

The Branford Boase Award



9 January 2020

Call for entries: 2020 Henrietta Branford Writing Competition For young people who enjoy writing stories!

Finish a story started by Branford Boase Award winner, Muhammad Khan

The **Henrietta Branford Writing Competition**, the annual competition for young people which runs in conjunction with the **Branford Boase Award**, is now open.

One of the most prestigious of UK children's book prizes, the **Branford Boase Award** recognises a debut children's author and their editor and was set up in memory of the outstanding children's writer Henrietta Branford and the gifted editor, Wendy Boase, Editorial Director of Walker Books. They both died of cancer in 1999.

The **Henrietta Branford Writing Competition** aims to find and encourage writers of the future, something Henrietta Branford was always keen to do.

Anyone under the age of 19 can enter the competition. Entrants are invited to finish this story begun by last year's winner, author of *I Am Thunder* and **2020 World Book Day author Muhammad Khan**:

My heart is a firecracker, my legs like twin rockets. I'm late for school and running faster than I ever have in my entire life. Fears of getting slapped with a detention (and Mum going mental) spur me on. Breathlessly, I propel myself through the school gates, surprised that nobody is on gate duty. Weird. Guess I must be later than I thought...

Sneaking in through a fire exit, I nip along corridors as silent as a ghost, glancing through the zoetrope of open doors. Every single classroom stands as empty as tomb. Where is everyone? Just as I begin to panic, I hear an eerie sound.

Each story should be no longer than 1000 words, should have a title and connect to the starter paragraph. All entrants must live in the UK and be under 19 years of age. Entries will be judged by **Prue Goodwin**, consultant and lecturer in literacy learning and children's literature. She says: 'We will be looking for writing which shows imagination and originality. Use the starter paragraph as a guide rather than a directive - and make sure the story is as engaging and entertaining as possible.'

Six winners will be invited to attend the **Branford Boase Award** celebration party in London in July. There they will meet Muhammad Khan and the authors shortlisted for the 2020 award as well as editors, publishers, agents, and other professionals in this field. They will receive a copy of each of the books shortlisted for the **Branford Boase Award** and be able to have their books signed.

The closing date for the competition is Friday 24th April 2020.

Full [details](#) are available on the website: www.branfordboaseaward.org.uk

For further information please contact Andrea Reece on 07807893369 or andrea.reece@zen.co.uk

Notes to Editors:

The annual Branford Boase Award celebrates the most promising book for seven year-olds and upwards written by a first-time novelist and also highlights the importance of the editor in the development of new authors. The shortlisted authors may have published other books in another genre – for example, poetry or a picture book – but eligibility for the prize requires that this is their first children’s novel. As well as encouraging publishers to find and promote new writers, the Award sets out to alert readers of all ages to the work of interesting newcomers.

The Branford Boase Award was set up in 2000 in memory of the outstanding and prize-winning author **Henrietta Branford** and **Wendy Boase**, editorial director and one of the founders of Walker Books. They worked together on a number of Henrietta’s novels, a partnership they greatly enjoyed. Both Henrietta and Wendy died of cancer in 1999.

Running alongside the Branford Boase Award, the **Henrietta Branford Writing Competition** encourages writing talent in under 19s.

The Award is the joint idea of **Julia Eccleshare** and **Anne Marley**. Julia is the director of the children’s programme at the Hay Festival and a regular contributor to Radio 4’s Front Row and Open Book programmes. Anne is co-founder of Authors Aloud UK and was Head of Children’s, Youth & Schools Services for Hampshire Library & Information Service for many years. She has served on many children’s book award panels, including the CILIP Carnegie & Kate Greenaway Awards.

For more information about the award and the Henrietta Branford Writing Competition visit www.branfordboaseaward.org.uk.

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