

The Branford Boase Award



1 February 2020

Call for entries: 2021 Henrietta Branford Writing Competition For young people who enjoy writing stories!

Finish a story started by Branford Boase Award winner Liz Hyder

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 **Bearmouth**, Liz Hyder

I'd never normally cut through the cemetery but I was running late. In trouble late. Shoelaces not tied properly late. I skirt around the corner and straight through the archway. A flock of birds shoots up and into the air shouting at me as I run along the old path, gravestones leaning at a funny angle, making me feel as if I'm being watched. It used to be a monastery once, Mum had told me, and I shiver as I think of creepy old monks in hooded robes.

The world suddenly turns upside down. Sky where the ground should be. I'm flat out on the path, sore-headed, knees scratched. I curse as I stumble back to my feet, see the shoelace that tripped me snaking on the ground as if it were alive. And that's when I see it. Out of the corner of my eye. Right by the bottom of the nearest gravestone.

Liz says, 'Don't forget your story doesn't have to be creepy or involve ghosts! It's your story - you can take it wherever you want to: a rocket to the moon, an adventure underground, lost treasure, a comedy misunderstanding or a million and one other things! The only limit is your imagination and I can't wait to see what you write! Good luck and get writing!'

Hear Liz introduce her story starter – from the graveyard that inspired it – on the [Branford Boase Award website](#).

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.

The winners will receive signed copies of each of the books shortlisted for the 2021 **Branford Boase Award**.

The closing date for the competition is Sunday 23rd May 2021.

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. 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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