

Scottish Schools' Young Writer of the Year 2021/22

Launch of this year's prestigious competition

The online current affairs magazine, *Scottish Review*, in association with the Young Programme charity, is delighted to announce the launch of the 2021/22 **Scottish Schools' Young Writer of the Year**. As in previous years, there are generous prizes to be won!

Who can take part?

The competition is open to pupils who are 15 to 18 years old on the closing date of **Thursday 16 December 2021**. A prize of £600 will be presented to the winning writer, and £300 each to two runners-up. All highly commended and commended writers will receive a gift voucher. The top three award-winning entries will be published with an overall report in a special edition of the *Scottish Review*.

The judges

The winning papers will be determined by a panel of distinguished judges including novelist, **James Robertson**; broadcaster and writer, **Sally Magnusson**; emeritus professor of adult and continuing education, University of Glasgow, **Jean Barr**; and politician and former secretary general of NATO, **Lord Robertson of Port Ellen**.

The Challenge

Each entry must be a work of **non-fiction**. Pupils should imagine they are writing a feature or an opinion column for an intelligent magazine or serious newspaper. It could, for example, be a commentary about something in the news, thoughts about a cultural experience (a review of an exhibition or a theatrical production perhaps), an account of a personal experience of some kind (a trip, a meeting, an incident), a piece about a sports event (major or minor), a profile of, or an interview with, an individual.

Around 1,000 words are required (**no fewer than 900; no more than 1,200** – entries outside of these margins **will not** be considered).

Advice to entrants

Before you begin writing, you should have a look at columns in, for example, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Scotsman*, or in quality magazines such as *Scottish Review* or *The Spectator* to get a feel for what is required.

You should bear in mind that the start of the piece is vital in hooking the reader's interest.

You should always have the reader in mind and keep asking yourself: is this interesting? Will the reader understand my logic? Does anything need clarification?

You should read the piece aloud to yourself. If you get confused, you should edit/rewrite/reorganise/reappraise; if you can't understand something that you have written, then neither will the reader.

The judges will be looking for insight and originality as well as stylish prose which has clarity and avoids cliché and jargon.

Last year's results and past winners











2020/21 results:

Amy Campbell, Hutchesons' Grammar School, for her entry 'Dancing on a Thursday night' (reflections on a life through the eyes of a daughter). The joint runners-up were Grace Houston, St Maurice's High School ('Time to face up to acne') and Mila Stricevic, Hyndland Secondary School ('Rap women - liberation or exploitation?'). Highly commended: Rhys Bradley, Banchory Academy; Oscar Chen, Lenzie Academy; Niall Dundee, Glenalmond College; Sowmi Gopalakrishnan, Hutchesons' Grammar School; Kelsey Quine, Firrhill High School; Honor Reynolds, Glenalmond College; Murray Seggie, Lenzie Academy; and Rowan Shea, Mearns Academy. Commended: Georgia Douglas, High School of Dundee; Isobel Howard, Forres Academy; Ruairaidh McCulloch, Perth High School; Kelechi Nwokeabia, St Benedict's High School; Petra Pender, Mary Erskine School; Will Ramsay, High School of Dundee; Caitlin Scollin, Trinity High School; Hannah Stewart, Perth High School; Megan Tandy, Dalbeattie High School; and Kirsty Williamson, Prestwick Academy.

Previous winners:

Changshi Tang, High School of Dundee (2019/20); Harriet Sweatman, The Royal High School (2018/19); Shannon Henderson, St Maurice's High School (2017/18); Jonathan Tevendale, Mallaig High School (2016/17); Gemma Grier, Our Lady's High School (2015/16).

Checklist and Rules

-  The competition is open to pupils in schools in Scotland who are between 15 and 18 on **Thursday 16 December 2021**
-  Schools must email schools@youngprogramme.org to register participation no later than **Wednesday 20 October 2021** giving the organisers the name, title and email address of a point of contact
-  Entries must be **non-fiction** and in the style of a column/article for a serious newspaper or magazine
-  Entries must be the work of the author alone, must not have been edited or otherwise altered by a teacher or anyone else, and must not have been published previously
-  Entries should have **no fewer than 900 words and no more than 1,200 words**. Entries outside of these margins **will not** be considered
-  The closing date for entries is **Thursday 16 December 2021**
-  Each entry must be emailed via the school, and must state at the top: the **name and age on the closing date** of the author, and the **name and village/town/city of the school**
-  Each school may submit a **maximum of 10 entries**
-  A shortlist will be announced in February. Each of the shortlisted authors will be required to supply a head and shoulders photograph for the *Scottish Review* website
-  The award-winning entries will be published on our website – www.scottishreview.net – in March

Contact us

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