**Judge's Report - Term 2, 2022**



**Theme: Ghost**

Before we kick off the commendations for Term 2’s competition, we’d like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our newest sponsor ***Ventra IP and Domain Hosting***, who have donated an amazing package to our ever-growing prize pool. Welcome to Little Stories, Big Ideas, Ventra IP, we greatly appreciate your generous support of Australia’s talented young writers!

Speaking of talent, as we’ve come to expect from Generation Next, there was no short supply in Term 2! The theme of GHOST summoned a supernatural response, both in creativity and competence, with a record 260 entries haunting our inbox from every state and territory.

From ectoplasm to existentialism and cemeteries to cyber space, students made the most of their 100 words, delivering micro stories that rattled their chains in our hearts and minds long after reading. While some entrants chose to forge their words around the more traditional interpretation of the theme: gothic tropes, haunted houses, paranormal entities, the afterlife…and the delicious thrill of a good scare, others leant in to more abstract forms, exploring the metaphorical ghosts that haunt our contemporary age.

As always, we applaud and appreciate the time and effort of all our entrants. We respect their words and creative expression, and celebrate their imaginative and impactful responses. Judging such diverse works makes for a happy challenge!

Without further a-boo (see what we did there?) the following winners, place getters, and honourably mentioned students represent the scope of talent the young writers of Australia currently exhibit.

There are no shadowy corners for these upcoming literary stars…

The theme for Term 3 **BODY** has now opened for entries. A timely and topical word, we feel, and one we know Australia’s talented young writers will each apply their unique lens to.



Please spread the word to your students, membership base, children, social networks, and anyone you think would be interested in submitting their work for the chance to win terrific prizes while flexing their creative muscle. We’d love to read their entries!

Thanks for your ongoing support,

Joe and Rebecca

**Year 10 -12 Winners**

**First Place**

***The Dancer***  by Maxine Fan of Lauriston Girls’ School, VIC

Ivory light  
Floods a swirling silhouette  
Sparkling eyes  
Limbs outstretched  
Sweeping like a swallow  
  
The swell of the orchestra becomes  
A vessel  
A softly rocking boat that never stills  
Cradled by restless waves-  
lapping at her steps  
She dances on  
Under moonlit shores  
  
The music dips and  
She slows  
Delicate leaps turn into  
A trembling stillness  
Her sigh  
Conceals a mournfulness  
A gentle subdued yearning  
  
Quivering fingers brush the dusted frame  
The glass is cracked  
In the corner  
Just slightly  
The photo has faded  
  
Her dance is art  
Her art is her life  
  
A rueful smile  
  
It *was* her life.

**Second Place**

***You’re My Friend, Right?*** By Haobo Zhang of The Geelong College, VIC

**1/02**

hi

hi

why are you leaving me on seen?

hello?

did I do something wrong

please say something

**3/02**

stop leaving me on seen

why aren’t you responding

we’re friends right?

please

you’re the only person i can talk to

please

**4/02**

what’s going on!

why aren’t you talking to me!

please

i was alone at snack and lunch again

why are you ignoring me

i just want you to talk to me again

i’m really sorry if i did something you didn’t like

**11/02**

i’m sorry

i’m sorry

i’m sorry

**Third Place**

***How to be a Ghost*** by Belle Harvie of Moss Vale High School, NSW

First, be dead inside.  
  
Second, hate everything.  
Nothing in life gives you joy.  
  
Third, enjoy people’s miseries.  
Your pleasure is their pain.  
  
Fourth, Plan your tombstone.  
Upset the dead spirits.  
  
Fifth, Escape reality.  
Go missing.  
  
Sixth, remind someone of their past.  
Scare those who care about you.  
It doesn’t matter how; just do it.  
  
Sixth, when someone hurts you, DO NOT REACT.  
You’re a ghost; you feel no pain.  
Rarely, let emotional pain hurt you.  
RARELY.  
  
Seventh, wear a white sheet sometimes.  
Get used to your future body.  
  
Repeat. For as long as you like.  
In whatever order.

**Honourable Mention**:

* ***A Banquet Spirit***  by Eileen Carmelita of St Thomas More College, QLD
* ***Just One Short*** by Nibesh Khatri of Perth Modern School, WA
* ***World’s Too Fast for Ghosts*** by Joshua Pinga of St Luke’s Catholic College, NSW
* ***Butterfly Abyss*** by Amelia Tu of Shalom College, QLD
* ***Poltergeist Problems*** by Krissy Vavlas of Strathmore Secondary College, VIC
* ***New*** by Maddi Lipscomb of Mansfield State High School, QLD

**Year 7 – 9 Winners**

**First Place** (Judge’s Note: Haiku *– Demonstration of how the rules of form combined with the power of a few well-chosen words can be presented with stunning impact*) ***Loss*** by Nga Nguyen of Mount Gambier High School, SA

Pale skin, blue lips lied  
My mother laid in the snow  
She won't hold my hands

**Second Place**

***Falling: Either in Love or to Death*** by Natasha Hague of All Saints College, Maitland

Why is it that love is always described as something you fall into?  
A shock,  
A surprise,  
A taste of freedom when in reality it is only the few short seconds before you hit the ground.  
I too am currently falling, however not in love,  
Instead flying downwards,  
Flying and falling,  
Falling freely towards a beckoning sea.  
Wind running after me,  
A crash.  
A splash.  
A long-expected collision.  
Maybe this is what love is, a freeing type of falling down, a slow succession through life.  
When your soul doesn’t fall but floats,  
Lighter than a whisper in the wind.

**Third Place**

***Misconceptions*** by Isabella Chalker of Bunbury Senior High School, WA

Two ghostly figures mounted on the wall, stuck in the make-believe world of a dusty picture frame. Don’t step on the third step of the staircase because you might wake them up and their shadows might move. Make sure you close the door or else a demon will wail through the gap. Make sure you lock the window or a shadow will enter your room. Never just a painting, never just the wind, never just a tree. A house ruled by shadows and the dark. A house ruled by people in a picture frame. A house ruled by misconceptions.

**Honourable Mention:**

* ***In Another World*** by Phillis Chenof St Thomas More College
* ***Eternal*** by Todd Frahn of Open Access College, SA
* ***The Breath of Night*** by Indiana Palmer, Bunbury Senior High School
* ***Mirrored by Emily Hague*** of All Saints' College, Maitland
* ***Desolate*** by Miller Read of Bunbury Senior High School, WA
* ***My Diary, June 2021*** by Ava Bond of St Mary Mackillop College, Canberra
* ***Where the Wild Things Start*** by Abbey Lim of The MacRobertson’s Girls’ High School
* ***Your Ghost Still Haunts Me*** by Lincoln Wheeler of Lumen Christi College, WA
* ***Misconceptions*** by Isabella Chalker of Bunbury Senior High School, WA
* ***The Jerboa Ghost of Wizz Creek*** by Humus Chandu of MESC