

Poetry Prizes for Pupils

Cleckheaton students have once again been putting pen to paper to produce some excellent poetry. Pupils studying at Key stage 3 in local secondary schools were asked to write a poem on the subject of animals and well over 150 of them took up the challenge in the competition which closed recently

Once the poems had been anonymised the panel of judges had their work cut out in selecting the best poems and spent a long time reading and sorting the exceptionally high quality efforts. After a number of elimination rounds they were left with their top ten outstanding poems from what they described as “a really well written selection”. After careful re-reading and much discussion it was decided to award 4 top prizes instead of the promised 3.

Once the winning titles were known and checked against the entry list it was found that despite having an even mixture of entries from girls and boys, the prize winners were all girls and 3 of them were from one school. Birkenshaw’s BBG Academy with the other prize winner coming from Spen Valley Sports College. The top 4 were

1st - Georgina Whitehead - BBG Academy – Poem Title "Mr Squid"

2nd - Amy Moizer - BBG Academy - Poem Title "Laying on the ground"

3rd - Lily Williamson - BBG Academy - Poem Title "The Wolf"

4th – Charlotte Powell - Spen Valley Sports College - Poem Title "Hamsters"

Each of the winning students received a gift voucher and a certificate from the Talking Zebras group. The picture shows 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize winners following a presentation by 3 of the 4 judges at a BBG assembly.

This was the second school poetry competition organized by the Talking Zebras, the first being for Key Stage 1&2 pupils. One of the judges, former teacher Mr Jim Saville who is also a published poet, said “I was very impressed by the overall standard of the poems received in both competitions and the prize winners showed a maturity and skill beyond their years This reflects well on both the pupils and their teachers”

The talking zebras were formed in October 2012 by Mr Saville and Mr David Lindsay to provide a focal point for the spoken word in Cleckheaton where people could come along and listen to (or perform) pieces of prose or poetry in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. After nearly 40 such Saturday afternoon sessions at the Commercial on Bradford Road, Cleckheaton they have a regular membership of like minded locals as well as guests from as far afield as South Yorkshire and Lancashire who get together from 2:30ish to 4:30ish on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Saturday each month. Such has been their success that they are regularly invited to take part in local literary festivals and to hold special concerts. The next concert being a mixture of poetry and music entitled “Lend Us Your Ears” and will take place at Millbridge Working Men’s Club, Liversedge on 20th June at 19:15 onwards. Tickets £5 more details from David [07900 695873] or <https://www.facebook.com/lendusyourears>