, she frowned. Her bones stuck out and her eyes were sunken and sad. She had to put on the 'mask'. She inhaled slowly and smiled. No, it looked too fake. She closed her eyes and breathed slowly.

A soft touch brushed her shoulder. Flinching at the unexpected touch, she opened her eyes a scowl on her face ready to face the unwanted attention. Her bony hands reeled back to shove, but her wrists became engulfed with warmth. "Why are you crying?" It was her voice. She started struggling against the hands binding her wrists together. "I'M NOT!" She replied shouting angrily. She could feel tears streaming down her face. More began prickling her eye lashes. Clamping her eyes shut, she began struggling.

"Aeline, stop!" The harsh voice echoed around the room. She stopped struggling as her eyes opened slowly. Sapphire eyes gazed lovingly back at her and brown hair framed the beautiful face in front of her. She recognised it. It was her sister. "Aeline, it's okay. I'm here."

Her serene voice reached her ears and tears pricked her eyes once again. This time, her tears fell freely. She buried her face in her sister's shoulder. "Hush." She wanted to silence her sobs, but they only became louder.

Her cries were long since silenced when she stood in front of the mirror. "Aeline, you don't have to keep pretending." Her sister's voice echoed around the enclosed room. Sighing, she turned around. "Arianna, sometimes smiling is easier than explaining why we're sad."

"We cannot change the cards we're dealt, only how we play the hand." Her sister's sweet voice was laced with a knowing tone. Forcing a smile that she knew would look like a tight grimace, she turned back to the mirror. Pale skin, bony figure. She didn't know why she was sad, but she was. Every night was spent crying, every day was spent with fake smiles. It was all so vivid to her.

But she knew she had to try.

But it's hard to find the truth when all you've known were lies.

"You're pathetic."

"You're useless."

"You're an idiot."

The voices were only in her mind, but they seemed so real. The taunts were constantly repeated over and over. She told herself not to believe, but she knew one day, they were the only words she would know.

She tried so hard to change. For her sister, for those she hurt and most importantly, for herself. However, she knew chances of that were slim. The soft click of her bedroom door only meant one thing. Her sister was gone.

She took her time alone to look at her surroundings. It was dark. Glancing out one of the windows, she couldn't help but smile. The rain crashed at her window like one must do when dancing. Spinning and turning gracefully before landing to the beat once more. Once, a long time ago, Rain was a burden. Rain was unwanted. Rain was the tears everyone cried. But now it was beautiful and she couldn't peel her eyes away. Mesmerised, she admired the rain, taking in its beauty. 'No' she told herself. 'It's not important'.

She shook her head and decided to find Arianna. She needed help and Arianna would always be there. She counted the small steps she took. Each time the floor creaked, her breath would hitch. Arianna...

"Aeline?"

Turning around slowly, she tensed her muscles. It was Arianna. "I love the rain, why?" She asked. Confusion and wonder soared through her body and mind at the long forgotten feeling. Her sister smiled. "Enjoy love while you can. Especially love for the rain." Was her sister's reply.

"I don't want to love it." Aeline replied. Her words were said softly, though pronounced with precise accuracy. "You don't choose love." Her sister urged.

"I want to stop loving... I have to stop loving"

"You can't."

She breathed slowly, but deeply. Taking in every word.

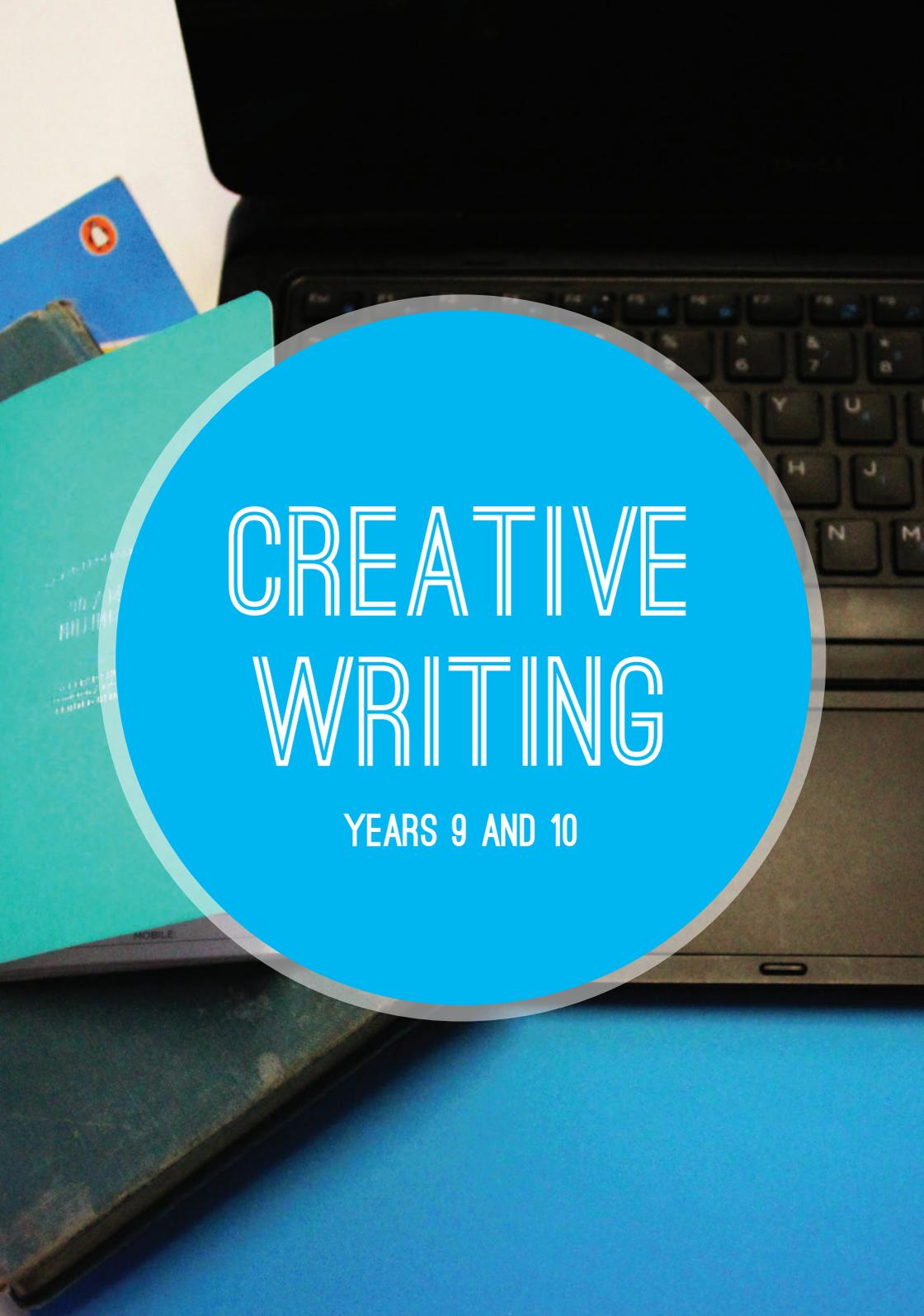
"Why do you want to stop loving?" Her sister's voice asked, barely above a soft whisper.

Confusion clouded Aeline's mind, but answered with the same whisper of her sister. "If I love, I cannot part. If I want to go, I would be unable to do so."

"Go?"

"Everything is an illusion. Everyone is cromulent. You are ineffable."

Then she walked off, leaving her sister behind. She was gone.

The background of the cover features a close-up of a laptop keyboard and several books. A large, semi-transparent blue circle is centered over the image, containing the text. The overall aesthetic is modern and educational.

CREATIVE WRITING

YEARS 9 AND 10

Act 3, Scene 1

by Jennifer Nguyen | Nossal High School

‘Either thou or I, or both, must go with him,’ Romeo calmly stated, eyes boiling with murder. Tybalt tossed his shoulder and smirked. Both unsheathed their swords.

‘Thou wretched boy,’ the sword gleamed a cruel shine from the Venetian sun, ‘shalt with him hence.’ They circled each other, feet nimbly bouncing on the heating pavement, never breaking eye contact.

Hooves interceded their eye contact as a blur hurled down from the horseback and landed between the men

‘Cease,’ Juliet Capulet breathed, ‘lay down thy swords.’ Both started, registering the girl.

Tybalt lowered his sword, ‘Cousin, leave this place.’

‘Cousin,’ the girl turned to him, ‘kindly be quiet.’ A small crowd had gathered around them to witness the spectacle.

‘People of Venice!’ Juliet turned to the civilians. A fruit vendor dropped a watermelon on the uneven pavement. ‘The feud between the houses of Capulet and Montague is disrupting the peace always, and for this I apologise.’

‘This feud must be discontinued! Generations lost, lives extinguished, wars raged - and for what? This feud has long lost its original purpose and my family continue to induce conflict on my friends, fellow citizens residing in beautiful Venice, our city, so rich and beautiful in the people. We are all Venetians, are we not?’

What point is there to war where we do not benefit from it, and throw children, young as myself, to the thralls of violence? We are all related, not by blood, but by bonds of comradeship, a sense of patriotism, love!’

The watermelon juices flooded the whole street, but those who stood by to watch were riveted on the girl, small, breathless, eyes bright with empowerment.

‘I love thou, cousin dear of mine,’ she turned to Tybalt, ‘and I love thee, my childhood friend, Romeo,’ Romeo bowed gallantly. ‘But this feud must cease, or there will be misfortune upon our families. I beseech thee, lay down thy swords and make peace.’

‘Wretched child!’ Tybalt cried, pupils dilated. ‘This is a business between men, and between our family heads! Cease thy presence, Juliet!’

‘Men!’ The crowd parted in a stammer of feet as horses nudged their paths through. The Prince swung off the horseback and cut through the crowd, face pleasantly annoyed.

‘My noble lords,’ Prince Escalus straightened his posture, ‘thou art in a public place. Behave thyself.’

Tybalt made a rude noise.

‘My lord,’ he knelt, ‘we are simply... resolving the conflict.’

A disbelieving snort rippled through the air.

“Prince Escalus, sir,” Juliet moved from behind Tybalt, curtsying. “Please judge our circumstance as thy treatment deems us fit.

“Speak, my loyal child.”

“This feud between both of our houses has resulted in many bloody civil uprisings and a disturbance of peace in Venice. I only beseech my cousin and my friend to make peace with each other and consider why they are feuding, yet I have not succeeded in concluding the conflict.”

“My lords,” Escalus cast a humorous glance at the boy and the man. “The heiress of the Capulet fortune is wise beyond her years. Venice is a city of peace and comradeship, a loyal bond between the community and its inhabitants. Conflict within the boundaries of the city will soon be outlawed, and those that trespass this will be exiled or worse, executed.” His amiable tone dissipated, leaving a curtain of mystified fear and awe hovering o’er the Venetians.

“Your Highness, I must atone for my reasoning of confronting Tybalt,” Romeo breathed, eyes murky, “thy loyal consort, Mercutio, has recently passed by the hands of Tybalt.”

The Prince looked amused.

“So I have been informed. It appears that my ward is very alive, his ego bruised, but he is fine. Thou need not worry about his health, my dear Romeo, though I thank thee for thy companionship.”

“Thou brain-scattered, foot-licking goose!” Profanities erupted from Romeo’s mouth.

He blushed and bowed to excuse himself. The Prince looked more amused still.

“For this I must confess my sins,” Tybalt knelt grudgingly. “I have acted irrationally to Mercutio’s taunts and did not keep a clear head in passing judgement and reacted provocatively.”

He turned with difficulty to Romeo, “I ask thee for forgiveness.”

Romeo grinned, Tybalt muttered something unpleasant under his breath, though his little cousin’s broad smile eradicated his repugnance for the Montague scum.

“We are one family protecting each other,

All brothers, sisters under the bond of city love.

Love is the force that unites us.”

Juliet Capulet-Montague, on the day of the peace accord between the two houses.

Prelude of Silence

by Courtney Ould | St Francis Xavier College - Beaconsfield

The witching hour: a cliché start to a fear-inducing situation such as this one. But then again, it's the clichés that always go big, is it not? Regardless, I'm not here to be a sell-out. I just want to tell a story, share the truth if you would.

Now, this particular telling starts with a simple beginning: I woke up.

I had no idea what in God's name even woke me up, but I do know that this was quite possibly the greatest error I've made in my life. The lingering sleepy haze hindered much of my thought process aside from the expected 'what the heck'. And that's when I heard the screaming.

At the time, it was quite alarming to hear a newborn wailing just a little after 3am, even more so considering the fact I hadn't yet adjusted to the prospect of having a younger sibling, so it's quite safe to say that at first this scared the absolute crap out of me.

The sobbing was loud, louder than it should have been for an infant, and triggered an almost instantaneous headache. It echoed across the wooden walls, bouncing through the house and reverberating around the room. This sort of thing happened occasionally during the day and my parents were always first on the scene, hushing and cooing until it stopped. It was a mystery why they hadn't acted upon this yet, surely they would have heard it too by now, right?

The wails somehow got louder as did

the pounding in my skull, and with a groan I planted the pillow over my head. I didn't even know why we had this thing, I wasn't given any warning, let alone an explanation. What could a practically broke family possibly do with a baby? It just didn't make sense.

More noise, more head pain, more frustration. The sheets were balled up in my fists as I shifted to further bury my face under the pillow. This was unfair on me. What the heck did I do to deserve to stay awake listening to a baby scream all night? My head pounded, the cries echoing through my room and sounded almost guttural as they ricocheted off the walls.

No, I didn't need this. Why did I have to suffer? I didn't ask for the damn thing, so I sure as hell had no interest in putting up with its crap. The more I thought, the louder it seemed to get, and I could feel anger boiling in the pit of my stomach. If that thing would do me a favour and shut up, then we could all be happy campers and go on our merry way. But no, it was still going.

Still screaming.

Except now...

I stopped to listen for a moment.

You know the feeling when the pit of your stomach drops? That hollowness rose, from the depths of my body and leaked into my throat, spreading like a self-created venom. It wrought paralysis, heightened senses and one simple action I could perform: stay still.

...it was actually screaming.

A demonic gargle, so loud that it was a wonder my eardrums hadn't burst. The sound was long and crackled like it would break, raising in pitch as it went on and ultimately causing my headache to skyrocket. That was the least of my concerns however. The burning white fear felt cold on my skin, and a shiver reverberated down my spine as I listened. I couldn't think, couldn't feel, couldn't do anything but wait in terror and confusion.

However, despite my own fear I became compelled to get up and locate the source of the sound. This made no sense, yet before I knew what I was doing I moved a numb arm under the covers and pushed them aside, ignoring the protests screaming in my head. My quivering frame rose slowly, the surrounding darkness leaving me completely blind.

Almost instantaneously, the sound extinguished like a flame, fizzling out and leaving behind a ringing silence.

I sat for a moment, adjusting to the lack of noise aside from the pulse of blood rushing in my ears. My eyes trailed around the room, searching for anything in the inky blackness. Sweeping over invisible objects, my eyes eventually landed on the location of the door, moving down to the base of the frame.

Once again, my heart froze in my chest, and paralysis seeped into my bones.

Two beady red eyes, peering up at me from the ground. Watching.

The Light, and the Emotionless

by Shaun Rowe | Cranbourne East Secondary College

The blaze of this light felt almost exotic to her skin, and she felt content. The inner tickling feeling she felt crackled among her veins. The light was doing something to her. She spread her arms and spun, as an exhibit of her jovial feelings, closed but a sudden shock. She looked up from the ground, and confusion eradicated her feeling of joy. Fear swept over her face, as her eyes widened, revealing her brown eyes. Within a second, they seemed almost colourless. They began to turn translucent. Her mouth opened in shock, no words being spoken. She was crying without tears. Expression without any expression. She could not move. Her eyes stared into the light without movement. Her mouth frozen in a gasp. Her mind shattered with thoughts. The light was breaking her.

She closed her eyes, breathed in, and calmed herself. The dismay fled from her inner self, and she glimpsed at the light once again, emotionless. She stared at the light's source. A young child. The face that had worried her for so long. The child's eyes were a cold black, staring directly into the woman's soul. She stared back. The skin of the child glowed, like a lantern.

The child's light began to dim, until the basement had returned to its regular state. Shelves and walls became apparent once again. The stairwell was within sight to society and freedom.

Yet, the woman did not care. She remained almost suspended in place, careless of

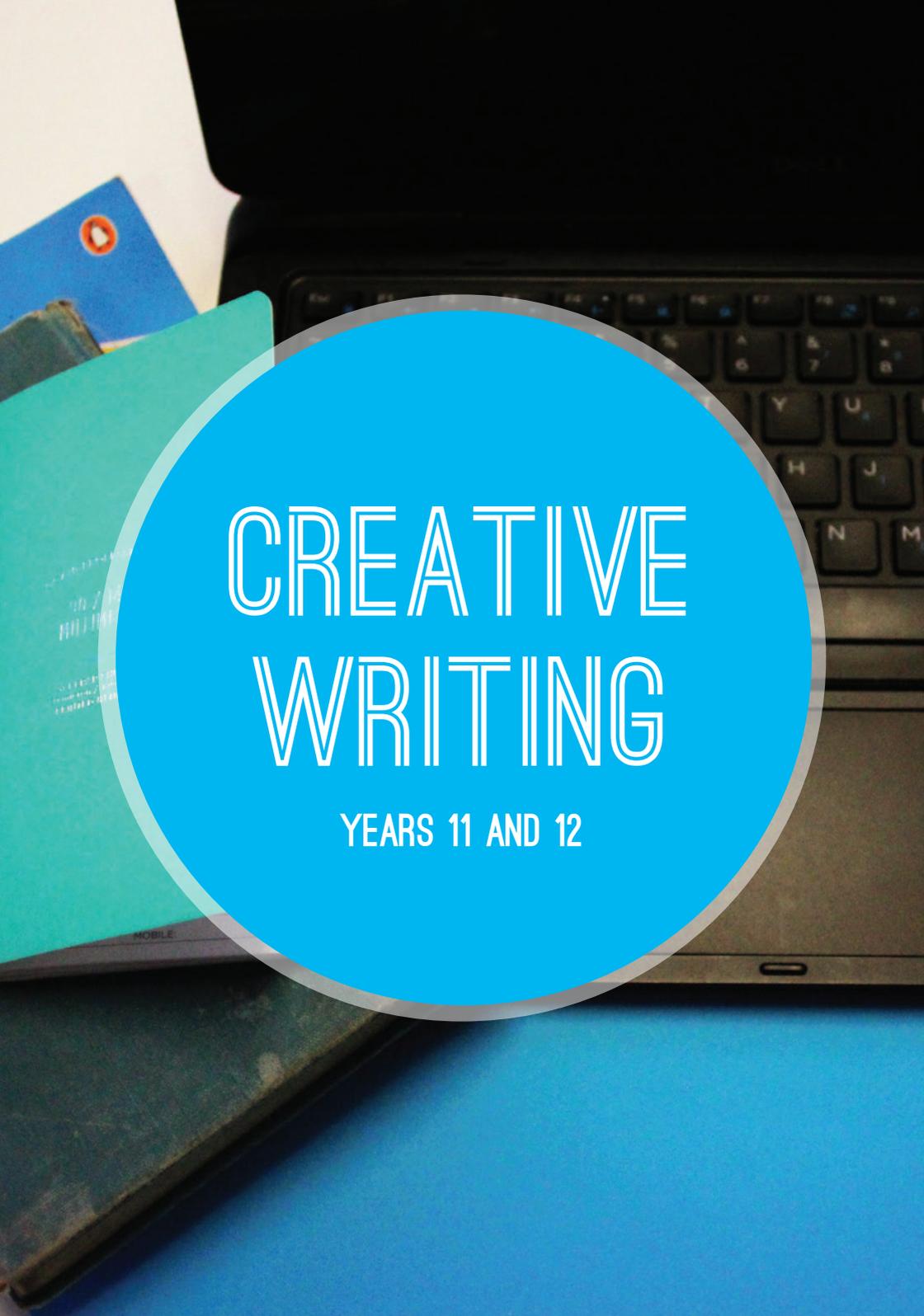
her current reality. The now-normal child approached her. The weathered clothing the child donned seemed ancient. He looked so young, yet he was ageless. The woman looked at the child, and inspected his face. The face that had given her so many nightmares. Fury consumed her body. Her teeth gritted to the point of pain. Her fists tightened, and her face reddened. She snarled and frowned.

But then she thought, and understood. It was her time. She eased her hands, rested her jaw, and simply closed her eyes again.

The child gave a soft laugh, and threw his hand through the woman's chest. Her eyes alternated between colours, until they became black. The white of her eyes were consumed by the dark. Her skin flaked away, blood pouring from the broken tissue. Her body caved in on itself, arms becoming nothing within a millisecond. Her body completely caved in, and let off a shocking bang. A penny-sized crystal of light floated from where she had stood. Her soul had been hunted.

The boy seized the crystal from its place, and opened his satchel. Within the satchel were hundreds upon hundreds of crystals. The woman's crystal was thrown in, becoming another crystal of the collection.

He left the factory, and ventured beyond the trees, ready for another hunt...

The background of the image shows a desk with a laptop, a blue folder, and a green folder. A large, semi-transparent blue circle is centered over the image, containing the text. The text is in a white, outlined, sans-serif font. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern, with a focus on the text.

CREATIVE WRITING

YEARS 11 AND 12

The Garden Piano

by Obed Wallis | Waverley Christian College

It can be universally acknowledged that no living organism can exist for long sanely under conditions of absolute reality, and this was no different for the child, Esther. As she burst through the bushes into the overgrown chessboard courtyard, the sun she so faintly found gleamed upon her, revealing the beauty of not only her pearly skin, but also her beautiful blue eyes and bright blonde hair.

“Good morning Mr Caterpillar,” said she, reaching out as though to shake the now cocooned caterpillars hand, “I’m overjoyed at the mere concept of seeing you renewed. I remember last winter I had to bring you hear and make you a whole new cocoon!”

The Courtyard she was currently within was littered with orchids and vibrant life, fulfilling all of her heavenly dreams and providing the escape she desired. She continued further along the chequered path, greeting any and every creature that she should have happened to have laid her eyes upon, until she eventually reached a great, monumental statue.

“Oh my Mr Green, I do believe you’re aging quite unhealthily. Might I restore your cracks or merely dress them? I do assure you it won’t hurt.” She waited for a response and after seemingly receiving the answer she desired, she skipped to a nearby Oak Tree and gently plucked a selection of leaves. From here she began humming a tune. To an ordinary listener this tune was merely an energetic melody

of no structure nor pleasantry, merely improvised by a child. Yet in her mind, not only could she hear the melody before it was sung, but she felt and experienced all of the different instruments, ravishing and refraining this beautifully harmonic song.

“Ok, here we go.” Esther placed the leaves on the cracks of the statue, instantly brightening its temperament. It was as though the stone cold features of this respected soldier had begun to smile.

“See now isn’t that better?” she cheerfully prodded, and as though it were alive, the statue raised its right arm, pointing to the east.

“Ah so that is where it is today! Thank you Mr Green.” Esther bound from here at full speed until she finally burst forth into an overgrown amphitheatre. What was found at the stage of the amphitheatre was, for anybody but her, quite unexpected. It was not a group of actors, nor dancers, but a lone piano. This piano had no strings nor hammers inside to be played, but was filled with bright Cattlya, Dendrobium, Lily’s and a vast range of other flowers.

“My you have certainly taken new life haven’t you my friend?” To the ordinary watcher, this piano should not play. As already seen it was missing its contents but yet it seemed he approached with the security it would play. When approached though, time seemed to bend to her will. The sun instantly vanished from the sky, being replaced by a full moon and a night sky littered with the never-ending universe

above. She lowered herself onto the stool and began to play.

Not only did a melody spring forth, defying what should have been reality, but as the intertwining harmonies mingled with the splendiferous constructs of a perfect understanding of music theory, a cluster of glow-bugs sprung forth from the piano. These added to the already beautiful night sky, filling the amphitheatre with marvellous lights. As each note rang forth, the choir of floating lights seemed to pulsate with it. Swelling and settling in perfect coordination, but as she ended her piece, the bugs slowly regressed to their home and the sun began to dawn.

“Goodnight sweet piano” she said closing the lid of this miracle instrument.

With slumped shoulders and sullen eyes, she slunk away from this stunning scene. Esther left the amphitheatre and passed the courtyard of the monumental statue Mr Green and the garden of the cocooned caterpillar. With a tear rolling down her rosy cheek, she whispered, “Goodbye.”

This beautiful escape of hers was an absolute realm of truth, but also a home. Sadly, though this was an indescribable place, no-one but she accepted it. She wept not for the fact that she left, but for the knowledge that none could accompany her back within this haven. This was why she ran and skipped here whilst she yet had the innocence to. The men and creatures of her realm were not similar to those of Mr Green or the cocooned caterpillar. Yet they still could be, and the Garden Piano, may yet exist.

Factor 8

by Aedan Kertesi | Nossal High School

Some of the kids in the younger year levels look in covert wonder at my bare arms, most people stare with a sort of fascinated disapproval. Needle tracks. Clotting factor VIII injections - nothing exciting. I'd left my old school in winter, not sure if it was the winter blues that contributed or if it was just one day too many being spoken to, only to be told, yet again, that shirts need to be tucked in with ties. I hadn't liked the place anyway, it was better being called weird all through grade six in the library. Gotta watch my joints, the doctors are always telling me. I've seen what people with my condition can do to themselves. It used to hurt seeing people out in the sun, getting bruised up, having fun chasing balls, crashing into one another without the fear that they'd cause a bleed. I mean, technically I should still be doing exercises to keep my joints strong, but people treat you like a vase waiting to break. I can see it in their eyes.

No one knows yet, except the teachers; that's the good thing about VCE, everyone seems to forget about sports, the urge to ram into one another, testing the commonly held belief that children bounce. Mum dropped me off in the car park this time around, finally. She won't need to see all of the conversations I'm not having. I shrug my schoolbag into my locker and grab my books for the first period. Shut the door, click the lock, spin it three times.

Head down, I cross grass and concrete to the tutorial room, and sit by the door. I've bought *A Dance with Dragons*, so I don't

need to meet the eyes of anyone who'll look at my arms with questions they know they don't want to ask. Honestly, I'm kind of regretting not bringing a long-sleeve top, openness be damned. I know I'm lucky to be living in this country, Mum tells me all the time, I know I should be thankful for the tracks down my arm. As I'm reminded whenever I have the sheer temerity to whinge about the way people look at me, my uncle couldn't get these injections and was in a wheelchair by the time he was thirty, dead five years later, back in the old country.

The teacher walks by and opens the door, and my stomach drops as she looks over at me, the way you'd look at something you're thankful isn't on the bottom of your shoe. I shut the book on Tyrion's voyage down the Rhoyme and walk into the classroom. "So you must be ... A-dit-ya?"

She chunks the word, with the accuracy of a five year old in a go-cart "Yes," I say, stepping into the room with the other students. Eyes everywhere. I resume my voyage down the Rhoyme, sitting at the table as she marks the role. I feel the pregnant silence fill the room, my eyes skimming the same word three, four times. I slide my bookmark in and look up.

"Hi, good to see you guys back, I'd just like to introduce you to A-dit-ya. He's just come here." Her smile dissolves as she fumbles for words. I know what she wants to say, the way she wants to jump to my defence, justify the marks down my arms.

I pray she doesn't.

She clasps her wrinkled hands together, like two deep sea oddities procreating, having finally collected herself. I feel the cringe forming and I fight the urge to lower my eyes to the table, shifting my gaze from her face to the whiteboard behind her. I shake my head slightly, slight enough that there's no chance she saw it. "Now I know we all like talking through homegroup but I have something to say so can you all listen up please. Listen, everyone." I can see the guy next to me turn to look at the teacher. My stomach feels like it has inverted, decided to commit mutiny against my body and proceeded to devour my heart, spleen and assorted organs. I collapse inwardly. She meets my eyes. "Aditya here is still reading a *Dance with Dragons*, so no spoilers from last week's episode in earshot." I breathe a sigh of relief and can't help but smile when the guy next to me whispers.

"Psst. George RR Martin kills everyone. Thought you should know."

Glass

by Jenny Li | Nossal High School

Linda takes a seat facing a glass wall separating the visitor from the patient. It's not actually glass, of course; it is a panel of transparent plastic, tough and unbreakable. She has imagined this scene playing out repeatedly on the nights she was unable to fall asleep.

Sometimes in her dreams she would pour out her guilt, piercing her mother with accusations as sharp as knives, watching her sob with shameful satisfaction.

Other times they would reconcile in a flurry of hugs and tears. She would tell her mother how much she had missed her and they would embrace in mutual forgiveness.

The guard gestures from the other side of the panel. A figure shuffles into view and slowly sits before her.

She remembers the first time she visited her mother after the incident. For a moment there had been nothing but silence as the two women stared at each other. The person sitting in front of her had reminded Linda of those tobacco advertisements on television, the crude before and after images of charred lungs, bloodshot eyes and leathery skin, designed to shock smokers out of their addiction. Her arms had been stick-thin; her shoulders narrower than Linda had remembered, the clothing hung unshaped on her willowy figure. It was Linda who had broken the gaze first, glancing down at the table.

"Hello Linda."

"Hello," Linda had replied, stumbling over the word. Eighteen years, and she'd almost forgotten that her mother's first language was Vietnamese. It felt awkward on her tongue. She rolled the syllables around in her mouth, trying to find a familiar taste.

How long had it been since she'd spoken a word of this language? After the incident they had removed her from the small apartment she had lived in with her mother, and relocated her to the other side of the city. In high school she had chosen to take up French and studied it diligently. The language had seemed mysterious yet sophisticated to her; she loved the way one word flowed into the next in a sentence, the sharp accented vowels expressing her anger and excitement, and the soft, murmuring tones when she felt melancholy.

Once, she had overheard a man talking on his mobile phone on the train. She had recognized the Vietnamese dialect straight away, but immediately wished she hadn't. Her two school friends had mocked it from a distance, trying to mimic its harsh tones and glottalised consonants in a string of fast gibberish. She had laughed along at their exaggerations, but it felt uncomfortable.

Linda feels herself being consumed by the chair, blending in with the rest of the silence. She wants to say something to the woman before her, but she cannot find the correct words to express it.

"I'll see you again soon, mother. Take care."

Those were the last words she would ever speak to Mai. When Linda receives the phone call from the hospital, it is too late. They ask her if she would like to come and collect the belongings; they seemed like an accurate representation of her existence - no bigger than a rucksack of clothing and a bundle of letters accumulated over the years.

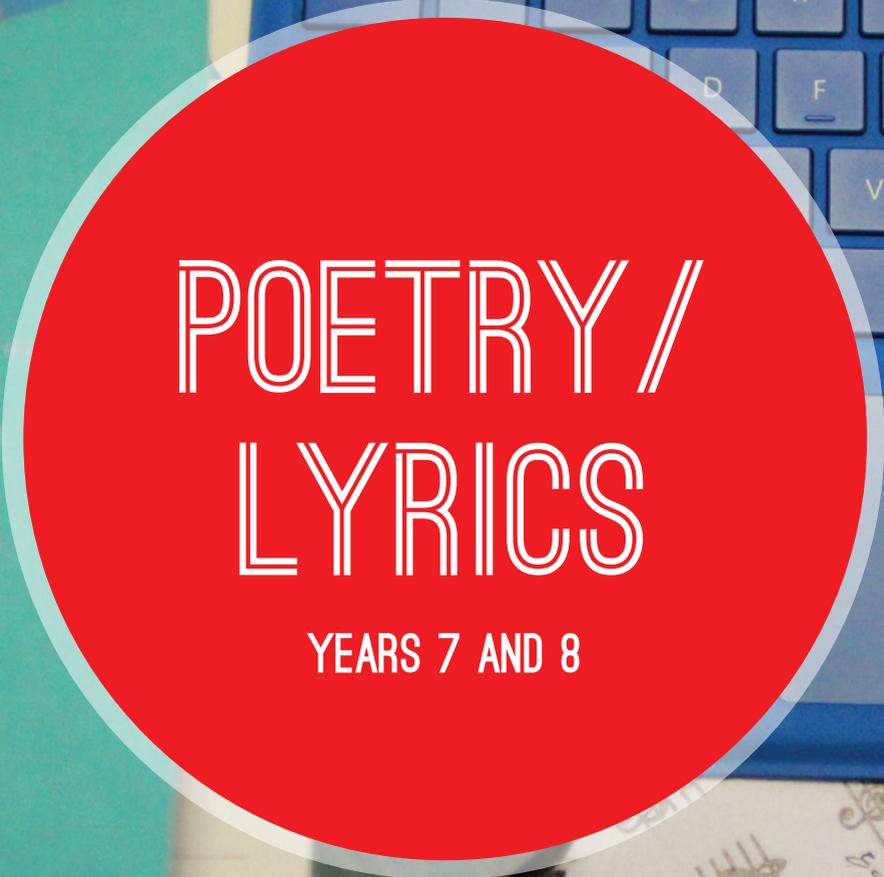
Now it is as if she is looking at her through a differently coloured piece of glass, or peering into a separate, darker alley parallel to the main road, suddenly privy to the small details she had previously overlooked in her annoyance towards this burden called her mother. She sees it all now. The gradually shaky handwriting in her letters, the twitching hand she held during the tail-end months of her stay. The tell-tale signs of cancer imperceptibly wounding their way into Mai's everyday routines. She sees it burning cigarette holes on the inside of her body; the blackness spreading outward like tendrils of smoke.

Linda has a family of her own now, a husband and a baby girl she calls her little angel.

She takes her daughter to the adventure playground near their suburban home. Everything is new here. The brightly coloured monkey bars and freshly painted pirate ship stand blue and proud in the middle of the park. She watches as her daughter rocks back and forth on the little boat, that high-pitched, childish laughter ringing across the playground.

It has no tones, no inflections. It is unsophisticated and sounds almost grotesque; it gurgles and bubbles uncontrollably, yet it is a beautiful sound.

A child's laughter, she thinks, means the same thing in every language.



POETRY //
LYRICS

YEARS 7 AND 8

My Goodbye

by Marina Zakary | Waverley Christian College

(Dedicated to Marleen Fransis)

Do you ever hear a haunting refrain
That takes you back to that moment again
Where memories flow and scenes are set
Fear overloads with an ample of regret

Down memory lane my mind rows
As the cool breeze today heavily flows
Together we laugh, together we cry
Around each other we would never be shy

Not one moment should have been wasted
As brutal and desolate feelings I tasted
When you pronounced you had to go
My mourning and sorrow they did outgrow

Emotions ran through my head
I found myself wishing I was dead
All because you were moving away
I knew I would never see you another day

You helped me laugh, you dried my tears
Because of you I have no fears
Your dazzling and radiant personality were outlined
Philanthropic hospitality you truly defined

You were one special shining star
Knowing you are a million miles away is an unfading scar
You made me so tolerant, passionate and carefree
You made it alright for me to be me

You always listened and knew what to say
You knew when to give a hug when I was having a bad day
You were the best friend I ever had
Now that you left me and I am beyond sad

Leaving this life I find no way
But our memories shall never fade away
It is time my friend to say goodbye
I will be waiting for your return in my suit and bow tie

Our Sky

by Jacob Payet | Waverley Christian College

Dawn brings the promise of a new day.
With it, the moon sighs and takes its leave
And the shimmering stars follow in its wake.
The morning sky yawns to life
As the soft clouds dance to their own beat.
The mountain checks its refectation
Mirrored in the calm, quiet sea.
The sun remembers it's majestic position
Creating warmth that blankets the earth
Before twilight gently whispers, hello.

The Paper Monster

by Maneesha Casey | Casey Grammar School

It grows larger with each moment that passes,
A looming doom created by my own pen,
Every bad poem,
Every half written story,
Every scrapped idea,
Its mass is made of torn and crumpled note book pages,
With each passing second it stumbles closer,
Until,
I am engulfed by its hands,
I am drowning,
Suffocating as its clutches tighten,
I feel the edges of accidental folds dig into my skin,
Tear at it,
I feel a speck of blood spill from my arm,
I look,
No longer am I made of flesh and blood,
I am but ink and flimsy note book paper,
It rips at me,
Spilling more of my ink,
It crumples me into balls,
I try to scream,
But paper has no voice,
I succumb to the paper monster.

Animals Alphabet Poem

by Bryn Howell | Waverley Christian College

A is for *Antelope* that grazes all day.
B is for *Butterfly* that flies away.
C is for *Cockroach* who you see at night.
D is for *Donkey* oh what a sight.
E is for *Elephant* with such a long trunk.
F is for *Fish* who likes to get drunk.
G is for *Gorilla* with its scary looks.
H is for *Hippopotamus* who likes to wallow in brooks.
I is for *Ibis* with its extended beak.
J is for *Jackal* with ears that peak.
K is for *Kangaroo* with its mighty kick.
L is for *Lizard* with a tongue that likes to lick.
M is for *Monkey* who stole my ring.
N is for *Nightingale* who likes to sing.
O is for *Ostrich* with its large, beady eye.
P is for *Pig* who grunts in his sty.
Q is for *Quail* known for its speckled eggs.
R is for *Rhino* with his sturdy legs.
S is for *Skunk* with its nasty stench.
T is for *Tortoise* you will find him under the bench.
U is for *Ugly Duckling* who is the odd one out.
V is for *Vulture* BEWARE when he is about.
W is for *Wildebeest* with horns that are terrifying.
X is for *Xenops* who sings melodies that are captivating.
Y is for *Yorkshire Terrier*, oh so cute but such an annoying bark.
Z is for *Zebra* finally the last one in the ark.



POETRY // LYRICS

YEARS 9 AND 10

Lessons of Love

by Jennifer Nguyen | Nossal High School

Teach me how to slow dance at 2am
 While we snack on cookie dough
 On our kitchen counter, in our small house.
 Teach me how to swing a golf tee
 Under the soft sun glare, in our small garden.
 Teach me how to stand in the freezing saltwater
 In the middle of July
 Against the bitter winds of the sea
 While you hold my hand and walk me through the cold.
 Teach me how to hold a violin
 The smell of freshly polished wood and metal shavings
 Melodies clear and lucid
 Ringing through the space of our living room.
 Teach me how to walk under the rain
 Under the night sky, while the world cries
 Buckets of fresh water, dripping onto our hair
 Hold my hand and never let go.
 Then in turn I will teach you how to read,
 To fall in love with a story deep within the pages
 Watching your eyes flash a million different shades
 Under the soft sleepy yellow lamp light of our home.
 I will show you the wonders of art,
 Guide you through museums, point out artworks
 Talk until your ears tire of symbols and meanings,
 While holding your hand because it is the most
 beautiful thing amongst all the artworks.
 I will teach you the wonders of running,
 Fresh scents of dew rushing up your nostrils, your legs tired
 Your lungs burn, your eyes tear
 As we race around our street early in the morn.

 I will teach you how to cry,
 How to let go, to not hold back, to not blame yourself.
 For darling life is short and should not be wasted on regrets,
 Life is eventful and will carry on, leaving you behind
 with your sorrows.
 Please let me be your anchor in the storm,
 Your comfort, your support, your home
 Teach me how to live your life and I shall do the same
 For with every self-discovery we made, we love more

 We are all humans and we are flawed,
 But to me darling, you are my forever more.

What Lies Beneath The Flowers

by Chizirimuzo Ugo | Nossal High School

I wake in the morning and I step outside
 The day is warm and bright
 The springtime is coming in nicely;
 It is truly a beautiful sight.

The flowers, they blush with happiness,
 The robins all sing with praise,
 For the season of spring
 Is a reason to sing
 And now onto my point which I raise;

How do you talk to an angel
 When she never makes a sound?
 What do you say to her lifeless body, lying
 There in the wood, underground?

I wake in the morning and I step outside
 I go anywhere I can get to
 Searching all day for something I need;
 Somewhere I can write about you

Be it a journal, be it a diary, be it a wall of an alley by the bar
 People will hear across the earth, and know of who you are;
 Lips of moonlight,
 Hair of silk,
 Skin, golden as a wheaty sunset
 (Not milk, that is far too overdone)

My love is a bird
 Swift and sweet
 When it opens its mouth to sing
 He may not quite hit all of the right notes
 But his passion is a wonderful thing

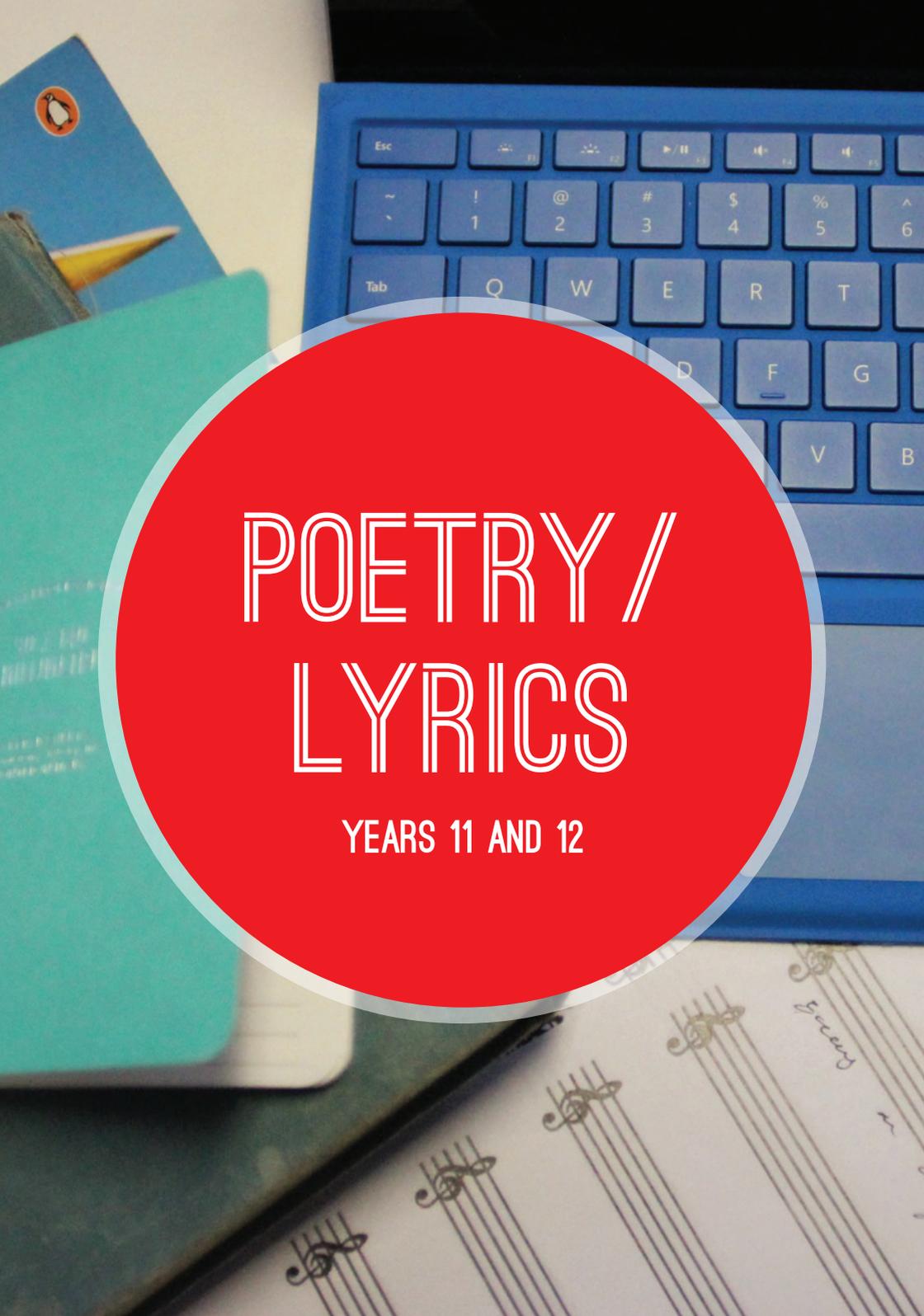
Never wonder how I feel
 For it is assured
 But you are no more, you have left this world
 My dear, whom I pine for
 With each passing day, my love for you grows
 And grow it will, forevermore

Tis now too late to say the words that encompass everything
 This coffin is a barrier I cannot penetrate, no matter what I do
 So I will find a special place, known only to us, which will happiness bring
 This place we share will be our sanctuary
 Somewhere I can write about you

The Looking Glass

by Georgia Fillingham | Beaconhills College - Pakenham

Peering through the looking glass, at a girl staring back at me
Her thighs are thick her hips are big,
Her face to me Unknown.
As my hands skim down my own thin waist,
I grimace at the feeling of bones
But staring back through the looking glass
stands my own ample clone.
The girls at school all laugh and stare as I pass them in the halls,
None of them seem to understand
The way I feel at all.
I turn to stare at the other girls all strung up on my walls
A perfect face a perfect body
All perfectly so small
I listen to the voice in my head telling me it's not enough
To starve myself and over work but I'm starting to feel fed up
I made a slip today by tasting just one chip
But after all this one slip is a lifetime on my hips
My parents beg and plead me
To stop doing this to myself
But they don't see what I do in this deadly sheet of glass
For all I see in the looking glass is someone who is not quite right



POETRY //
LYRICS

YEARS 11 AND 12

This Wall That's Me

by Samantha Lane | Berwick College

"Just get over it."

But it was not as simple
as building a bridge
or finding another way around.

"You'll feel better. Don't worry about it."

It forever encircled me;
trapping me in.
Its walls soaring on the edge of forever;
I did not know what existed on
the other side.

I could not wrap it in bandages
or place a kiss
to make it better.
It was an impenetrable wall
made from nerve ends
and fibres and
me.

It stood lofty, looming
to make itself look tougher-
to make itself look bigger-
to try and make me afraid.

At first, it succeeded.
I never dared go closer
or tell others of its existence.
Afraid of what would happen.
Terrified of what it could do.
So I kept its rough bricks to myself.

It has been there so long
I do not remember a time before.
But one day,
after years of self-encouragement,
and failed initial attempts-
I placed my hand on the surface and realised-
It wasn't as cold as I thought it was.

Sure, it was unrefined,
but the soil it stood on was soft.

The wall doesn't seem so scary now.
In fact,
I'm growing flowers.

A Soldier's Life

by Nithiya Pathmasiri | Nossal High School

I signed up for the forces,
To help bring this war to a pause.
It was a rash decision,
That will leave a lasting impression.

Goodbye mother, goodbye father, I said with tears,
Inside my heart, bundled up was my fears.
Happy was I to represent my country,
But who knew it would come with a hefty fee?

We landed on the shores of Gallipoli,
A landed that was unknown and unknown completely.
Trained were not our minds,
How were we supposed to know war was not kind?

Today, one of my mates passed,
Caused by the sea of green which was aghast.
Choking and drowning, smothered was he,
Deathly and painful, a scene I wished not to see.

As night fell onto the men's tents,
Everyone was joyful, as the war has stopped for a moment.
We played cards, smoked and had a jolly good time,
Until the next morning, for once again it was time.

The next day, it was back to fighting,
All I could think about was surviving.
What is war? Why does it go this way?
The things we feel, we cannot say.

Harry was fatally wounded in the knee,
Nothing could be done, so slowly died did he.
Suffered a long time, in pain and agony,
Sad to see him go but happy for him to rest in peace finally.

These days, dying is common and has become nothing.
Look at the body, cry a little and into the cart, they are flung,
just a thing.

War changes us, for the worse I'd say,
Am I becoming stone-hearted, dark...this isn't my way.

What an unlucky day it is,
I was struck by a bullet that I could not miss.
Horrid was it, the colour of red,
I knew I couldn't survive, nothing could be done,
was all what was said.

Happy or sad, I did not know,
For all I knew is that I didn't want to let my loved ones go.
But I know that it is my time now,
Please let me sleep, please let me now.

But one thing I'll tell you, just before I leave,
War is useless, this is what I believe.
For those who sign up, it isn't what you think,
It will leave you on the very brink.

The Dance of Sunrise

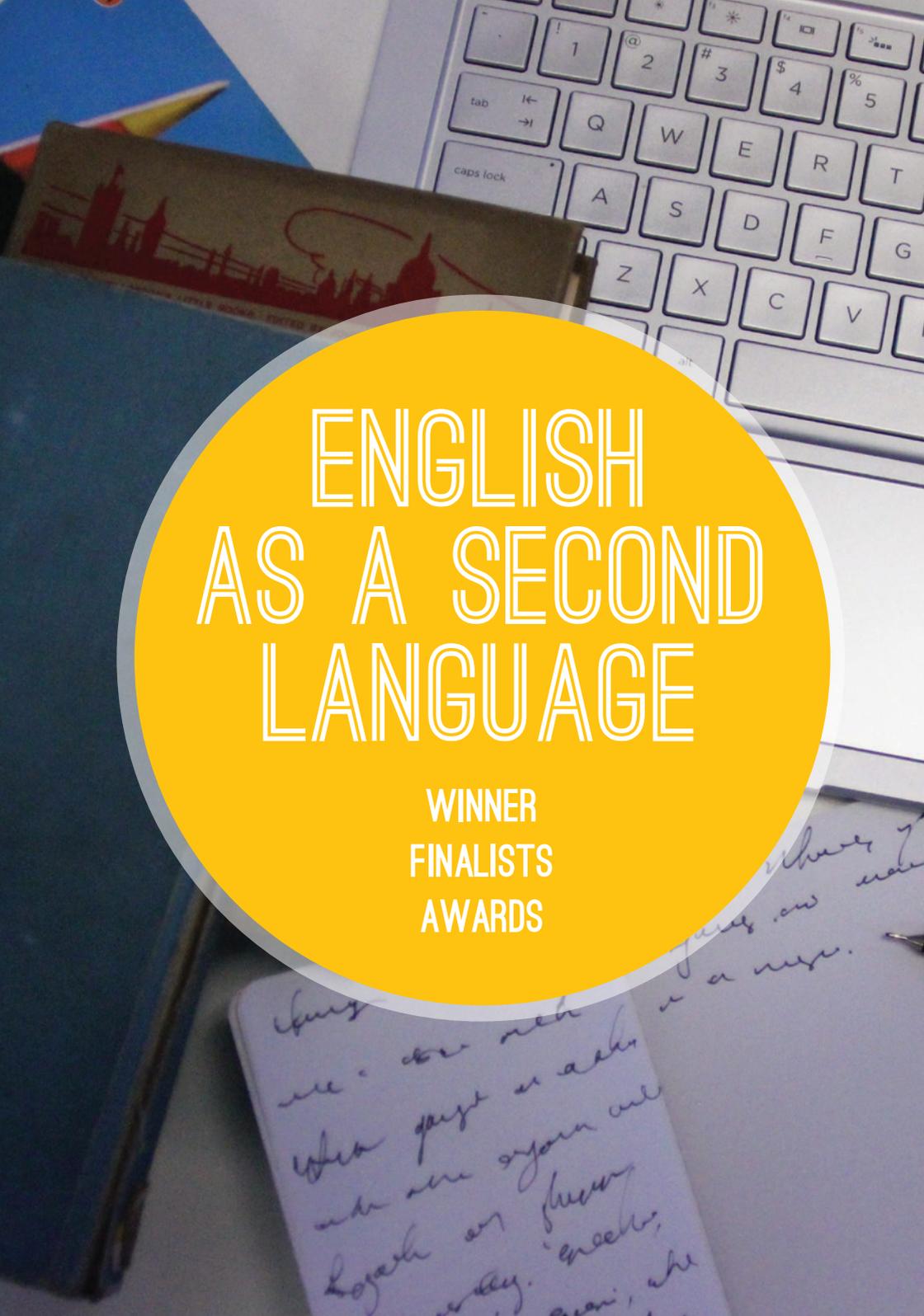
by Rhonda Kwan | Waverley Christian College

At the dawn of damson,
Where the sea meets the sky,
A breath of whispering wind
Breaks the still silence.

Mingling with the songs,
Of rolling waves of the deep,
The welcome of waking birds
Joins in with the chorus.

The glow of glorious gold,
Streaks across the surface of silver,
With its illuminous flare
Awakens the earth.

On the blazing horizon,
From the east to the west,
A dance of spectacular colour,
Sunrise, at its best.



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

WINNER
FINALISTS
AWARDS

Good is Bad

by Murtaza Hassan | Cranbourne Secondary College

“Finally, the U.S force fall back. The deaths are estimated to be more than a hundred, and twenty-seven missing. North Korea had won South-East Asia.” This is what was reported on the evening news. I was horrified, I had heard about North Korea building strong military equipment and bases from when I was young. They just started their war right after the crisis between China and Russia. Russia and the U.S agreed to come together and clear Asia. The Army needed more soldiers. I counted myself responsible, so I joined.

After a couple of months with physical and mental challenges and tests, I passed and went to the army with hundreds of other men and some women. All forces were about to go to Russia, which was closer to the invaded countries so then we could take action. The Enemy (North-Korea) was aware of the war coming ahead, they were prepared as well. It took 15 hours to reach Moscow, Russia. A day was spent sharing ideas and making a perfect plan. Tomorrow 3rd of February 2036 was the day of the battle.

Our planes could not be picked up by radar and we also used the cloudy weather to get there undetected. The war just began after we landed. Our cargos were loaded with tanks, armoured cars and soldiers. I could see the fear in everyone’s eyes, I was scared too. By going out there and fighting, we were rising to save thousands and thousands of lives. I was proud to be there and fight for justice. As soon as I went to the field one

of our cargos in the air exploded and the pieces were everywhere. It was a terrifying moment. Even though the war continued for two days, we finally succeeded to take back south Asia. And now North Korea was weak and we easily took over all Asia the next few weeks.

I was surprisingly alive. I believed that the long term argument that we had with Russia in the past was over now but I was wrong. One night in the second month of tour I received a letter.

“My Loyal soldiers:

Our nation has been waiting for this moment since the 90’s and here we are. Now we have the best opportunity to take down our biggest enemy, Russia. We were the reason of war between China and Russia in the first place. Although we’ve lost a lot of soldiers, it was the safest way to do it. Every and each one of them has made us proud. Now we need every one of your help to finish this once and for all.”

General, Jonathan Iris

Just by reading the letter I understood how greedy and hateful we were. All the time they’ve been hacking Russia’s government trying to break in. It was wrong what they were doing, they could be friends after helping each other through their shared problems. I just couldn’t imagine something like it and I could not let it happen. I went to the Russians and revealed their real enemy. They were just as shocked as I was.

“None of the soldiers except for Generals and higher posts knew about this” I said. I asked them to run a secret lockdown between Russians during the night when everyone is asleep. Then we'll report this worldwide and I am sure American citizens will make a stand against this.

It was 03:12 am. That was the time everyone had to get out. Everything went perfectly and safely. The gates were locked and power was cut from the base. Hours later the news was published worldwide and all the Americans stood up against the government. The Government couldn't ignore the population, the president was removed from his post immediately. The new president stopped the process and everyone involved was put into jail. This time, the two countries were actually friends now. The soldiers returned back to the U.S while the intruders remained in Russia's military prison. After I returned home I was awarded many prizes. The best of them all, I got a Noble prize for peace. The new government was sorry for what had happened and apologized from Russia.

Animal Testing Should Be Banned

by Ali Azimi | Cranbourne Secondary College

Animal testing is barbaric and I'm here to tell you why. I mean how cruel can some people be. Each year millions of dogs, cats, bunnies and rats are killed from animal cruelty. This timewasting hobby that scientists have found to be "effective" is very brutal. More than 92% of the drugs or tests that they have passed on animals have immediately failed on humans.

Many people believe animal testing is a good thing, "it's not that harmful", some say or animals are not getting mistreated. However, we don't know what happens behind closed doors. Imagine these animals stuffed into small cramped cages and getting painful cuts by trying to get comfortable. Some of these innocent animals usually get put in the same cages with other types of species. These animals get extremely terrified and normally get into fights. These fights lead to serious injuries and some even result in death. Animals are dying before they are even been tested on, and the ones that make it out alive are traumatised for life. Don't you think this is unnecessary?

I mean, do you really think it's worth a beautiful monkey just to create a new mascara? I don't think so. Humans are not the only ones with emotions believe it or not. Animals have a right to live their one and only given life and we can't take it away like that. Animal testing is just useless, time wasting and a waste of money. Also, since when have people been paid to physically and mentally beat an animal?

Do we eat cat or dog food? No, so if medication were to be tested on animals, it will most likely react differently on humans. Therefore I don't see the point of testing these drugs on these poor innocent animals. According to the journal of the American Medical Association, approximately 106,000 people are killed due to unpredictable feedback on drugs but all of these drugs were successful when tested on animals. This shows that some of these drugs will kill humans but have a different effect on animals.

People always question banning animal testing because they often ask who are we going to test it on if we don't test on animals. I personally think that we can definitely oversee animal testing. We are now in the 21st century. We have technology that gives us far more accurate results and also a cheaper option of doing this. The US spends about 16 billion dollars on animal testing. I personally disagree with this because it's not like every single test on every single animal cures a disease. No way, it might be 1 in 100 that might cure one disease and all the other 99 innocent animals, well, are gone. Also why can't animal testing cure something big like the Zika virus in Africa? I have never heard about a huge and deadly virus being cured from animal testing in the United States as they are the country who spends the most on this. As Mr Steven Spielberg once said "Humans are the only hunters that will kill when not hungry" and I personally adore this saying.

In conclusion we should all agree that animal testing is cruel and a time wasting act. We have technology which is more effective and more accurate than animal testing so there is no excuse why it should be done. I recommend animal testing should be banned so in the future this world would be safer for animals and humans.

That House

by Ali Seená Rahimi | Cranbourne Secondary College

It all happened that week, that week when we bought our new home. We unpacked everything we brought with us from our old house. I took a couple of my possessions to my room, when I walked back to the living room to get my other things I saw a big baby doll. Its skin was grey, its hair was like a yucky blonde, and it looked like the doll hadn't been washed for like a million years. I picked it up and just as I was about to go up to my mum, the room got cooler by the second.

At first I thought someone left the door open and wind was blowing into our house but when I went to close the door, the door was already closed. I put the doll on the table and suddenly the room was warm again but then the windows kept opening and closing. I then ran to mum screaming "this house is haunted mum, the house is haunted". She didn't believe me so I grabbed her wrist really hard and forced her to come with me to the windows but when we got there the windows were closed, "I swear mummy, the windows kept opening and closing and the room got really cold and then warm again." She thought I was going crazy, "Sweetie you must be day dreaming, or you're just exaggerating over a small thing" she said kindly. I don't think I was day dreaming but I guess I was over exaggerating a little bit. I ran back to the doll, picked it up and showed it to mum, "Mum look at what I found!" I said excitedly, "What is that?" she asked. I wanted to keep it and she agreed.

I went back to my room and took a nap for a long time.

The next night when I came back from the kitchen because I needed to get some salt something hit my stomach and I dropped the salt and the glass broke. First I thought I crashed into the table but then I looked at it, I realised it was 3 meters away from me. I started wondering what the heck that was, and what happened and how did it happen. I went back to the kitchen and took more salt and sat down. I got up from the chair again but this time I went to get a can of coke and then started screaming because I thought Simon, my brother, was pulling my hair however when I turned around, no one was there. It was pretty scary. A couple of seconds later, I started screaming again because I thought someone grabbed my hair and started pulling it. I started crying because of the pain.

I checked the mirror that was in front of me and saw this girl who was wearing white, everything was white, her hair, her dress, her skin colour, everything. I turned around and no one was there. I didn't know what it was, all sorts of things were going through my mind like what the hell was happening, why do I keep feeling this, why am I experiencing this, why me. The hair pulling stopped for a while and then it happened again but this time it was horrible. The pain was too much for me. My mum came and gave me a big cuddle and asked me what happened and I told her the story.

I went to bed to hopefully have a good night's sleep. I woke up in the middle of the night because of my terrifying dream. I got up, walked to the kitchen, got some milk, I poured the milk into the cup and as I was about to take a sip, my hair was being pulled again, I was lifted from the floor and screamed. My mum woke up and ran down to the kitchen. It felt like someone was controlling me, it really did. I kept crashing into the edges and top corners of the wall, my head started bleeding and then my mum grabbed my leg and started pulling me down. She grabbed my hand and pulled me all the way to the door. I stood up and she told me "We're getting out of this house." We ran to the car and drove to the hospital. I told her several times that we need to move houses but she never listens to me and now I have a bloody head.

Story About Myself in Afganston

by Fatema Ali | Noble Park English Language School - Hampton Park

My name is fatema and my lost name is Ali
I cam frome Afghanston I am 16 years old
I have 3 sisters and 3 brothes

I like the colour green and my like foods
is rice and korma and my favourite sport
is football my live in Afghanston is not
good because in Afghanston is faiting in
Afghanston I went to at school my school
id very good I am Afghanston I am learnig
calss eight In Afghanston is start for
school is afternoon because no more calss
in my school calss (1) calss (2) calss (3)
calss (4) calss (5) calss (6) in the morning
and this calss (7) calss (8) calss (9) calss
(10) calss (11) calss (12) afternoon and
start school on afternoon is one oclock
start and teery oclock is finsh nexst by
wad come back in now Then 6 oclock get
in the home

Story abuot in Australia habitat life

I life in Australia Melbourne Victoria one
years live in Australia I life in City of Casey
my family eight people live in Australia
my dad is working my mum going to
school my brothers and sisters. I went to
langewich school for learnig and speeking
Einglelish in Australia is saycan lanewich
speeking Eingelish for my family is very
hard the teacher Australia help with
anather conteery people because saycan
langewich evry conterry help wichather
my family new cameing to Australia is very
very hard because not understand speak
English but my family come to new house
and new conteery trouble opecific I like in
Australia because I am and mum driveng

in Australia in Joy

In Afghanston I am at school helping
with student in the calss for reading
and reiating a book I am very happy in
Afghanston because my friends lifes
in Afghanston I missed you my friends
still I missed you my friends I have Nine
friends in Afghanston the name is fatema
shokurah Masoma zarien shekaba
shamayel zaban fawziy sameyai finsh am
with friends playing together wolle ball
sometimes my friends washeds the coles
in the sea then swimming in the sea on
the weekend with my friends I went to The
park compersatoin together evry my friend
is cool and patiat I am with my friends
behavior is very good having I am invtaion
jst my friends in my home then evry my
friend coming my mum make spaghetti
and peas Then eat and very interesting
spaghetti.

In Afghanston is very powerful and for
kisser good and for side is important I am
in Afghaston cooking I very interesting
my mum taking with me your cooking is
very interesting my family in Afghanston
I have a garden the trees name is fruit
apple orange apricot grapefruit grape kiwi
mandarin strawberry banana pineapple
peach pear cherry pomegranate mango
watermelon and melon finsh.

My favourite fruit is grap and kiwi and
cherry one one people Afghanston
is abuse for evry people my jab in
Afghanston is yohghar but in the palastic
and wash the dishes then clean your

house and help my mum and I am Joying
in Afghaston am in Afghaston make
sewed in the sleaf and skeirt I am in
Afghaston feeling frustrating stipping
before coming to Australians now am Joy
in Australia my father have one brother
my brother father is died my father in
Australia is very happy my father say to
my fatema plaes know anterstan English
and you make a teacher am say ok
fatherfan my mum and my father is very
dear and patient with children is like
paldoe mum and dad is sometimes is
crawl is fine in Afghaston my famliy is a
lot fohmoer

many habitat in Afghaston in Afghaston
someims is like the is temblor then my
home in Afghaston is beautiful because
my house make soil my garnfather and
my garnmother together make a hουμε
my father in Afghaston I have a 3 car
and I have six bigescail one for my and
two bigescail for my two sisters and 3
bigscail for my brothers.

In Australia I have four friends my friend
name is: masoma: adeln safeyai seralyab
two my friends farm Afghaston and two
my friends is another coneery in Australia
sometimes to school I forgot my lunch but
in the lunch time my friends bering your
lunch but eating together and playing
together seting and tooking spoaking
Eingelish together Example tooking
about in the weekend what you do on
the weekend one my friends house river
house my but on the weekend maybe
masoma come to my home maybe am
going to home my friends on the weekend
am with friends together going to the park

or part y four my friends is cool a pretty
four my friends is am with current and
share and behaviour action evry people
with friends is grow.

Cookie's Fault

by Wen Lei Chen | Beaconhills College - Pakenham

Holding a teddy bear in one hand and another, grasping tightly on the leash of a bulldog puppy, the young boy anxiously bit his cracked lip, not acknowledging a stream of red liquid which was dripping from his head forming a small pond by his shoes. He seemed to be fascinated or perhaps shocked by the white coat angels' constant running and shouting around his unconscious mother, who was lying on a bed sheet soaked in blood. Blood was gushing out from her fatal wound like an open tap, her face almost unrecognisable, smeared in blood. All of a sudden, the emergency room had gone silent. "Woof-woof!", the puppy's cry echoed through the hallway that smelled like disinfectant, sobbing for the loss of his beloved owner.

"Death time approximately 1:25pm, cause of death insufficient type AB blood, presented by Red Teddy Blood Bank".

"Wow what an advertisement for blood donation!", I burst out with amazement, but something from the corner of my eye caught my attention. My eyes lit up immediately, no tears are visible anymore, but a rapidly growing desire instantly filled my heart. In a split second, I was out on the walk way, running as fast as the Olympian Usain Bolt (well maybe a tiny bit slower) towards the blood donation stop.

After 30 minutes of compulsory interrogation (for good purposes of course) upon arrival, I finally lay happily on my designated bed.

"Tick-toe, tick-toe", I really want hop off this uncomfortable bed, my heart is already flying towards my prize. "I am only half way there, a quarter to go, just squeeze a little bit more, just a little more," I murmured to myself.

"Beep, Beep" something seems to be vibrating, "oh, it might be a Pokémon!" I shouted excitedly, gathering several disapproving stares from my neighbours. Yet, to my disappointment, no rare Pokémon insight, but only a volunteer is rushing towards me.

"Congratulations young lady, you have broken our record! Three minutes and 45 seconds!", exclaimed the volunteer. "Am I done? Can I hop off now?", I quickly replied. Without waiting for an answer, I jumped off my bed feeling a bit dizzy, wobbling my way to the snack tables. Like a professional hunter I carefully browsed through the pile of goodies; grapes, milk, chips, biscuits, orange juice. "Oh this is quite a banquet", I whispered, but I failed to find that one thing that I am so desperately searching for.

"Oh, I am sorry sweetie, we ran out of the cookies, the advertisement was a total success! Who knows "Willy Wonka's secret Handmade-Cookies" can attract so many donors!", my interrogator proudly said. It is as if a dark cloud looms over my head and started raining and thundering, my smiles and enthusiasm withdrew from my face, I yelled "but, but, I am here for the COOKIES!!!".

Youth Information Centres

www.casey.vic.gov.au/youth

Cranbourne

Shop 156
Cranbourne Park Shopping Centre
03 9792 7350

Hampton Park

22-26 Stuart Avenue
Hampton Park
03 9702 9510

Narre Warren

52 Webb Street
Narre Warren
03 9792 7330

Casey 360 Mobile Youth Information Centre

casey360@casey.vic.gov.au

Contact City of Casey

03 9705 5200

NRS: 133 677 (for the deaf, hearing or speech impaired)

TIS: 131 450 (translating and interpreting service)

caseycc@casey.vic.gov.au

casey.vic.gov.au

 facebook.com/caseyyouth

 [@CityOfCasey](https://twitter.com/CityOfCasey)

PO Box 1000
Narre Warren VIC 3805

