

# YOUNG WRITERS COMPETITION

*This competition is designed to encourage new writing. All scripts are submitted as anonymous texts to an independent adjudicator. Reals names within the text are blanked and only a reference number and the age of the author is attributed to preserve anonymity. The adjudicator stated 'Again this year there was a very high standard of writing from all contributors. I hope the young authors are encouraged to keep on writing and that their work will inspire new submissions over the coming years. In the main the work was well structured and beautifully imaginative. There can only be a few winners but I hope that all who submitted try again and most of all keep their imaginations flowing'.*

## PRIMARY LEVEL GAEILGE

### Tuairimí an mholtóra

Tá caighdeán na Gaeilge an - árd ar fad sna scéalta go léir sa chomórtas seo. Feictear úsáid iontach de nathanna cainte agus cruinneas sa ghramadach. Molaim go hard gach iarrthóir agus tá súil agam go leanfaidh an sár - caighdeán seo sa todhchaí. Bhí sé an deacair rogha a dhéanamh idir na h- iarrthóirí, ach seo iad na torthaí:

**An Chéad Duais : 'Ó NAOMH PÁDRAIG GO DROIM DHÁ THIAR'.** Caoimhe Nig Ualghairg, Aois 8 Gaelscoil Chluainín. Tá an - líofacht sa scéal seo. Chuir sé / sí an scéal í láthair í slí éascaigh agus simplí don léitheoir. Tá an ghramadach an chruinn. Comhghairdeas. Maith thú.

**An Dara Duais : 'MO DHAIDÍ FEAR DÓITÉAN'.** Maitiú Ó Conghaile. Aois 8 Gaelscoil Chluainín. Arís, feictear an - líofacht sa scéal seo. Scéal deas, simplí atá ann ar a Mhamó. Rinne sé / sí codarsnacht an - éifeachtach idir an lá atá inniu ann agus an saol atá thart. Comhghairdeas. Maith thú."

### AN CHÉAD DUAIS

**Ó Naomh Pádraig go Droim Dhá Thiar** Caoimhe Nig Ualghairg Aois 8

IS MISE Caoimhe Nig Ualghairg. Táim 8 mbliana d'aois agus is as Droim Dhá Thiar mé. I rith an tSamhraidh seo caite ar cheann amháin do na laethanta fluiche, bhí mé féin is mo Dhaideo ag caint le chéile. Phléamar seo is phléamar siúd. Agus...ansin dúirt sé "A Chaoimhe, a chroí, an bhfuil a fhios agatsa go bhfuil fuil ghorm agat? Ta gaol agat le Rí!"

Bhuel, dar ndóigh phléasc mé amach ag gáire. "Daideo", a d'fhiafraigh mé, "an bhfuil mise gaolta le Prionsa Liam nó Harry?" "Ní hea," a dúirt sé.

"Tá gaol díreach agatsa le sean Rí na hÉireann!" "WOW," a scread mé, "tá sé sin iontach spéisiúil! Is banphrionsa mé!!!!"

"Tá ár n'ainm Mag Ualghairg an-speisialta i stair na hÉireann," a dúirt mo Dhaideo liom. "Súí agus éist", a dúirt sé. Mar sin, shuigh mé síos go deas ciúin agus d'éist mé go han- chúramach:

Tosaíonn an scéal leis an gcéad Mag Ualghairg- Ualgharg Ó Ruairc. Ba é Ualgharg Ó Ruairc, Tiarna Shuíochán Bhreifne timpeall 1200AD. Bhí sé i gceannas ar cheantar mhór ina raibh contaetha Liatroma, Shligigh, Cabháin agus Fhear Manach. D'inis Daideo dom gur fear iontach cáiliúil ba ea é. Ní amháin go raibh sé cáiliúil ach bhí sé an-dhathúil agus an-chumachtach agus an-chumasach agus an-chneasta. Ní hé aon ionadh go bhfuil mise gaolta leis!!!

Bhí Ualgharg Ó Ruairc mar ghaol díreach le Clann Bryan deartháir le "Niall of the Nine Hostages" a bhí mar Rí na hÉireann 380-405AD. Ba é Niall an duine a sciob Naomh Pádraig nuair a bhí sé ina bhuachaill óg óna thuismitheoirí agus a chlann sa Bhreatain Bheag. Thóg Niall Pádraig óg go hÉireann. Dhíol sé é mar sclábháí d'fheirmeoir darb ainm Milchú.

Choinnigh sé Pádraig ar feadh na blianta ar Shliabh Mis in Aontroim. Chaith Pádraig a chuid ama ag tabhairt aire do na muca. D'íth sé bia na muice. Labhair sé gach lá le Dia. Ghuí sé ar son na hÉireannaigh. Ba Dia an t-aonú cara a bhí ag Pádraig agus é in Éirinn.

Faoi dheireadh d'éalaigh sé ar ais abhaile ar bhád. Ach, creid nó ná chreid é, d'fhill sé ar ais arís go hÉireann sa bhliain 432AD. Aisteach go leor bhí trua aige dúinn. Scaip sé scéal Dé ar na hÉireannaigh. Is é Pádraig a thug an Chríostaíocht dúinn.

Is dócha go ndearna mo ghaol Niall of the Nine Hostages fíor-droch rud nuair a sciob sé Pádraig ar dtús. Ach ní fhéadfá ach aontú liom gur thoradh iontach a bhí ann sa deireadh, mar nach é - Pádraig, Aspal Mór na hÉireann.

Léiríonn sé seo gur thóg gaol liomsa an Chríostaíocht go dtí an tír seo.

Anois an dtuigeann sibh an tábhacht atá le m'ainm?

Chomh maith leis an nasc ríoga idir Bhreifne agus Niall Rí na hÉireann tá an t-ainm Mag Ualghairg luaite sa leabhar staire cáiliúla sin "Annála na gCeithre Máistrí".

Go hiondúil feictear an t-ainm Mag Ualghairg ó thuaidh i Liatroim agus i gCo. Fhear Manach. Tá go leor claimne timpeall Droim Dhá Thiar agus táimse féin an-bhródúil as m'ainm agus an stair a bhaineann leis.

Ar dtús nuair a d'inis mo Dhaideo an scéal seo dom, cheap mé go raibh sé ag pleidhcíocht! Ach nuair a thaispeáin sé fianaise dom ó saineolaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath, baineadh an-gheit asam. Ní scéal a bhí ann ach an fhírinne!

I ndeireadh na dála is féidir liom a rá go bhfuil gaol díreach agam le Niall of the Nine Hostages Rí na hÉireann agus Ualgharg Ó Ruairc Tiarna Bhreifne ach ar an lámh eile d'fhéadfaidís a rá go raibh siadsan gaolta liomsa!

AN DARA DUAIS

Mo Dhaidí Fear Dóiteáin *Maitiú Ó Conghaile, Aois 8*

IS FEAR dóiteáin é mo Dhaidí i gCluainín Uí Ruairc, Co Liatroma ar feadh trí bhliain déag anuas. Téann sé chuig an treanáil dóiteáin gach Céadaoin ar fud an chontae. Tiománann sé an inneall dóiteáin agus lá amháin thug sé síob domsa ann agus chuir sé na soilse ar siúl. Chabhraigh mo Dhaid le go leor leor daoine thar na blianta. Bíonn sé ag tinte difriúla ar nós; tinte simléara, tinte cistine, tinte scáthlána agus tinte tithe. Aon uair a bhíonn tine i gCo. Liatroma bíonn mo Dhaidí ann. Tá an ghráin síoraí ag mo Dhaid ar thimpistí bóithre mar de ghnáth bíonn duine éigin gortaithe go dona nó uaireanta níos measa bíonn siad marbh.

D'inis mo Dhaidí scéal barrúil dom faoi leoraí a shleamnaigh ón mbóthar istigh sa bpáirc agus bhí an leoraí lán le muice. Rith na muice ar fiáin agus bhí an boladh uafásach. Dar liomsa is iad mo Dhaidí agus na fir agus na mná a bhíonn ag obair leis laochra Liatroma.

PRIMARY LEVEL ENGLISH

**Adjudicator's Comments**

**First Prize: 'A MYSTERY'.**

*Olivia Parkinson- Coombs, Age 11, Gaelscoil Chluainín.*

The momentum triggered by this story's dramatic opening sentence never falters in this gripping narrative. Written in a pacey present tense that adds to the realism of the plot, the story unfolds through the skilful inter-weaving of natural dialogue, bouts of introspection and very incisive descriptions of actions and characters.

The result is a wee gem of a short story.

**Second Prize: 'FREEDOM IN SCHOOL'.**

*Odhran King, Age 11, Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey, USA.*

The desire of this writer to become "more mature and trusted" is the central theme of this story, which is set against the lively backdrop of Drumshanbo during the annual Joe Mooney Summer School. The 11 year old writer is entrusted by his parents "to go in to town and back without their support". The comforting ambience of Drumshanbo - "a very familiar town" to the writer - offers a good opportunity to surmount this challenge. The challenge is adeptly circled at different stages in the

story until, after a series of encounters, the writer finally arrives at the point where his/her "big achievement" in being trusted has been realised. Some aspects of Drumshanbo life add to the vibrant storyline as the writer includes not just some sights in the town but also sounds, smells and tastes, "Centra Supermarket", "the mouth-watering scent of snacks", the smell of "true Irish foods coming from the pubs and shops", "Tayto", "birds chirping" and the presence of the Summer School that transforms Drumshanbo into "an outstanding, atmospheric place for all the ages". A very well-written, interesting story.

FIRST PRIZE

**A Mystery** Olivia Parkinson- Coombs Age 11

I LOOK OUT the window on this dark night and wonder will I ever see my mother again. Why would she go out in the middle of a blizzard? Why would she leave me in charge of Emily? I'm only ten. She's two and thinks running circles around me is fun.

It's been two hours since she left. I'm starting to get really worried. Before I can gather my thoughts together, Emily starts to cry. I start to sing her a lullaby. "Rock-a-by-baby." Eventually, she drifts asleep.

I hear a hard knock on the door. I gallop to the door hoping it is Mum. It isn't Mum. It is a police officer. "Are you Janet Dunken?" he says in a stern voice. "Yes, why?" I know this is going to be bad news so I brace myself for the worst. "May I come in?" "Yes you may, but be as quiet as you can because I have just got my sister to sleep."

"Your mother, she has had a car accident." I freeze. What is going to happen to Emily and me? Will we get adopted? We could go to Dad but he left us years ago. "Is she okay?" The officer takes a while until he answers with a sorry look on his face "She is in the hospital. In

intensive care". "Can we see her?" I ask hopefully. "Of course you can!" "Who will take care of us?" "We will figure that out after you go and see her."

Emily and I get to the hospital with the police. "Are you the Dunkens?" the doctor asks very professionally. "Yes" I reply. "Right this way" he says joyfully. I wonder why he is so happy. I grab my sister's hand and follow him. The next thing I know my mother is sitting on a chair in front of me. The police officer got it all wrong!

I let go of Emily's hand, and run into my Mum's arms. I am so happy I am speechless. We hug each other for a long time until Emily sneaks in. We get back to the house and hug some more.

Emily and I don't know why our Mum left and went out into the blizzard, and probably never will. But that doesn't matter. All that matters is that she is okay!

## SECOND PRIZE

### **Freedom In School** *Odhran King Age 11*

"HURRY UP, MERISH! We won't be able to make it into town and back at this pace!" I exclaimed as we sprinted into the town of Drumshanbo.

"I'm coming, Odhran," Merish shouted back to me between his heavy breathing. Merish and I go to the same Music School, the Joe Mooney Summer School. Last year we became friends. We had ran all the way into town, without an adult watching us.

"There's Centra," I panted as we approached the supermarket. Centra is a very popular supermarket in Ireland. I could smell the mouthwatering scent of snacks, from gum to chocolate.

It felt as if time slowed down as I saw the very familiar town. I strained to turn my head and then I saw the buildings that I have been in so many times. I had thought about all the great times I'd had in those pubs and shops. We had run in through the door of Centra and almost fainted of exhaustion. Merish and I were sweaty and breathing heavily. When I caught my breath and my heartbeat slowly calmed down I asked Merish, "Can I have a bag of Taytos?" Taytos were one of Ireland's potato chips producers. Tayto's taste luscious, like something for royal kings. Taytos are made from the best potatoes in Ireland and they are rich in flavor.

"Sure, Odhran," Merish had answered as he payed the cashier for his chocolate and my Taytos.

I felt more independent and responsible. I had run into town by myself, gotten lunch without an adult, and stayed safe.

I felt as if I was an adult as I walked along the streets of Drumshanbo, a small town in County Leitrim, Ireland. I could walk freely wherever I wanted without an adult for the half an hour that was lunch time at the Joe Mooney Summer School, one of the best music schools in all of Ireland. I grinned like someone who had found a million dollars as I walked back towards the music school. It was an outstanding atmospheric place for all ages. I could hear the birds chirping in a nonchalant manner. I could see people stroll around Drumshanbo with a smile on their faces. I could smell the true Irish food coming from the pubs and shops. I could almost taste the freedom and maturity that I was enjoying. The imagination of becoming an adult and everyone trusting me didn't seem so far away anymore.

After Centra, Merish and I once again completed the hard run all the way back to the School. On the way there, I realized the big achievement I had accomplished. My parents trusted me to go into town and back without their support and they knew that I would be safe and cautious about everything I did. Even though I had a lot of fun, the split-second when I realized I had grown up and my parents finally trusted me was the best moment of all. When Merish and I got back to the Music School, we were right on time, which only boosted my feeling that I will come of age soon. I knew something special had happened today.

I will never forget today, the day I became more mature and trusted.

POST PRIMARY LEVEL ENGLISH

*Adjudicator's Comments*

**First Prize: 'MY GRANNY':**

*Siobhan Mulvey, Age 16,  
Drumshanbo Vocational School.*

This poem presents a very true-to-life description of the writer's granny or indeed anyone's granny at a similar age. The physical, behavioural, spirited and resourceful qualities of a granny are featured here, as is the bleak, vivid account of her sad decline. The poem's final lines, "Come down often/Yet we never got down/ as much as we could "resonate, I'm sure, with most of us who have to come to terms with the missed opportunities of visiting a loved one who has since passed away. This poem is a fine example of how the small scale of a poem can give the reader a very full picture of the subject - in this case, granny-with a concise, faithful language and rekindled, evocative images. In this poem, every word counted a short story.

**Second Prize: 'LIFT THAT WEIGHT OFF YOUR SHOULDERS'.**

*Étáin Sweeney Keogh. Age 14  
Ursuline College, Sligo.*

The debate on the merits and demerits of the e-book and the traditional printed book is an ongoing one. When the debate is directed towards the school situation the focus widens from the principles concerning the nature of reading to that of including the possible negative effects that occur when students carry heavy school - bags. This article is a refreshing change from those inspired by medical and educational theories. This is the well - balanced view of a scholarly 'hod-carrier', the long - suffering student. Not one to lower himself/herself to the petty level of partisanship, the writer presents an attractive case for both sets of readers - the traditionalists and the modernists. With a seamless skill, he/she contrasts the traditional book's "woody smell",

"the feel " and the prestige of being transferable with the "slight of hand " technology, "nifty" mobility but pricey expense of the e-book. The writer's impartial approach to the subject continues to the end, finishing on a note of equilibrium which includes both modes of reading - "It doesn't matter what you prefer to read on, it's what you read that counts ". This was a lively, well-presented account of a topic that may one day see the newfangled pragmatism of e-books displace the once irreplaceable 'real' book.

**FIRST PRIZE**

**My Granny** Siobhan Mulvey

I remember you walking on the street  
holding on to me tightly  
your long over-coat heavy on your frame

Scolding  
insulting without meaning to yet  
caring as much as one could

Rosary beads  
in your hands,  
praying faithfully

don't fuss  
or worry  
and don't quarrel

wrinkled face  
new teeth  
sharp in your gentle face

wise  
remembering  
reminiscing

You didn't like taking tablets  
the nurses found them thrown in  
your handbag  
how we laughed

I miss  
you still  
almost all a dream

First they said it was a burn,  
then a rash  
then gangrene

Amputate your leg  
they did  
the stump covered up

Only one leg  
it had spread to the other  
only so much a person can take

The last time I seen you  
I said "I love you"  
You said, rambling

"Come down often".  
Yet we never got down  
as much as we could.

## SECOND PRIZE

**Lift That Weight Off Your Shoulders***Étáin Sweeney Keogh*

SCHOOL BOOKS, two words that are literally a pain in the back. They mean going back to school after a long summer break that felt shorter than it was. Not only that, but as you approach those doors you are more certain of one thing than you've ever been before; you look like a tortoise. Your back is bent over and you have a shell of literature that slows down your pace considerably. There is however a solution, a light at the end of the tunnel, if you will, it is called the "eBook ". These literacy life-savers are light as a feather as well as quick and easy to use. Now I know you'll say what more could a person want, but you see I 'm still not satisfied

I'd like to begin by saying that I like books.

I like the woody smell of the dried ink on the paper, the feel of that thin, almost transparent paper between my hands and I like the curiosity of passers-by as they question you on the quality of the book. I just really, really don't like the weight. If there was a "Weight Watchers "for any inanimate object, it would be for books. It's not as if it's a no pain no gain scenario though, because it isn't. For every sore shoulder, there are at least one hundred pages of pure genius to enjoy (Not mentioning looking a bit more intelligent in front of your more intellectual friends). With books there are dozens of seemingly insignificant little necessities that would be missed if books died out; The feeling of desperation as you search the shelves of your local bookstore for that one book that sparked your interest from the condensed blurb; then the relief when you see it, the shelf acting as a pedestal; Finally the feeling that you can pass this book on to your grandchildren later in life and say "just read it". There is also something about turning that last page, reading that last word that fills a reader with a certain sense of satisfaction.

I suppose I should discuss the fad of "eBooks ", they are nifty little things. They can be operated at the slight of a hand (or the hard hit of a hand if you are technologically illiterate like me) and best of all they weigh less than a bag of sugar. You can bring them anywhere you want without having a sharp stabbing pain in your back at the end of the day ( although, be advised showers, baths, and other water laden areas are off limits ) "eBooks "are to say the least, quite expensive. With "iPads" (which you need in order to use eBooks unless you prefer the " Kindle "or" Nook" which are also a bit pricey) coming in at three hundred and ninety-nine euro and "eBooks" themselves coming in at about sixteen euro.

Then there is the issue of school books with which I began, although I really do detest the concept of looking like some sort of reptile, (I think that's what a tortoise is) I simply can't imagine my parents purchasing me, firstly a device on which to read "eBooks" and secondly, the electronic books required. There are of course, certain conspiracy theories about scheming teachers plotting to damage our spines through giving us too much homework, but let's face the fact that those theories are bogus.

Whether you prefer paperbacks to hardbacks, books to "eBooks", at the end of the day it's the quality of book you read not the quantity. It doesn't matter what you prefer to read on, it's what you read that counts.

**NEW RADIO DRAMA**

Benbo Productions have completed the recording of their 3 part Radio Drama adaptation of *The Adventures of The Wet Señor* entitled '*Francisco*' at The Glens Centre. Recorded by Ray Duffy for Ocean FM, thanks to funding from *The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland*, '*Francisco*' is due for broadcast on Ocean FM before the end of 2012. '*Francisco*' tells the story of Spanish Armada survivor Francisco De Cuellar's incredible adventures in the Northwest in 1588, it features music from Kíla, and includes actors Jaimie Carswell, Des Braidén, Sorcha Fox and Darina Gallagher. It is written and directed by Donal O'Kelly.

