

First Story National Writing Competition On the theme of 'Home'

Homefront... Homeland... Family, friends, pets... The smell of grass, the feel of new sheets, the taste of mum's best dish... The journey from the corner shop... Remember... I was, I am... Insider/Outsider... Echoes...

Encourage your students to write stories or poems of 850 words or less on the theme of 'Home' – what does home mean to them? Is it a place, a smell, a taste, a group of people?

This year, we have an incredible chance for winners of the competition to go on an Arvon residential – and we want as many students to take part as possible!

Enclosed in this pack are various tools that will help you to run the competition, the items you should find are as follows:

- Competition posters
- 'Top tips' for writing
- Competition Submission Pro-forma
- IP Consent Form

The competition is split in to three stages:

- 1) *School level:* we want the whole school to get involved! The pupils are challenged to write a piece of 850 words or less on '**Home**' – or what an image or phrase presented to them in relation to this concept – means to them. They will submit their writing to you, and you need to select the **three best pieces** to enter into the competition. We will provide you with flyers and posters and workshop ideas to get the creative juices flowing. We'll give £30 to each school that enters to use as a prize within the school. **And the first 100 teachers to get over 50 entries within their school will get £100!**
- 2) *National level:* Four stories from each key stage (KS3, 4 and 5, twelve stories in total) will be selected by First Story from the final entries submitted by each school. This shortlist will then be read by a panel of high-profile authors – **Anthony McGowan, Bernardine Evaristo, James Dawson, Kate Kingsley and Laura Dockrill** – for consideration. This panel will pick one winner from each key stage and an overall winner of the whole competition. The final shortlist of twelve entries will be published in an anthology, and the shortlisted, along with the key stage and overall winners, will be recognised at a prize-giving event at LSE in early 2015. Each winner will gain a place on a **dedicated Arvon creative writing residential**, along with three peers and a teacher from their school.
- 3) *Teacher competition:* A separate strand of the competition will run for **teachers to take part**, in which teachers also write one piece 850 words or less on the theme 'Home'. We are really keen to see your writing too! Teachers' entries will be judged by the panel of authors and the winning teacher will gain a place on the Arvon residential.

Notes for Teachers

- The competition is open to pupils in Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 and a winner from each key stage will be chosen at the end of the competition.
- Teachers have the choice to run the challenge as an after-school club, or during lesson time integrated with the pupil's curriculum.
- Stories submitted by teachers as entries into the competition must be sent as individual word documents to help speed up the judging process.
- Each entry must be labelled with the student's name, key stage and school.
- All entries must be accompanied by a Competition Submission Pro-forma and an IP consent form.
- The timeline included in the document shows how the competition will develop from the launch in September 2014.

To submit the three winning stories from your school, please email:

competitions@firststory.org.uk

Please use the subject line 'First Story National Writing Competition'.

Detailed Timeline

DATE	EVENT	INFORMATION
September 2014	Competition begins	Teachers begin running sessions on creative writing and communicate the competition challenge to pupils.
Friday 28th November 2014	Competition entries due	Teachers judge their pupils' writing and submit a maximum of three entries. Also submit their own entry for the teachers' competition.
Friday 5th December 2014	First Story selects twelve shortlisted stories	All submissions from teachers are judged by First Story and twelve 'runners up' are found.
Friday 12th December 2014	Judges panel decide final winners	One winner is chosen from each key stage, along with one overall winner. Winning teacher also selected.
TBC 2015	Winners are announced at prize giving event and reception at LSE	Winning students from each key stage to select three peers to take on Arvon Residential.
16th – 21st March 2015	Arvon residential	For the three winning students, plus three peers and their teacher each, plus winning teacher.

Our partners:

Arvon

[Arvon](#) runs residential creative writing weeks for schools, groups and individuals, in beautiful countryside locations. The courses, led by highly respected authors, include a powerful mix of workshops, individual tutorials and time and space to write.



London School of Economics & Political Science (LSE)



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

The prize-giving event will be hosted at the [London School of Economics & Political Science \(LSE\)](#) in March 2015. The event will form part of LSE's 7th annual Space for Thought Literary Festival, which explores the links between the arts and social sciences.

FIRST STORY

Creativity Literacy Confidence

Top Tips for Writing

Millions of words have been spent trying to 'teach' creative writing. Writers at First Story agree that the most valuable of these words boils down to three simple rules:

- 1) Enjoy details
- 2) Value your own experience
- 3) Develop your own voice

Of course achieving these aims is not always simple, but perhaps the first point is the one from which the rest stem.

Below is a table of ideas to help pupils to develop their creative voice and write a piece centred upon **the theme of 'Home' for the First Story National Writing Competition**. They consider the nature of identity and encourage students to think about their own lives and what Home might mean to them.

These ideas are best done in groups of 8 – 16. If you are able to run an extra -curricular class, that is great. If not consider dividing the class into groups that feed back to one another.

Six Useful Exercises

Exercise	Details	Feedback
Being 10 20 minutes	<p>Choose the year in which students were aged about ten years. Ask them to close their eyes and think as hard as they can about being ten.</p> <p>Ask them to imagine the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The taste of being ten• The smell of being ten• The sound of being ten• The feel of being ten• The look of being ten <p>Give pupils time to think for each instruction and then tell them to open their eyes and write down their memories. Give them a few minutes for each sense and encourage them to focus on details, names and specific images.</p>	<p>Select a number of different memories to read aloud and encourage students to comment on why particular ones worked well. This activity can be broken up by writing and feeding back on each sense before feeding back on the next.</p>

<p>Recipe of Home 15 minutes</p>	<p>Ask the students to write a recipe to create their home. Think about the ingredients that might go into a home (concrete things: bricks, furniture; abstract things: love, comfort).</p>	<p>Students read aloud and discuss their recipes.</p> <p>Students could then swap certain ingredients from their recipes and see what kind of home this comes up with.</p>
<p>Begin in the Middle 20 minutes</p>	<p>Give students a pictures to look at of different kinds of home (from different cultures, different places). Tell students to imagine that they are reading a book, and halfway through, they find that the words on the next page have been replaced with the image. Starting, therefore, in the middle of the sentence, tell them to continue writing where the words left off.</p>	<p>Students read aloud the pieces they have written. Tutor to discuss the manner in which (probably) they have, in fact, started at the beginning.</p>
<p>Automatic Writing 15 minutes</p>	<p>Tell students they must begin with the words 'The first time I heard...' Encourage them to think about a piece of music/particular noise. Ask them to close their eyes and imagine the moment.</p>	<p>Some /all of student read pieces aloud. Think about what worked and why. Ask for positive and negatives from each student.</p>
<p>Building a Person 15 minutes</p>	<p>Give each student a piece of paper and ask them to write down a character's first name on the top line. Tell them to fold the paper to cover just their answer (as in the game consequences) and pass on to the next person. Ask the next person to write the person's surname, fold and pass on. Continue, asking them to write the person's age, place of birth, their hates, loves, favourite colours, etc. When the paper has gone full circle, ask each student to read out the finished profile. Write for ten minutes about this character on the subject of what they're like when they're at home.</p>	<p>These could be read aloud or judged by the teacher for the most creative.</p>
<p>Incongruous Description 25 minutes</p>	<p>Give each student a place or allow them to pick one: e.g., home, hospital, school, corner shop etc. Ask them to make a note of their place. Then give each student a style in which they must write. For example: all in questions in words of one syllable, in one sentence, as a radio DJ, etc. Encourage them to think about POV (are they going to write in 1st/2nd/3rd person?). Ask students to describe their place in the given style.</p> <p>Alternative: Describe the place using the language of a conflicting setting. For example: a. A farm using urban language (Fence posts lined up like police at a riot.) b. A classroom using holiday language. (Students slouched like overheated sunbathers on a beach.)</p>	<p>Ask if any students would like to read some/all their places. Encourage them to listen for effective passages and analyse. What makes a successful/unusual depiction of place?</p>

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FIRST STORY NATIONAL WRITING COMPETITION 2014-15 On the theme of 'Home'

STUDENT INFORMATION

Please complete the details below and ensure it is submitted with all other paperwork.

STUDENT DETAILS

NAME OF STUDENT

DOB

KEY STAGE

NAME OF SCHOOL

ADDRESS

CONTACT TEL. NO. (please provide a number you can easily be contacted on)

EMAIL

SIGNATURE

SUBMISSION DETAILS

TITLE OF SUBMISSION

WORD COUNT

FIRST STORY

CONSENT FORM

Thank you for taking part in our creative writing course. First Story Limited is a UK registered charity, and we aim to give promising students the opportunity to make the most of their creativity.

During the course, you will create copyright works. We may also want to produce films, recordings or photographs in connection with the course, and you may perform or feature in those.

You will own all rights in any such contribution that you make. We would, however, like to use your contribution for the course and in the future.

Consent

So, in return for our arranging the course (which you confirm is a sufficient benefit to you), you agree as follows:

- 1 You consent to taking part in the course. You also consent to being photographed, recorded and/or filmed by or for us in connection with the course.
- 2 We may use (and authorise the use of) your contribution for all purposes that are consistent with our charitable status by any means. Accordingly:
 - a. you grant us a non-exclusive licence to use your contribution for those purposes;
 - b. you grant us every consent that may now or in the future be required by law for such use; and
 - c. you waive, and agree not to assert, any so-called "moral rights" or other non-transferable rights that you may have in relation to your contribution, although we shall (wherever reasonably practicable) try to give you a suitable author credit.
- 3 We have created a private and closed group on Facebook to facilitate communications between the author and all participating students. The group is moderated at regular intervals by First Story staff. You agree to comply, when using the group, with First Story's terms of use for the group, which are available online at www.firststory.org.uk (or in hard or soft copy from First Story on written request).
- 4 We may store your details on our database for all purposes relating to the running of the course and the operation of our Facebook group.
- 5 We may also use your personal data (in an anonymised form) to evaluate the course's effectiveness and to publish the results of such evaluation.

Please fill in your details and sign below:

YOUR DETAILS	
Full name (<i>please print</i>):	
Name of school:	
Date of Birth:	
Email address:	
Signed (<i>student</i>):	Dated:

If you are under 18, your parent/guardian must also complete and sign this declaration:

PARENT / GUARDIAN DETAILS	
Full name (<i>please print</i>):	
Relationship to child (<i>please tick as appropriate</i>):	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian
Contact details:	Tel: Email:
Declaration: I confirm that I am the parent/guardian of the above child. I approve my child's agreement above.	
Signed (<i>parent / guardian</i>):	Dated: