

Creative Writing – Intermediate

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The overall standard of Intermediate Creative Writing entries was very pleasing in 2010, and nearly all entries were able to gain a Merit Certificate, if they did not achieve a Major or Minor Bursary. Major and Minor Bursary winning entries shone with accurate scientific content incorporated into original and creative stories.

Two Major Bursaries of \$60 and ten Minor Bursaries of \$45 were awarded. Lauren Shearman's Major Bursary winning entry – *'Ferals versus natives'* was an original and informative story whose narrative voice was a passionate biologist. And the 'feral'? The cane toad! Lauren also wrote a Major Bursary winning story last year as a Year 9 student, so she has definitely proven her success with this writing genre. Year 9 student Ellen Taylor's Major Bursary writing – *'Keeping our biodiversity'* took the form of a letter from an Australian scientist in the year 2130. Her story caught the reader's attention from the start and the science content was clearly presented. Ellen's main character? Again, the cane toad!

In 2010, twenty-eight entries were received from students at thirteen schools across Victoria, and a judging panel of four teachers assessed the entries. Equally popular of the four *Biodiversity* topics were *'Once upon a time there was plenty and now...'* and *'Keeping our biodiversity'*, with two thirds of students choosing these topics. The other two topics were *'Ferals versus natives'* and *'Reclaiming the city'*. Although chosen less, these topics did lend themselves to some very original and creative storylines.

In this year's stories, the cast of 'natives' included Eastern Grey Kangaroo, Helmeted Honeyeater, Common Ringtail Possum, Cassowary, Tasmanian Tiger, Bilby, Acacia Boormanii and Eucalyptus Porosa. The cast of 'ferals' included cane toads, cats and rabbits. Story locations included the Great Barrier Reef, the Daintree Rainforest and the Great Sandy Desert.

The 'accuracy of science content' and 'relevance of science to the topic' criteria were generally rated highly by the judges this year. Most entrants carefully followed the guidelines for Creative Writing in the STS Handbook, including providing an appendix of five key scientific ideas and a bibliography and keeping within the maximum word count. References for internet resources were generally complete with the name of the article/source, the URL address and the date *and time* of access listed.

Thank you to our judges for their assessment time and comments, including *'great ideas presented'*, *'interesting use of perspective from the cat'*, *'fantastic integration of the science of biodiversity'*, *'excellent commentary'*, *'you are very imaginative'*, *'your story was very informative'*, *'a very interesting and engaging story'* and *'science was well integrated'*.

Well done to all the 2010 Creative Writing – Intermediate section authors on your efforts and congratulations to all who achieved Bursary and Merit Awards.