

Creative Writing – Intermediate Report

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In 2018, a team of five judges assessed forty-two Intermediate Creative Writing entries from sixteen schools. In comparison to 2017, this was a thirty-five percent decrease in the number of entries received, which was comparative to the 2016 entry pool. Nine registered entries were not received. The overall standard of Intermediate Creative Writing entries was again consistently high in 2018, and judging has continued to be very competitive. There were four allowed topics. The three topics 'And now we think differently', 'This changes everything', and 'Australian changes that revolutionised the world' were the most popular topics, each attracting about the same number of entries. The 'After many trials...' topic attracted the least number of entries.

Five Major Bursaries of \$60 and ten Minor Bursaries of \$50 were awarded, thanks to the generosity of sponsors and donors. Eight entries gained the Distinction award. The standard of entries was such that all other entries were awarded a Merit Certificate, with hardly an exception.

In this year of the Australian game changers and change makers theme, key judging criteria discriminators for the award of a Major Bursary were again the integration of science ideas into writing, the amount of scientific content included in the writing, and originality and creativity. 'The journey and impact of stem cell technology' was a moving piece about the life of a child born through IVF being later saved through the use of cord blood stem cells when she developed a life-threatening illness as a child. The child became a doctor and in a full-circle turn of events, she carried out medical treatment using stem cell technology to restore the sight of her IVF embryologist. 'Noiseless sound' focused on the impact on a woman's life of her receiving a cochlear implant. In 'The Fatal Malattia', an historical crime is linked to a current one. Both crimes are solved in imaginative writing by a character based on DNA Biologist Eliza Bell. In 'How we think', the author develops a character based on Nobel Prize laureate Sir John Carew Eccles, who reflects on his life's research and teaching on neurophysiology. As well as the black box flight recorder and the cochlea implant being popular focuses of many of the creative writing entries, students also incorporated science ideas that included the story of penicillin, and the cloning of sheep.

It is always important that students gain a thorough understanding of the section Guidelines page in the STS Handbook prior to commencing their writing project. The additional page on How to cite references and write a bibliography will alert entrants to the requirement to list both the date and time that they access websites. If students have this in mind from the commencement of their entry, then they should be able to fulfil this formatting requirement. Importantly, students can use the Entry Guidelines as a self-assessment checklist prior to submitting their entry.

Well done to all the 2018 year 9 and 10 authors on their creative writing achievement. Congratulations to all who achieved Bursary, Distinction and Merit Awards. The judging team from five schools across Victoria is especially commended for using the online system of receiving entries for judging and entering comments and results for the first time. They did a sterling job of evaluating the entries using the judging criteria for Scientific Content and Presentation, and writing feedback comments for each entrant. We are most appreciative of their volunteer time and expertise, and careful judging. Thank you to all the learning area directors and coordinators, and Science teachers across the schools for their valuable support and encouragement of the students. We are also grateful for the involvement of parents and other mentors, which is invaluable.