**Writing Competition Worksheet**

This worksheet has been designed to help those who want to write or video a short story and enter it into our writing competition.

**What your Story should be about**

The theme of the competition is all about lockdown and the experience you have had over the past year living in lockdown.

For Juniors aged 8 - 12 you have up to 500 words to use in your story.

For Seniors aged 13 – 19 (or up to 25 with a disability or additional needs) you have up to 800 words to use in your story.

You can write about an experience, a message, or a vision that you want others to understand. It could be special to you and your family or it could be about something other people have felt too.

It can be a about something positive or something negative.

The Judges will be looking at not only what you say in your story but also how you structure your story to help people understand it. Being honest in story writing is always a good idea.

**Structuring your story in five steps**

You want your readers to connect with your story. You want them to see things how you see or saw them. Below is some guidance for you to consider when writing your story.

1. **Introduce yourself and your topic.**

At the start quickly say something about yourself, for example: your name; age and something about your family.

1. **Set the Scene.**

Before you tell us about your experience, message, or vision you want to describe where the story is set so your readers can make a picture in their mind. This is helpful as once they have such a picture in their mind they will not just be reading your words but imagining they are there, with you, as the story takes place.

When setting the scene always say where it is and think about:

1. What the weather was like. For example: it was a grey cloudy day or a cloudless sunny day.
2. Describe what is there: also use all the senses such as smell and sound as well as sight and use colour to help. For example: I could hear birdsong and smell freshly cut grass.
3. Are there any people there and what are they doing? For example: they could be sunbathing or shopping.
4. **What happened?**

Now explain what your story is about. Just write down everything you feel is necessary but remember not to over complicate things, so your readers get confused. I would focus on just one thing about lockdown which has meant something to you for example not seeing friends in school or people in your family.

Let your readers know how you have coped (or not) with, for example, not seeing your friends as much.

1. **What emotions did you feel?**

It is important to give your readers a connection to your story and showing your emotions is brilliant at helping you do this. For example, you may have been shocked, lonely, anxious, upset, or worried. Show your readers how this affected you physically for example, it could have made your blood boil, your heartbeat faster or left you feeling numb.

1. **How do you think lockdown will affect you as you get older?**

I really hope lockdown ends very soon and that we can all get back on with our lives, but it may make us see things differently and make us act differently to what we used to do before lockdown. For example, it might make you feel worried hanging about with too many people or that you should spend more time with the people you care about.

**Top Tips**

* Write it out in rough first before writing your story and sending it in. Writing it in rough and then writing (or typing) it neatly can help you see things you might have missed.
* Do not worry about spellings, grammar, and punctuation. It is your story that really matters.
* I have mentioned it before but always be honest when writing about your own experience, for example write what your true feelings are about lockdown.
* Take your time when writing your story. Write it in rough first and then leave it for a day. Sometimes new ideas and thoughts will appear which you can then add to your story.
* Once you have finished it, read it back to yourself to make sure you have put in everything you wanted and are happy with it.

I hope you enjoy writing your story. Writing about our own personal experiences can be extremely helpful to you. It can boost your health and wellbeing and make you understand things better.

I look forward to reading or hearing your stories.