**Creative Writing Competition: ‘Everyday Heroes’**

**National Literacy Trust and Swindon Stories** are delighted to launch an exciting creative writing competition as part of the Connecting Stories project, with support from the authors Simon Farnaby and Steve Antony. We are inviting children aged 7-11 from Swindon to create a piece of writing based on the theme ***‘Everyday Heroes’.***

Using Swindon as the setting, write about local people that inspire or help you – this could be a neighbour, a friend, a family member, a sports person, a celebrity or a key worker; you could even invent a hero that comes to Swindon!

You can choose any format you like – a story, a poem, news article or diary entry. You can include some illustrations too.

Everyone who enters the competition will receive a certificate and will have a chance to get their work published in an anthology and displayed in a local exhibition. There will also be book prizes for the winning entries.

Winning entries will be chosen based on originality, imagination, relation to the theme and overall enjoyment.

**How to enter**

* Use the blank space in this booklet or a side of A4 paper to complete your piece of writing.
* Ask your parent/guardian or teacher to scan or photograph your work and enter online at [www.literacytrust.org.uk/communities/connecting-stories](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/communities/connecting-stories) or email it to swindoncs.primary@literacytrust.org.uk. Don’t forget to include your first name and first letter of your surname, your age and school.

**Privacy notice**

The National Literacy Trust will need to hold and process your personal data in order to manage this competition. We will only use it for this purpose we will never pass on personal information to any other organisations unless specific consent has been given. For our full privacy policy see literacytrust.org.uk/privacy

**‘Everyday Heroes’: Writing prompts**

Your piece of writing can be funny, heart-warming, adventurous or exciting, fiction or non-fiction, everything is welcome!

Here are some ideas to inspire you if you’re feeling a bit stuck:

* Heroes don’t have to be fictional - you could write about local people that inspire or help you, this could be a neighbour, a friend, a family member, local sports player or a key worker.
* You could write a letter to thank your hero for all they do to make Swindon a wonderful place to live or maybe you’ll choose to write a news article about your hero saving the day
* You could imagine a hero who comes to Swindon and write a story or comic about their adventure. What happens?

**Describing your hero**

* What is your hero like? Think of some words you can use to describe them. Are they kind, brave or clever? What do they look like?
* Does your hero have any special powers?
* What do other people think about your hero?

**Simon Farnaby’s Top Tips for Writing**

1. **Use the power of ‘what if’.** Asking yourself “what if” questions can be a really useful way to start a story.When I was writing the *Paddington* films, I asked myself “what would it be like to live with a bear?” For *The Wizard in My Shed* it was, “What would it be like to live with a Wizard? What if magic was actually real?” Have a go at putting two things together that don’t normally go together, and asking yourself ‘what if’.

1. **Try to picture your story like it’s a scene from a film**. The fun thing about writing is you get to control EVERYTHING about the world you’re writing about. You can design the sets, the costumes, what the characters look like- and there are no rules or limits to what those things can be. Picturing your story like it’s a film and writing down what you see in your head will help you get in loads of descriptive detail that will really bring your story to life.

1. **Give your pet a voice.** One of the things that helped me when I was writing *The Wizard in My Shed* was to imagine how my daughter’s guinea pig might speak and what they might say. Guinea pigs are quite nervous animals and they poo a lot, so it was fun to give it a voice like “I’m going to do a poo, here it comes!” It sounds mad, but have a go at putting yourself in the mind of a pet, or an animal in a zoo, and thinking about the things those animals might say or do. If you’re finding it hard to come up with dialogue for humans, have a go at making them animals instead!

1. **Make life hard for your characters.** When you’ve created a character that you like, it can feel sad to make bad things happen to them- but conflict is story and all stories need conflict! Ask yourself what is the thing standing in the way of your character getting what they want? Set your character an obstacle and really put them through it. The twists and turns will make your story much more satisfying.

1. **Keep going!** Writing can feel scary when you start, butthe more you do it, the better you’ll get. Don’t worry about things like your handwriting or spelling, just get some thoughts down on the page and write LOTS of stories.

Name Click or tap here to enter text. Age Click or tap here to enter text.

School Click or tap here to enter text.

Parent/Guardian/Teacher email address Click or tap here to enter text.

 [ ]  Parent/Guardian: I give permission for this work, along with the name, age and school provided, to be published in an anthology and displayed online or in public venues.

 **Competition Rules**

* The competition is open to children and young people aged 7-11, however entries from all primary school pupils will be considered for the exhibition.
* The closing date for submission is Friday 12th March 2021. Winners will be announced at the beginning of April.
* Entries should be one page of A4 or 500 words maximum and written in English.
* The piece of creative writing must be an original piece of work and be wholly written by the entrant. It must reflect the theme of the competition as stated in the competition challenge. The writing must be single-authored.
* Entries must not contain obscene, defamatory, offensive or otherwise unsuitable material. The organisers reserve the right to disqualify such entries.
* A team of community partners and National Literacy Trust staff will shortlist entries and winners will be chosen by our panel of experts.
* On submission, parents/guardians will be asked to grant permission to enter. They will be asked for consent to publish the entrant’s writing online or in print form, or display physical entries in public spaces.
* Teachers submitting on behalf of their pupils must obtain permission from parents/ guardians prior to submission. As a teacher, by entering your pupils’ work into this competition you are confirming that written parental consent has been sought and confirmed in advance of the submission. National Literacy Trust will not be held liable in the instance that consent has not been sought.

