Collaboration and Partnerships

Ablaze Poetry Competition 2018

Ablaze ran a third Primary School Poetry & Picture competition in Bristol and South Gloucestershire Primary Schools in 2018 with this year’s theme being ‘My Planet’. The theme really sparked the children’s imaginations and 60 fantastic poems were chosen for the book; poems explored topics such as environmental issues and imaginary planets.

The competition is supported by Intellect Ltd, who kindly publish the poetry book.

Clarke Willmott generously hosted the prize giving celebration for the second year running, where Bristol’s first Poet Laureate, Miles Chambers presented the winners and runners-up with prizes and certificates and the children read out their poems.

This year’s overall winner was Maryam Iqbal from Whitehall Primary School with her poem ‘One World’.

One World
by Maryam Iqbal

I wish we lived in a world where everyone was treated equally,
    No difference between rich and poor,
Where we all lived in perfect harmony.
    A world without conflict and war,
A world where we respect every faith
    A world where we could be sure,
    That no-one was unsafe.

A difference in race can start a war,
A war between the powerful and the poor,
    So what if we are black or white?
We all have the same rights.

Poor children crying in pain,
    Just want to be happy again,
Scared, they sit in hunger,
Knowing they may not live for longer.
Loving families torn apart,
Feeling distressed, hopeless with a broken heart,
People’s homes shattered to rubble,
Their lives now an ever-lasting struggle.

Let’s all come together, united as one,
Let’s end all wars and put away the gun.
Why can’t we all just see,
That unity is diversity.

If you would like to order a copy of our fantastic poetry book, with all money raised supporting our Primary and Secondary school programmes, please Contact Us.

Bristol Airport have made a kind donation to support our 2019 Poetry Competition, which will allow us to provide poetry workshops in a number of schools, as well as printing more poems and pictures in our book.

**Ablaze Picture Competition 2018**

Each year, Ablaze holds a cover image competition to get an eye-catching picture for the front page of the poetry book. This year’s cover design was drawn by Victoria Bartlewska from St Teresa’s Catholic Primary School.

The cover image competition received so many fantastic entries that we decided to include pictures inside the book for the first time.
Thanks to a collaboration between Ablaze, Rolls-Royce and the Bristol Hippodrome, twelve primary schools were lucky enough to be treated to boxes at the Hippodrome’s children’s shows. Pupils from Evergreen Primary Academy – who are part of the Cabot Learning Federation – were treated to the ‘Teletubbies Live Overview’ performance and all the pupils were thrilled to see the Teletubbies on stage. For some of the pupils who attended shows over the summer, their visit to the Hippodrome was the first time they had ever been to the theatre.

Deborah Barkham, the Inclusion Lead and SENCo at Evergreen Primary Academy, said “The children really enjoyed the Teletubbies Live show. They loved the opportunity to experience live theatre in such beautiful surroundings!” She commented on the school’s Ablaze Reading Buddies: “Children at Evergreen Primary Academy are given the opportunity take part in weekly, one-to-one reading sessions with professionals from TLT Solicitors through Ablaze. Our children really value this time and have developed positive relationships with their readers. Taking part in this reading programme, alongside the other reading activities taking place in the school, provides our children with the opportunity to develop a love of reading and sharing stories. A bonus of the Ablaze Reading Buddy programme is that our children have the chance to meet inspirational adults within the Bristol community and this helps to support and develop their own aspirations for their future.”
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Rolls-Royce Bristol Hippodrome visits

Charlotte Kelly, Community Investment Officer at Rolls-Royce in Filton, commented “Rolls-Royce works with a range of specialist partners to support social investment programmes that make a positive difference to the local communities which we serve. We wanted to do something different in 2018, so when we were approached by the Bristol Hippodrome, we jumped at the opportunity to become one of their corporate partners offering those who may not be able to visit the theatre the opportunity to go. With shows like Awful Auntie, Teletubbies Live and Peppa Pig’s Adventure being shown at the Bristol Hippodrome, we decided to work with our longstanding corporate charity & partner, Ablaze, to offer this opportunity to pupils who might not get the chance to go to the theatre. Rolls-Royce employees support the Ablaze ‘Reading Buddy’ primary school intervention by volunteering in a local school, to help children who are struggling with their literacy. This has been a fantastic partnership, bringing three organisations together to give something back to the local community.”
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“It’s Right to Write” writing course with OVO Energy, Woodlands Academy and St. Pius X Catholic Primary

Following on from last year’s successful “It’s Right to Write” course with writer Huw Powell, Ablaze ran two creative writing courses for Woodlands Academy and St Pius X Primary over 2017/18. The courses were kindly supported by OVO Energy and delivered by Lu Hersey, author of the highly acclaimed book ‘Deep Water’ and who has taught creative writing to Year 5 and 6 pupils under the ‘Paper Nation Scheme’. She is also a Founding member & judge of the Bristol Short Story Prize, as well as a winner of the Mslexia Children’s Writing Award.

Woodlands Academy Year and St Pius X Year 5 pupils were chosen to receive the course which covered areas such as: having a brilliant idea & developing your story; setting; characters; dialogue; editing and bringing the whole story together. Ablaze supported the course and sourced business volunteers to help mentor the pupils in the sessions’ exercises. Each pupil’s story was published in a special booklet at the end of the course and they all got a copy to keep. The course was incredibly well received and Will Harding, the Year 5 Teacher at St Pius X Primary School, commented, “What a fantastic course. Children at St Pius don’t often get opportunities like this and it has had a clear positive impact on their writing. I have seen such a marked improvement in their writing since the delivery of the course and I am certain that Lu has unearthed something that these children didn’t necessarily believe they had - a real talent for creative writing.”
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OVO Energy and St Pius X Catholic Primary Breakfast Club

OVO Energy also donated money towards a breakfast club at St Pius X Catholic Primary. The school is in real need of support with an Inadequate Ofsted grading and 60.3% of their pupils eligible for Free School Meals.

Denise Fannin, the Head Teacher, reported that over 50 pupils came to breakfast club and that most of them probably hadn’t eaten since school lunch the day before. This had a positive impact on attendance levels at the school, which are currently very high, with 27.4% of pupils being persistently absent from school (the national average is 8.3%). With the school having 121 pupils on roll, that means that almost half of the school attended breakfast club over 2017-18.

If your business would like to support a breakfast club to help a local school improve attendance and attainment, Ablaze could help you find a school to support and manage the partnership. Please get in touch with Ablaze to find out more.
Hareclive E-ACT Academy are absolutely delighted with their new Reading Oasis, thanks to Ablaze and United Way UK.

Sally Ridley, Ablaze’s Primary Partnership Manager, nominated Hareclive E-ACT Academy for a United Way Reading Oasis, as the school has a high proportion of children receiving Pupil Premium Funding, with over 70% of pupils at the school entitled to Free School Meals, compared to a national average of 14%. The school also desperately needed new books and facilities in which to enjoy them. Sharon Jones, the Reading Recovery Lead at Hareclive E-ACT Academy, was absolutely thrilled when the school was selected to receive a Reading Oasis.

Thanks to United Way UK, the school’s library now has hundreds of new books, new bookshelves and comfortable seats for the pupils to sit down and enjoy a book. The United Way Reading Oasis scheme aims to provide safe and inviting spaces within schools where children can enjoy reading and gain access to brand new books, while learning how to make reading a habit at home.

The United Way Reading Oasis scheme is funded by donations from companies and individuals, and schools with a high proportion of children receiving Free School Meals – especially those schools with an inadequate library or no library at all – are given priority. Please see United Way’s website for more details about the scheme.
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Bookworms sessions at Clarke Willmott are a big hit with students.

Clarke Willmott hosted yet another fantastic Bookworms programme for fifteen Year 7 students from Bridge Learning Campus.

Book Worms is a collaborative reading experience for year 7 and 8 students who are behind the expected reading level or who demonstrate a reluctance to engage at school which aims to improve existing reading skills, particularly comprehension and retrieval, increase confidence and build reading pleasure.

Aimee Davies from Clarke Willmott organised and coordinated the sessions, which took place at the Clarke Willmott offices in central Bristol, she was helped by a group of volunteers from the law firm. The group of boys from Bridge Learning Campus visited the offices each week for one term. Sessions started with some games, then the group read the book ‘Who Let the Gods Out’, discussed the book and did activities to help deepen their understanding of the book.

The feedback from the programme was fantastic. All of the students who took said that they felt more confident about themselves and their abilities having taken part in the programme, as well as feeling they had improved their ability to take part in discussions. 86% of the boys felt their reading and comprehension skills had improved and 71% said they enjoyed reading more now. The students could not think of a single thing about the programme that they didn’t enjoy.

The volunteers also enjoyed taking part and all felt that the students had improved their confidence and reading skills.

“The programme builds confidence in the pupils outside of their usual comfort zone. As well as aiding the boys' reading skills, they have also developed their aspirations and personal skills by attending” Clarke Willmott Volunteer

“Thank you so much for helping my reading” Bridge Learning Campus student

“First and foremost, this was a really rewarding experience and I felt a sense of achievement as we saw how well the boys progressed first-hand. However, I also gained experience in working with children and coordinating larger groups so it was a two-way process!” Clarke Willmott Volunteer

“I had a blast here but it’s really sad on the last day” Bridge Learning Campus student
Collaboration and Partnerships

West of England Mentoring

One of WEM’s strengths is its partnership model. Four organisations, Ablaze, Mentoring Plus, Babbasa and Bath Bridge joined forces to deliver best practice in business mentoring to students across our region. The partnership benefits from excellent track records in schools across Bristol and Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES), alongside established relationships with local businesses and funder across the West of England.

Inspired by the opportunity to work collaboratively and thanks to a start-up grant from the Careers and Enterprise Council our aim remains that together we can:

- Build on our local best practice through testing and learning together
- Balance expansion in B&NES, Bristol and South Gloucestershire
- Motivate a new generation – make it relevant, work creatively, plan ahead and make connections between professional ambitions and academic attainment

Through our partnership WEM is maximising the positive impact on disengaged students’ performance and progression. Our combined expertise, networks and passion for enabling young people has inspired a unique mentoring programme tailored to our locality.

“The mentoring programme is a fantastic opportunity to support WEM and the children at our local Bath schools. We have been thrilled by the uptake and the response as well as the positive feedback which has been phenomenal. We are always keen to give back to the local community and look forward to our upcoming programme of mentoring events.” Bill Vasilieff, CEO, Novia Financial plc

Ablaze
Developing skills and inspiring habits of achievements. Since 2005 thousands of young people across the wider Bristol region have been supported by business and community volunteers delivering support in schools through Ablaze programmes.

Mentoring Plus
A long tradition of inspiring community mentoring for young people across B&NES. We train and support adult volunteers to mentor 7-21 year olds needing extra support with family, education, emotional needs and employability.

Babbasa
A Bristol-based social enterprise that supports the professional aspirations of young people, irrespective of their background. We believe every young person has unique skills or talent which, if explored and nurtured, can contribute to society in a significant way.

Bath Bridge
An independent CIC set up in 2014 in response to the City Identity Project, its membership of active local businesses and influencers aims to support the city’s dynamic, inventive future by initiating and supporting physical, economic and social projects.