

THE Elsie Locke Writing Prize 2017



for narrative writing by students in years 7 and 8

Since 2009, thousands of students have participated in the Elsie Locke Writing Prize. Support your students to take part, too.

The prize commemorates Elsie Locke's life, both as a writer and as a person who was concerned about peace, the environment, women's issues, and community. The winner receives \$250 together with a certificate, and their story is published in the *School Journal*.

TOPIC FOR 2017: A story set in early New Zealand that is about exploration, a discovery, or an encounter

The story can be about people's arrival and first impressions of New Zealand; people discovering/experiencing new places or creatures; or people from different cultures encountering and interacting with one another. Characters can be Māori, Pākehā, or from any other culture.

This topic links to the following level 4 achievement objectives. **English:** Select, develop, and communicate ideas on a range of topics; Use a range of language features appropriately, showing an increasing understanding of their effects. **Social Sciences:** Understand how exploration and innovation create opportunities and challenges for people, places, and environments; Understand that events have causes and effects; Understand how people participate individually and collectively in response to community challenges.

For stories and articles in the *School Journal* that might help see "Fallen Leaves" and "Te Kura Tuatahi: New Zealand's First School" (L4 Nov 2016); "Ngā Tātarakihi o Parihaka" (L4 May 2016); "Hatter's Gold" (L4 Oct 2015); "Te Taki" (4.3.09); "Spirit of the Bird" (L3 Aug 2015); "Richard Owen's Giant Mystery" (L3 Aug 2015); "Bright Fine Gold" (L3 May 2015); "Hakaraia: Warrior Peacemaker" (L4 May 2015); "Bok Choy" (L3 May 2015); "Ngā Pakanga o Aotearoa/The New Zealand Wars" (L4 Nov 2014); "Kauri Island" (L4 Nov 2014).

JUDGING

The judges will look for the following:

- an original and thoughtful response to the topic
- a sense of time, place, and character
- an understanding of the event described and its importance to the main character
- the ability to engage the reader
- clarity, coherence, and an effective use of language.

To read the winning stories from previous years, see "War Games" (4.3.09), "The Half-crown" (4.3.10), "Too Close to the Wind" (L4 October 2011), "Past, Present, and Future" (L4 October 2012), "Close to the Edge" (L4 November 2014), "Mr Archibald" (L4 October 2015), and "Mirror Image" (L4 November 2016). These stories can also be read on the Elsie Locke website: elsielocketrust.org.nz

COMPETITION RULES

The competition is open to all students in years 7 and 8. Entries should be around 500–600 words (maximum). They may be handwritten. All work must be the writer's own, and the winner must be willing for their story to become Crown copyright. Entries need to arrive by Friday 14 July 2017 and should be sent to:

Susan Paris
Lift Education
PO Box 19088
Wellington 6149

The winner will be announced on Monday 7 August on the Elsie Locke website (see address above) and Lift Education's website: www.lifteducation.com. Schools will also be notified if a student made the short list (the top ten).

Please photocopy this form below and **staple it to each entry.**

Name: _____

School: _____

Year level: _____

I certify that the work is my own and I give my permission for it to be published in the *School Journal* under Crown copyright.

Signed: _____

Teaching Suggestions

READING

Build understanding of the context and themes

Use the suggested *School Journal* stories or articles to build your students' understanding of New Zealand prior to the mid-nineteenth century. Many of these texts support the themes of encounter and discovery. While none directly relate to exploration, many could be used to inspire your students to use the context and historical setting in their writing.

Provide guiding questions to draw out understanding of the events, contexts and characters in the suggested texts.

For example:

- What would it have been like for people to leave their home and familiar country to travel to strange, faraway places? (see "Bok Choy", "Kauri Island")
- What kinds of things happened when people from different cultures encountered one another in early New Zealand? Why did some of these encounters result in conflict? How did people/the government deal with conflict? ("Fallen Leaves", "Nga Tātarakihi o Parihaka", "Hakaraia: Warrior Peacemaker", "Te Taki", "Ngā Pakanga o Aotearoa/The New Zealand Wars")
- What would it have been like for a child arriving in early New Zealand from a faraway place? ("Kauri Island")
- What would it have been like to encounter some of the now extinct birds and creatures that were alive in earlier times? What would it be like to discover a creature previously thought to be extinct? ("Richard Owen's Giant Mystery", "Spirit of the Bird")
- What were some of the personal conflicts that people struggled with as they adapted to new lives, unfamiliar settings, and people from other cultures? ("Bok Choy", "Hatter's Gold", "Fallen Leaves", "Kauri Island")
- What would it have been like to discover a place, such as a swimming hole, cave, or island, that no one else had seen before?
- What qualities did the people in the articles or stories convey? (for example, curiosity, courage, determination, fairness, respect, empathy)

WRITING

Developing ideas

- Develop a group or class brainstorm of historical events and settings that students could include in their stories.
- Create a timeline of significant events ranging from the first migration to New Zealand around seven hundred years ago to the mid-nineteenth century. Encourage students to fill in gaps with research.
- Explore the ways in which writers for the *School Journal* have created fictional stories around historical events and contexts. The writing section of the TSMs (teacher support materials) will provide you with hints and suggestions. Analyse the writers' use of plot, setting, and characterisation, noting how they:
 - hook the reader in
 - convey a sense of time and place
 - convey the characters' thoughts and feelings
 - use language, including figurative language, for clarity, coherence, and building rich descriptions.

Creating text

When students have chosen an event for their story, have them think about the main characters.

- Model a character description as part of the planning process.
- Discuss how a character might respond to a situation that involves either exploration, a discovery, or an encounter.
- Provide time for students to think about their story's "hook", how they might portray the characters, and the conflict or tension in the story and how this could be resolved.
- Have the students develop an outline of their plot. They could share it with a peer and take in feedback before drafting their story.

Support students throughout the writing process and provide ample time for reflection, peer feedback, reviewing, and re-writing.