

THE Elsie Locke Writing Prize 2016



for narrative writing by students in years 7 and 8

Since 2009, thousands of students have participated in the Elsie Locke Writing Prize. Support your students to take part, too.

The prize commemorates Elsie Locke's life, both as a writer and as a person who was concerned about peace, the environment, women's equality, and the community. The winner receives \$250 together with a certificate, and their story is published in the *School Journal*.

TOPIC FOR 2016: People and protest – a story about taking a stand

What issues are worth taking a stand on? How might this be done? The story could be set in the past, present, or future, and the event could be real (Parihaka, the 1978 Pureora Forest protest, the 1981 Springbok tour ...) or imagined. Remind the students that protest can take various forms – and that their story should focus on the experience of the individual.

This topic links to the level 4 social sciences learning objective: Understand how people participate individually and collectively in response to community challenges.

For stories and articles in the *School Journal* that might help with the topic, see "Ngā Tātarakihi o Parihaka" (L4 May 2016), "Three Days at Te Awapātiki" (4.3.10), "War in Waihi: The 1912 Goldminers' Strike" and "In the End" (both in L4 October 2013), "Heartbeat" (L3 June 2012), "Hakaraia: Warrior Peacemaker" (L4 May 2015), "His Own War: The Story of Archibald Baxter" (L4 March 2012), "A Tour Like No Other" and "Game Over!" (both in 4.2.11).

There is also excellent content on www.nzhistory.net.nz (go to topics/politics and government/protest and reform) and www.teara.govt.nz (search using "strikes" and "protest").

JUDGING

The judges will look for the following:

- an original and thoughtful response to the topic
- a sense of time, place, and character
- an understanding of the event and its importance to the main character
- the ability to engage the reader
- clarity, coherence, and an effective use of language.

To read the winning stories from previous years, see "War Games" (4.3.09), "The Half-crown" (4.3.10), "Too Close to the Wind" (L4 October 2011), "Past, Present, and Future" (L4 October 2012), "Close to the Edge" (L4 November 2014), and "Mr Archibald" (L4 October 2015). These stories can also be read on the Elsie Locke website: www.elsielocketrust.org.nz and Lift Education's website: www.lifteducation.com

COMPETITION RULES

The competition is open to all students in years 7 and 8. Entries should be around 500–600 words (maximum). They may be handwritten. All work must be the writer's own, and the winner must be willing for their story to become Crown copyright. Entries need to arrive by Friday 15 July 2016 and should be sent to:

Susan Paris
Lift Education
PO Box 19088
Wellington 6149

The winner will be announced on Monday 1 August on the Elsie Locke website and Lift Education's website (see addresses above). Schools will also be notified if a student made the top ten short list.

Please photocopy this form below and **staple it to each entry.**

Name: _____

School: _____

Year level: _____

I certify that the work is my own and I give my permission for it to be published in the *School Journal* under Crown copyright.

Signed: _____

Teaching Suggestions

READING

Build understanding of the context and theme

Ask questions to draw out your students' knowledge about protest and people who take a stand.

- What issues do people feel strongly about (encourage both local and national examples)?
- What protests do you know about, both recent protests or ones in the past?
- Can you name any New Zealanders who have taken a stand on an important issue?
- What leads individuals and/or groups to take a stand?
- What is the impact of protest on those protesting? What about the people on the other side?

Use the suggested *School Journal* texts and websites to build your students' understanding of the social and political contexts that set the scene for protest.

Ask questions, for example:

- What were the social or political conditions at the time?
- Who was especially affected by these conditions?
- What were the main issues that drove these people to protest?
- What was the wider impact of the protest on the people involved and their families?
- What was the outcome of the protest?
- Do you think the issues were worth taking a stand on? Why?

Ask students to identify and evaluate the underlying issues and prompt them to think critically about common threads between the different social and political contexts.

Explore the characteristics of people who take a stand

Draw out the students' ideas about what inspires people to take a stand. Discuss specific examples in the *School Journal* texts.

- What common character traits can you identify in these people?
- How did the writer convey these character traits? (In particular, note characters' actions and dialogue.)
- Identify how the people or characters in the articles/stories influenced events.

WRITING

Developing ideas

- Develop a group or class brainstorm of historic and contemporary events involving protest that students could write about.
- Use the *School Journal* stories to identify how true events have been incorporated into a fictional setting. With the students, analyse the plots, setting, and characterisation. Note how the writer:
 - hooks the reader
 - conveys a sense of place
 - conveys characters' thoughts and feelings.

Identify and discuss the way language, including figurative language, has been used to build rich descriptions of the setting and characters. Co-construct success criteria with the students to help them plan, create, and revise their text.

Creating text

When the students have chosen an event, have them think about their story's main characters and plot.

- Remind the students that characters are an essential component of a story. Encourage them to think about the characters in their own story and discuss the qualities that enable a person to stand up for what they believe in. Then model how to write a character description. Explain that this is an important step in the planning process and it will support students to create dialogue and action that reflect their own character's qualities. Provide time for the students to think about their story's plot and "hook". How will they create conflict and tension? And how will this be resolved?
- Have the students develop an outline of their plot to share with a peer. They should take in any feedback before writing a first draft.

Support your students through the writing process and provide ample time for peer feedback, reflection, re-crafting, and editing.