

The Branford Boase Award



7 February 2022

Call for entries: 2022 Henrietta Branford Writing Competition For young people who enjoy writing stories!

Finish a story started by Branford Boase Award winner Struan Murray

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 **Branford Boase Award** winner, author of thrilling fantasy adventure **Orphans of the Tide**, Struan Murray:

Dad's gone out for the night and I'm alone at home for the first time. I should be doing homework, but I've got the television on, staring out the window into the garden. The moon paints the swaying oak tree silver, a cat stalks mice from its branches. There's fireworks crackling up on the hill; green, red, purple.

It happens all at once. The television stalls, paused on the newsreader. The oak stops swaying, the cat is frozen mid-pounce. A firework hangs in the sky. I stand up, search about, feel my heart race. I look out the window, and I spot it, beyond the bushes.

Something is moving in the garden.

Competition judge, Prue Goodwin has this special advice for young entrants, 'After you have read the starter passage, take some time to think. This writing is not a piece of schoolwork, it won't be marked by the judges, just read to be enjoyed as a good story.'

Read the starter again. *Don't go for the obvious*. Remember, *you* are in charge of choosing how you carry on with your story. Your imagination can go in any direction you want. Try to make the final version as original as possible. The 'starter' is there to help you get going, so use it to take your ideas wherever you want. Ask yourself, "Will my story grab a judge's attention? Make them laugh or cry?" Do you want to entertain, provoke or scare your readers? Your story can be exciting, funny, moving, adventurous, frightening – whatever you want. Enjoy writing, and good luck!

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.

The winners will receive signed copies of each of the books shortlisted for the 2022 **Branford Boase Award**.

The closing date for the competition is Sunday 22 May 2022.

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.

Entries will be judged by **Prue Goodwin**, consultant and lecturer in literacy learning and children's literature.

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

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