

 **YOUNG  
MUSLIM  
WRITERS  
AWARDS**



Muslim Hands



**ANTHOLOGY 2022**

*'Glory be to the One Who took His servant  
by night from al-Masjid al-Haram (in Makkah)  
to al-Masjid al-Aqsa (in al-Quds), whose  
surroundings We have blessed...'*

[The Noble Qur'an, 17:1]

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Assalamu alaikum,


We are delighted to share with you the shortlisted entries from the 12th annual Young Muslim Writers Awards. When we invited children to submit their pieces to the competition, young writers across the UK responded to our call. Teachers, parents, siblings, friends, and the young writers themselves uploaded their stories, news articles, poems, playscripts, and screenplays.

With each passing year, we marvel at the creativity and skill with which the young writers weave their tales. Their imaginations took us on a journey through dragon-filled adventures, super sleuth detective mysteries, the migratory journey of whales and birds, and the wonders of a starry night sky. Five were shortlisted in each category and reviewed by our judges to determine the winners from each age group. We hope you enjoy reading the shortlisted entries which are featured in this Anthology.

In presenting this year's competition, we thank our broadcasting partner, Islam Channel, who have made our shared desire to inspire creativity in millions of viewers around the world a reality since our very first event. We thank the Institute of English Studies at the School of Advanced Study (University of London) for their support in celebrating the achievements of young writers for the past five years. We thank the thirty-five judges who painstakingly selected this year's winners. We are grateful to the publishers and companies listed in this Anthology, who have generously gifted books and sweets to the shortlisted writers and last but not least, we thank the teachers and parents across the country who have encouraged children to attend our workshops and to explore creative writing.

To all the young wordsmiths who took part in the Young Muslim Writers Awards 2022, may this be the first step in your remarkable writing journeys and may this achievement pave the way for your future successes in sha Allah.

Wassalam,



**Syed Lakhte Hassanain**  
**Chairman, Muslim Hands**

## SHORTLIST: POETRY

### **Key Stage 1 Poetry – Ages 5 to 7**

Horses

Jannah

Super Sperm Whale

Butterflies

Parents

Taymiyyah Drummond

Adam Umar

Yahya Yasmin

Zoya Ahmed

Maryam Ibrahim

### **Key Stage 2 Poetry – Ages 7 to 11**

The Taste of Rain

Galaxy Quest

The Peaceful Night

I'm Still Waiting

The Last Stand

Xavier Mahmood

Zidan Akhtar

Ali Murad Mahmood

Thalia S. A.

Hannah Amira Hoque

### **Key Stage 3 Poetry – Ages 11 to 14**

Chant of the Key Workers

The Soundless Warrior

Despite it All

Green and Grey

Indoctrination Camp

Fatema Zahra Mithwani

Mariam Khan

Aishah Kola-Olukotun

Samir Cheema

Khadija Fombo

### **Key Stage 4 Poetry – Ages 14 to 16**

Chatbot

Broken

Webs Untangled

In Your Hands

An Ode to My Mother

Sumayyah Qureshi

Amelia Tazarab Khan

Habiba Mohammad Khattab

Humna Shahzad

Deborah Afolayan

## SHORTLIST: JOURNALISM

### **Key Stage 3 Journalism – Ages 11 to 14**

Sit Still Look Pretty

Home Bargains Heist

Sports World

The End of the World

The Problem with Western Feminism

Azwa Khan

Zakariah Ben Said

Muhammad Usman Hussain

Zainab Riaz

Faatimah Lambert

### **Key Stage 4 Journalism – Ages 14 to 16**

Dragon Discovery

Storm Eunice Hits the UK

Voice of Young People

Corruption Within Governments

Maryam Abdalla

Zubaidha Maryam Mohamed Rifath

Muhammed Amin

Hafsah Malik

## SHORTLIST: SHORT STORY

### Key Stage 1 Short Story – Ages 5 to 7

Owen and His Magical Adventures  
The Park Disaster  
A Journey with Music  
An Unforgettable Journey  
The Power of Alhamdulillah

Maryam Salahuddin-Karn  
Ammarah Kazi  
Eliza Miah  
Rayan Shah  
Muizzah Tayyab

### Key Stage 2 Short Story – Ages 7 to 11

A Great Migration  
The Writing on the Wall  
Unpredictable  
Alma - A Short Story  
The Dream Weaver

Yahya Arif  
Sephora Drummond  
Thalia S. A.  
Zaki Mavani  
Zahra A Mahmood

### Key Stage 3 Short Story – Ages 11 to 14

Dragon of the Soul  
The Crimson Vines  
The Shack  
A Demonic Misfortune  
The Painting

Khadija Fombo  
Sumaiyah Hanna Ahmed  
Zakariah Ben Said  
Syed Muhafizul Haque  
Inayah Ahmed

### Key Stage 4 Short Story – Ages 14 to 16

Myslica  
I Swear  
Dragon Fire  
Defenceless  
Struck By Giants

Humna Shahzad  
Ummay-Habeeba Mushtaq  
Maryam Abdalla  
Amelia Tazarab Khan  
Numa Tasneem Nayeem Karnachi

## SHORTLIST: SCREENPLAY

### Key Stage 3 Screenplay – Ages 11 to 14

'Calamati', Ti Ho Detto

Neda Aryan

## SHORTLIST: PLAYSRIPT

### Key Stage 3 Playscript – Ages 11 to 14

Javid Bond and Sharukh Holmes

Ameera Ebrahim and Zoya Vindhani

### Key Stage 4 Playscript – Ages 14 to 16

The Nadari Family

Numa Tasneem Nayeem Karnachi

# KEY STAGE 1

## POETRY

### BUTTERFLIES

Butterflies Allah SWT's creations are so beautiful SubhanAllah...

Butterflies are amazing, light and very bright...

Free to fly.. they flutter by as if to say "Hi"

I wonder how high they can fly up to the sky...?

I wish a butterfly could land in my hand...

The pretty colours on their wings make me feel happy and thankful

Alhamdullilah for all the beautiful things...

Zoya Ahmed

Key Stage 1 Poetry





## **HORSES**

Hooves hit the ground in rhythm  
On sunny days galloping together  
Racing through grassy fields  
Soft breezes run through their manes  
Every steady trot, canter, and gallop  
Sees these beautiful creatures on the move

**Taymiyyah Drummond**  
**Key Stage 1 Poetry**

## **JANNAH**

Just can't wait for Jannah!  
Allah can see me, and I can see Allah,  
Nothing is better than Allah  
Neighbours with the Prophets  
A palace made of silver, gold and rubies,  
Happy to be in Jannah!  
In'sh'Allah!

**Adam Umar**

**Key Stage 1 Poetry**



## PARENTS

Parents play games with me,  
And are really helpful, I am  
Really grateful, What  
Excellent parents I have!  
Nobody is better than them,  
The best parents for me,  
So I make dua to Allah and thank Him for giving them to me.

Maryam Ibrahim  
Key Stage 1 Poetry

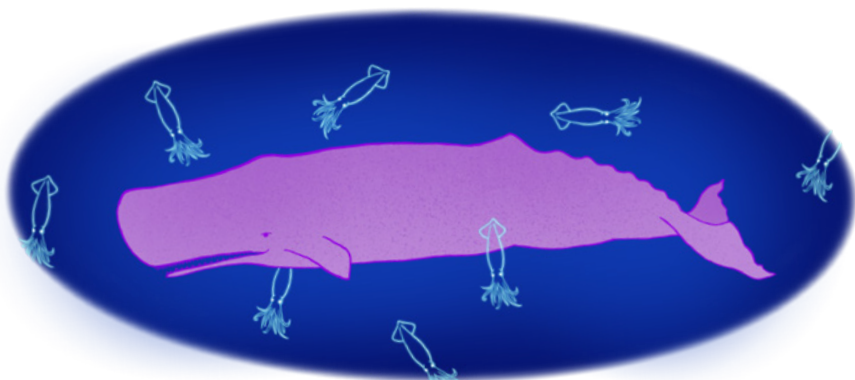


## SUPER SPERM WHALE

I am a small, super sperm whale  
Which swirls and splashes in water in a pail  
The water is wet and that's what I like  
The ocean is light blue, calm on my sight  
The deeper you swim, the darker it gets  
The higher you swim, the lighter it gets  
Daddy, mummy and me  
We all have tea  
Squids in my tummy  
Yummy, yummy, yummy  
One of my friend is small, with a huge shell  
He swims and falls asleep and sinks without propel  
The enemy of my friends  
The enemy of mine  
The enemy of the ocean... the killer whale

Yahya Yasmin

Key Stage 1 Poetry





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# KEY STAGE 1

## SHORT STORIES

### EXTRACT FROM 'A JOURNEY WITH MUSIC'

Once there lived a musician called Zaky. You see Zaky loved music from the very beginning and always wrote songs. He also had a friend called Jennette. When they were a child, they played together, laughed together and had so much fun with each other. Until one fatal day Jennette accidentally knocked open Zaky's locker then out tumbled books, crafts and all sorts of things and out tumbled a song about frogs. Everybody laughed and shook their heads. Zaky was so upset and blamed Jennette and turned around and fled. The next day Jennette announced she was leaving because her father had a job in Japan. Zaky felt relieved because he was still mad at her. The day after Zaky realised, he made the wrong choice about being happy and he then felt bored without her.

Years later, Zaky became a musician but never stopped wondering about Jennette. One night he looked through his memory box and found a piece of music which he had written. It made him think of Jennette. 'I'll book a flight tomorrow and give it to her, he thought. His pet monkey asked, "Who is Jennete?" "Haha Jennette is my best friend", he replied. "I am your best friend, not her," shouted his monkey, angrily. "You both are," said Zaky. "Remember when I found you in a tree before you learnt how to climb. I found Jennette stuck in a tyre swing at school." "Wow, did you help her?" Asked his monkey, curiously. "Yes, of course," said Zaky.

Eliza Miah

Key Stage 1 Short Story

## **EXTRACT FROM 'AN UNFORGETTABLE JOURNEY'**

As soon as we approached the immigration counter. I saw a jar of sweets and the counter boy gave me a lollipop which made me very happy. Next, it was our turn to physically do Umrah, my grandparents did the tawaf in wheelchairs on the 1st floor. My parents were behind us and of course not to forget me. I was in my grandma's lap. It was midnight, I was tired and feeling cold due to open Ihram, my grandma said, 'Oh, we should have secured your Ihram with safety pin'. I found it hard to hold the Ihram in place therefore I fell asleep for sometime.

After completing my Umrah I was crying and moaning because I did not want my head to be shaved. However, grandpa and dad had their head shaved and I had mine shaved the next day. In the morning, my dad took me to the barber to get my head shaved. My dad said to the barber. "Use a blade" but however the barber said that "he will cry. But surely, I was brave enough to smile while waiting to get my head shaved. Suddenly another barber came and shaved my head with a blade. The first barber was shocked to see such a fearless 4-year-old calm boy. My dad was so proud of me, he bought me a vanilla ice cream, orange juice and a toy.

**Rayan Shah**

**Key Stage 1 Short Story**

## **EXTRACT FROM 'OWEN AND HIS MAGICAL ADVENTURES'**

He was about to fall again but the french and Italian owls helped him and the American owls flew to Owen. They could speak English so they spoke to Owen. They asked Owen, 'what brings you to America?' And he said 'I want to fly all over the world'. And then the American owls said they could help him to travel around the world. They all decided to go to Australia next but for some reason they couldn't find any owls there, so Owen was a bit upset. So he kept on looking and looking and then eventually in the outback they met a human but the human was bad and he captured them and took them to a cage. Owen said to the owls why has he put us in a cage when he is not using us.

The bad guy heard this and thought he needed to do something quickly before they escaped. He thought and thought until an idea struck him. He would write to the queen that he had beautiful owls from around the world including the rarest rainbow owl called 'Owen' which was the named after a king. He thought he could ask the Queen for lots of money.

**Maryam Salahuddin-Karn**  
**Key Stage 1 Short Story**

## **EXTRACT FROM 'THE PARK DISASTER'**

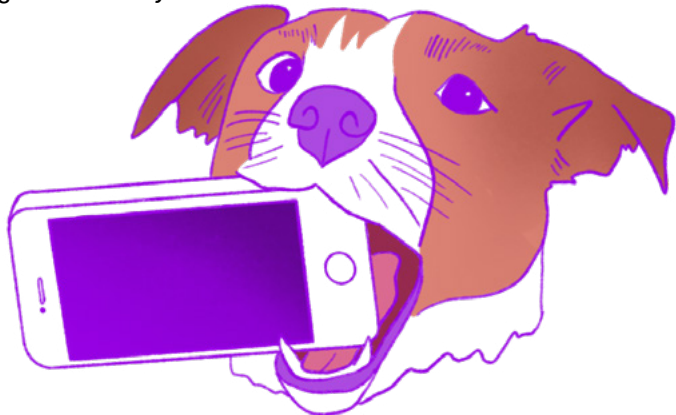
As Amy reached for her pocket where she had put her phone, she froze in shock – it had gone! With tears in her eyes, her hands shaking, Amy along with her friends and her mum started searching the park. They searched high and low, searched every crevice and left no stone unturned, but nothing. Amy's dream had turned into a nightmare!

Suddenly, Khadija let out a mighty shriek. She had found the phone! But all was not as it seemed – the phone was inside the mouth of a dog! Everyone ran to where Khadija was stood. Stood in front of Khadija cowering behind the huge oak tree was the dog.

Amy crept slowly away from her group and towards the dog hoping to sneak up and snatch the phone from the dogs mouth. BANG!!! Her plan went totally wrong. As she reached towards the dog with her arms outstretched, she lost her balance. SPLASH!! Straight into the lake which ran so peacefully behind the oak tree.

With the dog distracted, it lost its grip on the phone, which fell to the ground with a pleasantly smooth landing as it dropped straight into a pile of leaves. The dog ran off so quickly, it had disappeared out of sight before the group realised that the phone was on the ground.

**Ammarah Kazi**  
**Key Stage 1 Short Story**





## **EXTRACT FROM 'THE POWER OF ALHAMDULILLAH'**

Soon the Ali started to say Alhamdulillah. On the other side Rayan who had lots of things started to waste everything and did not even than Allah SWT for everything he had. Soon days passed by, Ali became rich and Rayan became poor. One day Ali went to the shop with his family and he saw his friend Rayan who used to be rich, he was sitting outside the shop and was begging for money. Ali went to his friend and said " My dear friend why are you sitting here and begging for money?". His friend replied " My Dad's job is gone and now we do not have any food or money left at home". Then Ali told him " I used to be poor but I always thanked Allah SWT by saying Alhamdulillah for everything he gave us and he made me rich. He gave money to Rayan and asked him to go home and tell your parents what you have learned. Rayan started saying Alhamdulillah and he became rich again and both the friends lived happily ever after.

**Muizzah Tayyab**

**Key Stage 1 Short Story**



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# KEY STAGE 2

## POETRY

### EXTRACT FROM 'GALAXY QUEST'

As I gaze through my telescope, I transcend into space  
Sun, moon, faraway planets - suddenly within my embrace  
Stars beaming bright, constellations dance in the sky  
Beckoning us to navigate the land, the seas, and the Galaxy up high  
Thousands of light years away, yet within our sight  
Celestial formations radiating heat and light  
Everything in Space is in motion - a spectacle second to none  
The Earth spinning on its axis and planets orbiting the Sun  
How is it possible? The Principle of Gravity is key  
A force pulling together all matter, the glue bonding entire galaxies

Zidan Akhtar  
Key Stage 2 Poetry



## **EXTRACTS FROM 'I'M STILL WAITING'**

Have you now forgotten I still perch  
In the middle of your jar?  
Do you even remember the wonderful fact  
That I was your shining star?

Recall those memories when we both sat down  
Then together we would write  
We'd giggle and gasp at what we'd created  
'Till the sun gave in to moonlight

...

Wherever you are, I wish you'd come home  
And perceive your puzzling absence  
I just wish and hope and dream  
You'll eventually see my presence

Don't forget the stories we've shared  
Don't forget what I've done  
I just have to believe that someday...  
Someday, you'll come

Yours Truly,  
Pencil

**Thalia S. A.**  
**Key Stage 2 Poetry**

## **EXTRACT FROM 'THE LAST STAND'**

What has happened?  
Industrial Revolution.  
Discovering new ways to  
USE ME.  
Destroying my species.  
Pollution.  
What is this evolution?  
The smell of hay. Gone.  
The smell of flowers. Gone.

Jade, mint, dark green,  
These are the colours that sum up  
ME.

10 seconds

My final stand  
Happens here now.  
They have bought out the chainsaw.  
Extermination, Elimination, Execution.

5 seconds

They will use me for everything.  
These barbarians don't understand.  
The pain I feel now will become an echo through history,  
Who will remember me, me, me?

**Hannah Amira Hoque**  
**Key Stage 2 Poetry**

## THE PEACEFUL NIGHT

Oh the peaceful night of shadow!

With glittering stars that shine in the black sky, as shiny and as black as the crow's feathers.

I stare into the calm night with sparkling shooting comets.

I gaze at the beautiful grey moon, a bright smile on the dark blanket of night

And its luminous colour that fills up the horizon.

When I peer into the awe-inspiring sky I wonder: when can we watch TV?

**Ali Murad Mahmood**  
**Key Stage 2 Poetry**



## EXTRACTS FROM 'THE TASTE OF RAIN'

Dark grey skies overshadow what  
Used to be fun in the sun  
Like a huge, great big elephant.

Boom, crash, bang  
Missiles deafen my ears,  
Obliterate my school, obliterate my home, obliterate my dreams  
Into dust  
As it seems.

...

Stolen childhood; taken, taken  
Adulthood; forcibly awakened, awakened.  
Daddy, Mummy nowhere to be seen  
We are left deserted; alone with our  
Fears  
Fighting to survive; every breath is a  
Battle  
With each sound the bullets  
Rattle.

...

Stolen childhood; taken, taken  
Adulthood; forcibly awakened, awakened.  
Daddy, Mummy nowhere to be seen  
We are left deserted; alone with our  
Fears  
Fighting to survive; every breath is the  
Battle  
With each sound the bullets  
Rattle.

**Xaavier Mahmood**  
**Key Stage 2 Poetry**



# KEY STAGE 2

# SHORT STORIES

## EXTRACTS FROM 'A GREAT MIGRATION'

It was a beautiful morning in the Indian Ocean. From the nearby Maldives islands, birds twittered and chirped. A squadron of brown pelicans flew up, disturbed by a movement below. Suddenly, a big, strong bottlenose dolphin, his sides glistening with water, joyfully leapt out of the sea and gracefully dived back under the sea's azure surface. The sun was a ball of fire; the sea was warm and soothing.

A white peacock at the top of a tree screeched as two turtles slipped smoothly into the water, before swimming below and disappearing into the depths of the sea. Small waves lapped gently on the island's shores while iguanas, geckos and crocodiles basked in the sun. The sound of a young hippo bellowing could be heard on the beach. All was peaceful.

...

The next morning, an oil shipping ship was spotted by an elderly lion fish one kilometre away. All the animals retreated to caves and holes on the reef to hide as the ship passed as parts of the ships gear may lie low. In an instant, the ship stopped as it crashed heavily into an underwater volcano and at once, oil began to leak from the massive ship's stern. Crash! Thud!

Yahya Arif

Key Stage 2 Short Story

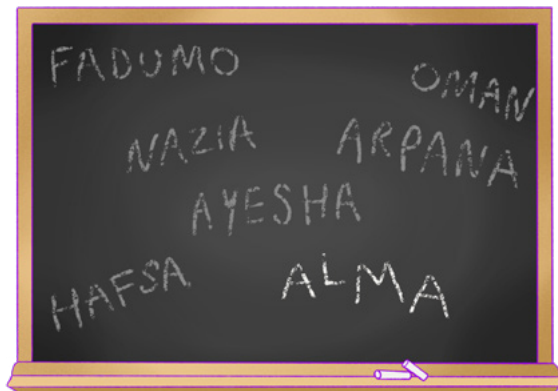
## EXTRACT FROM 'ALMA - A SHORT STORY'

She danced cheerfully through the snow-laden streets relishing her own company. Structures loomed over her petite figure, and her cheerful wanderings came to a halt when she stumbled across a mundane window (the first in a long while) which obscured its contents from view. Just then, a wall invaded her view, and a quite peculiar one at that. It was an archaic wall, as most in this area were, supporting a prehistoric chalkboard, drowning in an endless sea of names. Compelled by her own curiosity, she scrawled her own insignificant signature in a tsunami of others : A-L-M-A.

Taking a step back, Alma admired the latest addition; she smiled contentedly to herself but something wasn't right and Alma knew it. Was it the fact that the whole place felt eerily quiet? She could feel eyes, hundreds and hundreds of eyes, heeding her, scanning her her, uncovering her and digging into her inner soul. Suddenly, there was a noise... she spun round to discover the window wasn't so secretive. Something had emerged from behind the window. Alarmed, puzzled and slightly frightened, Alma advanced cautiously towards this mysterious object and examined it only to realise this was a doll! And, to take the shock further, an exact clone of herself! From the silky, golden wisps of hair to her patched, cotton wooly hat to her denim-blue trousers. The only difference between the two bodies: one was contained life and energy and the other held nothing but emptiness.

Zaki Mavani

Key Stage 2 Short Story



## **EXTRACT FROM 'THE DREAM WEAVER'**

They walked along the cobbled stoned path to the dark, towering oak tree with branches, which looked as long as a 37-foot yacht, at the back of their garden. Suddenly, there was a thunderous scream from Hannah for what stood before her.

"What's wrong?" asked Kia in a worried tone, peering over Hannah's shoulder. Her mouth dropped at the sight.

"W-Wha-what is i-it?" stuttered Hannah and Kia in unison. Raya ran to them, almost tripping over her untied shoelace.

"What's wro-" Said Raya, "OMG! NO WAY! There- there's a door!"

There in front of them was a beautifully carved door, almost hypnotising them to open it and go through.

"Oh, please oh please oh please, can we see what's inside? PRETTY PLEASE?!" pleaded Raya on both knees.

"I'm really not sure..." said Kia hesitantly, but she saw the look on her sister's face and said "Oh alright."

"YAY!" cheered Raya who stood next to the door.

"NO NO! I'm the oldest, even if it's only by a few hours, I know what's best!" wailed Hannah.

(In her mind, she did want to go but she was wary of what could be inside.)

"Darlings, lunch will be ready in 5 minutes!" announced Mum.

"OK, Ammi!" replied Raya. Before Kia and Hannah realised, Raya ran through the door.

"RAYA!!!" shrieked Hannah, "Come back here, NOW!"

"Come on Hannah, live a little, TRUST me," assured Kia's faded voice because she was gone too. Through the mystical door.

**Zahra A Mahmood**

**Key Stage 2 Short Story**

## **EXTRACT FROM 'THE WRITING ON THE WALL'**

As soon as we got home, I went to my room and read a book. I heard a loud knock on the door. "Zahra, sweetie, answer that please. I'm in the middle of cooking" Mum's voice came from downstairs. I ran down and flung open the door. It was a policeman. "Um .... hi?" I spoke. "Hello, miss. I am here to ask if you have seen anything suspicious recently. I would like to speak to your carer, parents, or guardian please." He said in a flat voice. "I'm coming, Zarah" Mum shouted from the kitchen. "Oh, hello constable. Nice to see you again" Mum said, rather impatiently. "Miss, have you seen anything suspicious in the last few hours at Number 27 on your road?" I looked across to 27. There were some random letters written in bright blue on the front wall. The letters were "R O M A Y N E". "Um I may have seen something. Zahra can you please go upstairs for a minute?" Mum asked, blushing.

Fifteen minutes later I ran downstairs because I had the door slamming. "Um Mum what did you see?" I questioned. "Well, I saw someone drop a can of something at Number 27 then they ran away. The person was short and a slow runner. That was all. But there is something that might interest you..." I could feel my excitement building, a real-life neighbourhood mystery! The constable gave me a note of the places that were spray painted and what their messages said. Would you like to look?". I could hardly contain my joy. Mum handed me the piece of paper, not slightly interested herself. I ran upstairs to my room, where I could get my torch and some peace and quiet to have a closer look.

**Sephora Drummond**  
**Key Stage 2 Short Story**

## EXTRACT FROM 'UNPREDICTABLE'

Before the smart but cautious Lottie could protest, Kate was already tugging at the peculiar item. It easily plopped out of the bush. And then we could see what this special thing was.

A map!

Yes, it was a map. But a very red one. I didn't understand why it was red, but I recognised my house, the cafe and park on it.

"It's a map of the town!" I said in awe. "I wonder who drew this. It's very precise."

I also noticed it had a peculiar word on it. I didn't understand what it meant at all. This was the weird word:

Monitumstricte non utuntur maledictus

See, weird.

My eyes were slowly drawn to three parts of the map. There was an X on each of them. The three markings were very clearly drawn. It made me think something was hidden in each of those three places.

"I want to find the treasure," Kate decided.

"Treasure? Who said anything about treasure?" Lottie asked.

"Me!" Kate cheered. "There must be treasure, girls."

"And boy," Zayd put in.

"I suppose we could try and look for the treasure. If there IS treasure, that is. We could use this map to help us," I mused. "When should we do it?"

### Thalia S. A Key Stage 2 Short Story



# MEET THE JUDGES



**AHMED JAFFERALI VERSI** is the publisher and editor of The Muslim News. Ahmed has interviewed world leaders including the late President of Bosnia Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegovic, the late Aslan Maskhadov of Chechnya, Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, the Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, the Rt. Hon. David Cameron the Rt. Hon. Theresa May, and the Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson, and King Charles III when he was HRH The Prince of Wales. During the first Gulf War, Ahmed was part of a British Muslim delegation to Jordan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia mediating for the release of British hostages. In March 2000 Ahmed launched The Muslim News Awards for Excellence celebrating Muslim achievements. He established the Muslim Women's Sport Foundation and also previously served as Deputy President of the International Islamic Women's Games. A regular speaker at international conferences covering Islamic issues at the local and global level, Ahmed focuses on media representation. Ahmed was awarded Honorary Doctorate of Arts in recognition of achievements as Editor of The Muslim News from the University of Bedfordshire in 2007. He was ranked among the top 20 most powerful Asians in the British media by The Guardian.



**A. M. DASSU** is the internationally acclaimed author of 'Boy, Everywhere', which has been listed for twenty-five awards, including the Waterstones Children's Book Prize, the Carnegie Medal, is the 2021 winner of The Little Rebels Award for Radical Fiction, and is also an American Library Association Notable Book. Her second novel, 'Fight Back', was Book of the Month in The Guardian. She writes books that challenge stereotypes, humanise the 'other' and are full of empathy, hope and heart. She is a director at Inclusive Minds, an organisation for people who are passionate about inclusion, diversity, equality and accessibility in children's literature. She is also one of The National Literacy Trust's Connecting Stories campaign authors, aiming to help inspire a love of reading and writing in children and young people. Her work has been published by The Huffington Post, Times Educational Supplement, Scoop magazine, DK Books, Scholastic, Lee and Low, Old Barn Books, and Harper Collins. Her next book is a World Book Day novel and will be published in March 2023.



**AMEERAH KOLA-OLUKOTUN** is a seven-time winner of the Young Muslim Writers Awards and the winner of the Reader's Digest 100 Word Story Competition 2022 in the 12-18 category. She is passionate about exploring injustice in her work and inspiring young people to express themselves through their writing. She has written persuasive comment pieces on knife crime and vaccine hesitancy and stories on a range of topics, including racism and neurodivergence. She is currently studying Biology, Chemistry, French, and Spanish at A-Level and hopes to become an obstetrician.



Photo credit: Robin Clewley

**AMINA ATIQ** is a Yemeni poet, performance artist, creative practitioner, and award-winning community activist. She is a BBC Words First Finalist 2019, an alumni Young Associate, and sits as Anti-racism advisory member with Curious Minds. Amina is an Artist Fellow at DaDaFest and a Social Cohesion Fellow of Humboldt Foundation Residency 2022. Currently Amina is lead artist at 20 Stories High's public-poetry project Poet's Gift, working closely with young Muslims in Merseyside, as well as a librettist in collaboration with composer Alya Al-Sultani for the opera 'Two Sisters'. Amina has been featured by Poetry Please, BBC 4 Radio, Cordite Poetry Review, Queensland Poetry Festival, 'Use Words First' (Wrecking Ball Press), John Moores Painting Prize 2020 (The Double Negative), The Independent, 'Just Beyond Reach' (Sutton Manor, Metal Southend), 'Not Quite Right for Us' (Flipped Eye Publisher, Speaking Volumes), amongst many others. Photo credit: Robin Clewley



**ANNUM SALMAN** is a spoken word poet hailing from Pakistan. She completed her MA in Creative Writing from the UK and went on to publish her debut poetry book, 'Sense Me' in 2019, which centres around the theme of identity. She writes about family, culture, race, gender, and mental health among other topics. Annum has had many feature shows in the UK as well as in Pakistan and currently lives in London where she works as a PR professional and marketer and instructs workshops on poetry.





**AYA KHALIL** is the award-winning author of 'The Arabic Quilt: An Immigrant Story', which is an NCTE's Charlotte Huck Award Recommended Book and the winner of the Arab American Book Award, among other honours. She's the author of 'Our World: Egypt' (Barefoot Books) and the forthcoming books: 'The Night Before Eid' (Little, Brown) and 'The Banned Books Bake Sale' (Tilbury House). Aya holds a master's degree in education and works as a freelance journalist, whose articles have been featured in The Huffington Post and Brit & Co., among other publications. She immigrated from Egypt to the United States when she was young.



**BURHANA ISLAM** is a storyteller who is passionate about exploring themes of heritage, belonging, identity and faith in her work. She studied English Literature at Newcastle University before deciding to become a secondary school teacher, sharing her love for stories with a new generation of curious, young minds. 'Mayhem Mission' (2021) was her debut children's fiction book and 'The Dastardly Duo' (2022) is the second novel in the same series. The end of the trilogy is set to be released in early 2023. Burhana is also the author of 'Amazing Muslims Who Changed the World' (Puffin, 2020).



**CORNELIA FUNKE** initially trained as a social worker and worked with children from tough social circumstances who taught her a lot about the world. She became an illustrator of children's books and then soon began to write her own stories. Since then she has written more than sixty books for all ages, translated into many languages. Best known are her 'Inkheart' trilogy, 'Dragon Rider', 'The Thief Lord', and now the 'Reckless' series. Her most important project for the last five years though has been a residency program she started for young artists from all over the world. She invites young writers, illustrators and musicians from all over the world to come to her farm in Tuscany to work there and get inspired by each other. In 2023 she intends to also invite many environmental activists to meet and together fight for the green and non-human inhabitants of this world.



**DAN WORSLEY** is a children's author and performance storyteller, having left a teaching post in 2013 to work full-time in literature. In 2014 he launched his first book, 'Impossible Tales', a collection of short stories for children, with five more books following after. His writing adventure has taken him to hundreds of primary and secondary schools, libraries, and other public spaces, allowing him to share his books, perform stories, and write with tens of thousands of children and young people. His mission objective is to engage and enthuse as many young readers and writers as possible.



**FAIMA BAKAR** is a freelance journalist who is a contributing writer to Time Out, Metro, and Stylist. She previously worked on the lifestyle desk at HuffPost and Metro.co.uk where she wrote more than 3,000 articles on topics including race, religion, gender and beyond.



**GABY MORGAN** is Associate Publisher at Macmillan Children's Books. She has compiled many bestselling anthologies including 'The Big Amazing Poetry Book', 'Read Me and Laugh: A Funny Poem for Every Day of the Year' and 'Fairy Poems' – which was short-listed for the CLPE Award – and the Macmillan Collector's Library poetry series featuring anthologies on Happiness, Nature, Childhood, Travelling, Stillness and the Sea.



**HELENA NELSON** is a poet, as well as the founder editor of HappenStance Press. Her books include 'Starlight on Water' (a Jerwood prize winner), 'Plot and Counter-Plot', 'Down with Poetry', and most recently 'Pearls: The Complete Mr & Mrs Philpott Poems'. She writes both light and serious verse, runs workshops and performs widely. In 2016 she published the popular HappenStance guidebook, 'How (Not) to Get Your Poetry Published', a book that collects the insights and ideas she has gathered over the last seventeen years of publishing poetry.



**JOHN DOUGHERTY** is the critically acclaimed author of over twenty books for children. John initially trained as a primary school teacher, and through teaching rediscovered his love for children's literature. His first book 'Zues on the Loose' was published in 2004 and was shortlisted for the Branford Boase Award for 'an outstanding first novel for children'. John's writing includes 'There's a Pig Up My Nose' (Egmont Publishing, 2017) which won the Oscar's Book Prize 2018; the critically-acclaimed 'Stinkbomb & Ketchup-Face' series; and a well-received poetry collection, 'Dinosaurs & Dinner-Ladies' (Otter-Barry Books, 2016). John is a patron of the Chipping Norton Literary Festival and is a former chair of the Society of Authors' Children's Writers and Illustrators Group. John regularly delivers writing workshops in schools and festivals, nationally and internationally.



**KARIM KHAN** is a screenwriter and playwright. Karim's first credit was on 'All Creatures Great & Small (C5/PBS). Currently he is writing episodes on two shows for the BBC and has been in a number of writers rooms over the past year with companies including House Productions, Mammoth, Parti Productions, BBC Studios, and Playground. Karim is in development on a number of original projects and adaptations with Clerkenwell, New Pictures, Kudos, The Ink Factory, World Productions, and Left Bank Pictures. In 2022, he was awarded the inaugural Pillars Artist Fellowship which was sponsored by Netflix and Amazon studios and supported by Riz Ahmed's LeftHanded Films. Karim will also develop a new TV project with his mentor Mike Bartlett as part of the ITV/Dancing Ledge/ScreenSkills writers' initiative. For theatre, Karim has been a part of the Soho Writers Lab and the Royal Court Writers Group and his writing credits include 'Corrosive' (Pegasus Theatre, 2019), 'Beyond Shame' (Derby Theatre, 2018) and 'Orange Juice' (The Pleasance, Burton Taylor Studio, 2017). His new play 'Brown Boys Swim' premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe 2022, before transferring to the Soho Theatre. The play is published by Methuen. Karim is also an MA Screenwriting graduate from the National Film and Television School with a scholarship sponsored by Toledo Productions and Channel 4.



Photo credit: Sophie Davidson

**KATE WAKELING** is a writer and musicologist. Her debut collection of children's poetry, 'Moon Juice' (The Emma Press) illustrated by Elina Braslina won the 2017 CLiPPA and was nominated for the 2018 CILIP Carnegie Medal. Kate's second collection for children, 'Cloud Soup' (The Emma Press) came out in 2022 and was shortlisted for the CLiPPA and selected as a Book of the Month by the Guardian and the Scotsman. Kate's work for adults has been commended in the Forward Prizes for Poetry and published widely, including in the Guardian, Magma, Oxford Poetry, Stand Magazine, The Rialto, 3:AM magazine and 'The Best British Poetry 2014' (Salt). A pamphlet of Kate's poetry for adults, 'The Rainbow Faults', is published by The Rialto.



**KEN SPILLMAN** has written 95 books and his work has been translated into dozens of languages across four continents. His recent books for children include 'The Absolutely True Adventures of Daydreamer Dev' and 'The Astoundingly True Adventures of Daydreamer Dev' (Puffin India). Ken's picture book 'My Upside Down World' was selected as one of the top 100 worldwide at the Bologna Children's Book Fair 2022. Ken has presented sessions to 95,000 children in Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Oman, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Singapore and the UAE. He has been a finalist in two categories of the Australian Arts in Asia Awards, a showcase for best practice arts engagement in Asia.



**KHALEEL MUHAMMAD** is an internationally renowned nasheed artist who has performed globally and released three albums. Khaleel is the author of the children's book Muslim All-Stars. He has appeared in several television shows, adverts, and the Disney film Cinderella. On TV he has presented Khaleel's Make & Do art show, and The Muslim Kids Show and is currently creator of Iqra Kids TV on Iqra TV. He is the radio presenter of the double award-winning Kids Round Show on Inspire 105.1FM. Khaleel designed and illustrated the children's books 'Allah's Amazing Messenger (pbuh)' by S.J. Sear, 'Adams Adventures' by Mariah Derissy, and his own 'Muslim Family Colouring Book'. Khaleel has self-published 'Muslim All-Stars: Monster Mayhem', 'Deen Street Kids' and most recently his fourth book 'Raheema and the Robot'.



**LUQMAN ALI** is the founding Artistic Director of Khayaal Theatre, the first multi award-winning professional theatre company dedicated to the dramatic interpretation of Muslim and interfaith literature and the experience of Muslims in the modern world for the stage, film, radio, publishing and education. He is currently working to nurture an inclusive humanitarian discourse of story and dream in Muslim communities and between those communities and wider society through Khayaal's national on-demand Theatre-without-Walls programme that includes adaptations of wisdom tales from Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam while also developing the company's next medium scale production exploring the intersection of Britain and Islam in the story of coffee.



**MARCUS WICKER** is the author of 'Silencer' (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017)—winner of the Society of Midland Authors Award—and 'Maybe the Saddest Thing' (Harper Perennial, 2012), selected by D.A. Powell for the National Poetry Series. He is the recipient of a 2021 National Endowment for the Arts Creative Writing Fellowship, a Pushcart Prize, 2011 Ruth Lilly Fellowship, as well as fellowships from The Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, and Cave Canem. Wicker's poems have appeared in The Nation, The New Republic, The Atlantic, Oxford American, and POETRY. He is Poetry Editor of Southern Indiana Review, and an Associate Professor of English at the University of Memphis where he teaches in the MFA program.



**MARYAM HESSAVI** is British Manchester-based poet and critic, with poems and reviews appearing in various publications, including Carcanet's 'New Poetries VIII'. An alumna of the University of Manchester, she holds an MA in English Literature & Creative Writing with specialisms in Modernism and Linguistics. Maryam is a Ledbury Critic and Reviews Editor for The Poetry School.



**MATHEW TOBIN** teaches English and Children’s Literature in Primary ITE and leads several modules on the MA/PGCert in Education with a focus on the history of Children’s Literature and Reading for Pleasure. Since joining Oxford Brookes University in 2014, after sixteen years of Primary teaching and leading in Oxfordshire, Mathew has been asked to deliver several keynotes across the UK on Reading for Pleasure, Picturebooks and Engaging pupils in the reading and writing process. He has research interests in children’s literature and the Reading for Pleasure agenda and is currently working on his doctorate in exploring multimodal approaches to locality-based children’s literature.



**MOLLY ROSENBERG** has worked at The Royal Society of Literature for ten years, and as Director since the end of 2017, oversees the Society’s business and creative strategy. She is celebrating the RSL’s bicentenary festival RSL 200 – with readers and writers across the UK and beyond – through a number of new programmes, showing that literature is for everyone. Molly has previously worked at the Royal Opera House and Southbank Centre, and as an independent researcher. She has studied at King’s College London, University of California Berkeley, and Trinity College Dublin.



**RABIAH HUSSAIN** is a writer whose current projects in development include a book adaptation with Parti Productions, a book adaptation with BBC Studio Wales, and her original idea with Little House Productions. Rabiah has been invited to be on the BBC Writersroom Drama Room programme where she was paired with Clerkenwell Films to develop an original drama. Rabiah was a writer for the Kudos TV and Royal Court Theatre Fellowship Programme in 2019 and has recently been commissioned by Royal Court to write a new play called ‘Word Play’. She was part of the writer’s room for Riz Ahmed’s ‘Englistan’ and completed a shadow scheme with The Forge for ‘Ackley Bridge’. In 2018, Rabiah was part of the BBC Drama Room programme and is an alumnus of the B3 Media Talent Lab for upcoming BAME filmmakers. Rabiah’s debut full-length play, ‘Spun’, premiered at Arcola Theatre in July 2018, receiving 4-star reviews in The Guardian and The Stage, and was nominated for Best

Stage Production at the Asian Media Awards. 'Spun' toured Canada in 2019, and won the German Baden-Wuttemberg Youth Theatre Prize in 2020. Rabiah's plays, poetry, monologues, and audio projects have been part of programmes with Tamasha Theatre, The Rich Mix, The Space Arts Centre, The Bunker Theatre, RADA, Bechdel Theatre, Theatre Absolute, and Battersea Art Centre. Accompanying her creative work, Rabiah has contributed opinion pieces to The Guardian, Huffington Post Blog, Exeunt Magazine, Burnt Roti, The F-Word, Gal-Dem and Wales Arts Review.



**RADIYA HAFIZA** studied English Language and Literature at King's College London and worked in publishing for a few years. She is behind the fantastic blog The Good Assistant. Radiya grew up reading classic Western fairy tales that never had any brown girls in them - Rumaysa is her debut novel, bringing such stories to children who need to see themselves represented.



**RAISAH AHMED** is a writer and director working across film & television. She has made a number of acclaimed shorts, including 'Meet Me By The Water', which was commissioned by the Scottish Film Talent Network and premiered in competition at the Edinburgh International Film Festival, and 'Magda', which premiered at the Glasgow Short Film Festival. As a director her credits include BBC 3's 'The Break' and 'Princess Mirror-belle'. As a writer she is currently developing 'Half Moon Camp', an original feature with Zorana Piggott and Film 4, and 'South Side', a drama series with Freedom Scripted.



**RICHARD GRANT** is a performance poet, writer, and producer, also known as Dreadlockalien. He has worked alongside the Young Muslim Writers Awards for many years and is an advocate for spoken word and unheard voices.



**SARAH GHAZAL ALI** is the author of 'Theophanies', a poetry collection selected as the Editors' Choice for the 2022 Alice James Award, and forthcoming with Alice James Books in January 2024. A 2022 Djanikian Scholar, her poems appear in POETRY, American Poetry Review, Pleiades, the Rumpus, and elsewhere. She is a Stadler Fellow at Bucknell University and poetry editor for West Branch.





**SARMAD MASUD** is a writer and director. He most recently directed all four parts of 'You Don't Know Me' for Snowed-in Productions, a four-part series written by Tom Edge, based on the book by Imran Mahmood, and broadcasted on BBC. He previously directed the 'Bulletproof' Special for Vertigo and Sky set in Cape Town, having also directed the Season 2 finale. He also recently directed on 'Ackley Bridge' for The Forge and Channel 4. Sarmad's first feature, 'My Pure Land', is set and filmed in Pakistan. It premiered at the Edinburgh International Film Festival and was the UK submission to the Oscars in the Foreign Language category. He was also nominated as a Screen International Star of Tomorrow. Previously his short film 'Two Dosas', funded by Film London, was voted best film in their London Calling Plus category by David Yates, winning at London Short Film Festival, Aspen Shortsfest, River to River in Florence, and Shufflefest voted by Danny Boyle. He also wrote and directed 'Adha Cup' which was the first Urdu language drama commissioned by Channel Four, going on to develop it as a six-part TV series with the BBC.



**SHAZIA RASHID** is a screenwriter whose recent credits include 'Phoenix Rise' (CBBC), 'Malory Towers' (King Bert/CBBC), and 'Rebel Cheer Squad – A Get Even Series' (CBBC/Netflix). She is attached to adapt best-selling novel, 'Arya Winters and the Tiramisu of Death' by Amita Murray (Renegade Pictures). She is on the writing team for C4 Drama series 'Outta Town', developed by Fully Focused Productions (a production company working with disadvantaged young people, in front of and behind the camera) for whom Shazia has written multiple short films. A graduate of the BBC Writers' Academy and a winner of ITV's Original Voices scheme, Shazia has written for 'Eastenders', 'Doctors', 'Holby City', and 'Casualty'. She has also storylined for 'Eastenders', 'Hollyoaks', 'Coronation Street' and on drama series 'Tanglin' for Singapore's national broadcaster MediaCorp.



Photo © Tallulah Foster

**STEWART FOSTER** is an adult and children’s novelist. His books have won multiple school and library awards and are recommended by Empathy Lab and Reading Well. His first adult book, ‘We Used to be Kings’, was published in 2014, to the accolades of being selected as The Observers’ Author to Watch, and Amazons’ Rising Star, in the same year. His first children’s book, ‘The Bubble Boy’, was published in 2016, winning Sainsbury’s Children’s Book Award in 2016 (Age 9+) and many schools and libraries awards, as well as being nominated for The Carnegie Book Award. The book was published as BUBBLE, in USA and has been translated into eleven languages. Since then, Stewart has written four more children’s books – ‘All the Things That Could Go Wrong’, ‘Checkmates’, ‘The Perfect Parent Project’ and ‘Can You Feel the Noise?’



Photo credit: Asif Patel

**SUFIYA AHMED** is an award-winning children’s and YA author of twenty books. Her latest title is ‘Rosie Raja: Churchill’s Spy’, about a new bold Muslim heroine set during WWII. Sufiya regularly visits secondary and primary schools to talk about her childhood dream to become an author. She also discusses her previous career in the Houses of Parliament to educate and inspire pupils about the democratic process and discusses how her political activism influences her writing. She is a public speaker on girls’ rights. Sufiya is the founder of the BIBI Foundation, a non-profit organisation which arranges visits to the Houses of Parliament for diverse and underprivileged children.



**SUMAYYA LEE** was born in Durban and has worked as an Islamic Studies teacher, Montessori Directress and Teacher of English as a Foreign Language. Her debut, ‘The Story of Maha’ (Kwela, 2007) was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Writers Prize for Best First Book – Africa and longlisted for the Sunday Times Fiction Award. She was one of the judges for the 2018 Writivism /Kofi Addo Prize for Creative Non-Fiction and is part of the Advisory Board at Writivism.



**TIMI SANNI** is an award-winning writer, editor and Muslim literature advocate from Lagos, Nigeria. He is the founder of The Muslim Write Initiative, which promotes a true, non-stereotypical representation of Muslims in literature. He is currently pursuing a degree in Biochemistry at Lagos State University and is an alumnus

of Lucent Dreaming's Creative Expression program, Nairobi Writing Academy and SprinNG Writing Fellowship. He was also an attendee at the Revolutionary Poetics Masterclass with Kaveh Akbar. He has been recognized by Poets Without Borders, Stephen A. Dibiase Poetry Prize, Awele Creative Trust and others. His work appears in Black Warrior Review, New Delta Review, Lucent Dreaming, Lolwe, and many other publications.



**XANA MARWICK** is a stage and screen writer based in Edinburgh. After leaving school aged fifteen, she later went on to study at the Royal Conservatoire for Scotland, has been nominated for and won numerous awards and residencies, including the highly competitive BBC Writersroom, Dramaroom scheme and her work has been seen throughout the UK and internationally. Xana has written across a variety of television and theatre productions, including all five series of BAFTA-nominated 'Molly and Mack' for CBeebies, and has written pilot episodes, bibles and script polishes across drama, animation and kids, and currently has a number of original ideas in development. Xana has a particular interest in finding the magic and humour in stories about people who have been let-down, left-behind or left-out, often inspired by those she has met through her work with socially excluded communities and by her own life. Xana's writing spans everything from joyful pre-school comedy to dark and gritty drama, often exploring themes around the treatment of women and girls, mental illness, poverty and neurodiversity, all subjects with which Xana has first-hand, lived experience.



**YASMIN KHATUN DEWAN** is a journalist and broadcaster with specialist focus on religion, fashion, sustainability, and community related stories. In 2014 she travelled to the Chadian borders of the Central African Republic to cover the civil war, and has continued to cover the region in her work. She has attained international recognition and acclaim with publications in The New York Times and The Guardian. Her documentary following the Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh was shortlisted for International Investigation of the Year at the AIB awards and was more recently shortlisted for report of the year at the Asian Media Awards. She is currently a journalist at the BBC News Channel. In addition to her journalistic work she has been researching the intersection between hijab and identity and is a Research Fellow at the William Temple Foundation.

# KEY STAGE 3

## POETRY

### EXTRACTS FROM 'CHANT OF THE KEY WORKERS'

we are the tranquil stream that soothes  
every flower, bud and shoot,  
that lies lost  
beneath  
the soil

*this is how we lead*

we are the gentle breeze that sweeps  
every haunting fear away, whilst we bottle up  
our own, that we fling  
into an abyss

...

we do not need your claps  
for the seeds of care we've sown  
do bear the ripest fruit  
through the countless hugs  
of gratitude  
from those of you  
who prize us  
who know us, recognise us

we are doctors nurses carers teachers  
cashiers bin-men workers preachers  
drivers farmers fire-fighters  
here we come the hope-igniters

**Fatema Zahra Mithwani**  
**Key Stage 3 Poetry**

## DESPITE IT ALL

Despite it all, the children play  
with twisted twigs that morph into swords  
whose gleaming silver is reflected in wide eyes  
as their wielders search for better duelling sticks.

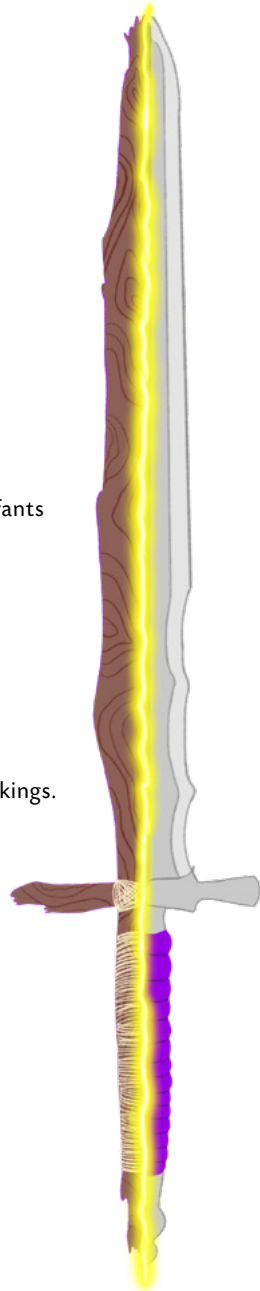
Despite it all, the children play  
with shrapnel caused by a bundle of doom  
shreds of wood becoming sleds  
to slide down hills of rubble with raucous shrieks.

Despite it all, the children play  
between drug-dazed adults and soiled, sobbing infants  
darting past household missiles, clutching needles  
to copy doctors, or mummies, with innocent zeal.

Despite it all, the children play  
with exhumed bones from the victims of famine  
contorting their bodies like tribal men,  
then building fortresses of ossein to lounge in like kings.

They frolic and grin, giggling when they fall  
Children are children, despite it all.

**Aishah Kola-Olukotun**  
**Key Stage 3 Poetry**



## EXTRACT FROM 'GREEN AND GREY'

The sun was as red as blood  
As it slowly plunged into the sea  
It was as cool as spring  
Yet the sea was salty and as still as a rock  
The soft, bubbly clouds were as smooth as pebble  
I realised the majestic view

The sun was gone  
The sky was space-black  
Frigid waters veiled by litter  
Clear bottles and bags  
I felt disgusted at the clear waste of plastic  
I realised the horrific nature of our now horrific world

A canopy of vibrant green,  
Stretching higher than the eye can perceive  
The trees were a tranquil emerald  
And as tall as girrafes  
There was a spidery tangle of leaves  
Trunks as jagged as nails

A canopy of grey smoke streaking the sky  
Reached further than the eye could perceive  
Once brimming with life  
Now a barren land  
Where gnarled trees and birds thrived  
But now all is gone and life is gone.

**Samir Cheema**  
**Key Stage 3 Poetry**



## **EXTRACT FROM 'INDOCTRINATION CAMP'**

Why can't we pray? The woman asks internally,  
For if a whisper of faith penetrates her icy lips,  
They will be sure to lash her till she bleeds,  
Till the religious belief is knocked out of her,

They cannot stand her and her people,  
Who share a universal religion yet stand alone,  
In the cold, cold, camp,  
Surrounded by bars and fences,  
An impenetrable barrier which she cannot escape,  
A whole world separating her and her kin,

She tried to help an elder yesterday,  
And was lashed for saying the Lord's name,  
What was the crime? her body screams,  
Her anger and sorrow threaten to burst forth from her veins,  
Which have not tasted warm blood in days,

**Khadija Fombo**  
**Key Stage 3 Poetry**

## EXTRACTS FROM 'THE SOUNDLESS WARRIOR'

A delicate dance across the page,  
Every pirouette precisely penned,  
Smooth. Deep. Rhythmic.  
A twist and a twirl,  
Up, down, up, down.  
Sometimes stopping  
To dot the i's and cross the t's  
I control the pen as I please.

A flute of ink.  
Composing meaningful melodies,  
Repeating. Rhyming. Regular.  
Like a beating heart,  
The ink flows silently,  
A soundless note sent  
As I conduct my instrument.

I am in awe of its accuracy,  
Pinpoint precision.  
Every move of my hand echoed,  
Made permanent in velvet black  
A stark contrast to the luminous paper  
As my thoughts appear before my eyes.

...

In my hand I hold  
The answer to their disregard.  
The definition of power.  
I am in control.  
Transformed.  
This receptacle of ink moves of its own accord,  
Behold my humble biro.  
My powerful pen.

**Mariam Khan**  
**Key Stage 3 Poetry**



# KEY STAGE 3

# SHORT STORIES

## EXTRACT FROM 'A DEMONIC MISFORTUNE'

The boy wiped his forehead, brushed a hand through his hair, and picked up the ball. Walking behind the fading line, he called a name, skipped forward, and launched the ball over his head. Shouting ensued, followed by the distinct sound of shoes skidding across concrete. One of the players, among the shorter ones, kicked the ball up, loaded his hips, and smashed the ball flawlessly into the back of the net. Zaid Bin Umar sprang up with glee, clapping and cheering his friends on. However, he was dragged back down immediately back a fierce pain in his knee. He groaned and gripped it tightly as it stormed down his calf and shot up through his thigh. A broken whimper crackled from his vocal chords as he scrambled for a bottle, sighing as the lukewarm water flowed gently down his throat. A heavy weight crushed his ribs as his eyes watered, for his heart longed for the moments he so cherished; the buzz of scoring, the pain of conceding, and the feeling of bone-rattling contact against the hard surface of a ball.

He stood up cautiously, taking care not to irritate his dynamite of a knee. Limping away slowly, he felt drowned in his memories. His eyelids fought fiercely to screw themselves shut, so once the day had finished, he wasted no time in climbing into bed, drifting away to the sister of death, into a blissful ignorance of reality, a safe haven of vulnerability.

"Recon, ready and set,"

"Roger that, Strike Team Delta move in to position"

Syed Muhafizul Haque  
Key Stage 3 Short Story



## EXTRACT FROM 'DRAGON OF THE SOUL'

There weren't always dragons in the valley. I know this for a fact because I had been their end. I thought I had slayed the last dragon a millenia ago, when those foul beasts were about to upend the course of our existence. I remember their scaly, crimson skin ricocheting into the air, fire balls spurting from their mouths, their broad wings extended. I had once admired those wise creatures that curled majestically to form the empire's emblem and who's name the people called Father: the dragon emperor. Father had believed that humans and dragons had to live in harmony for all of eternity, that the dragons brought good luck to the Emperor and his descendants. This narrative was told in the vibrant hues that were sewed into the gigantic tapestries that lined the walls of Father's throne room.

I ordered them burnt.

However, my past comes back to haunt me. The vessel rumbles and descends to land. I peer outside of the horizontal window. After hearing news of destruction being havoced by reptile-like beings with wings, I journeyed here straight away. I let not a single of my men travel with me, no matter how much my advisors warned me of the risk. Smooth grassland stretches as far as my eye can see, daffodils dotting every inch, beautifying the land I had left burning. Yellow light bathes the grass in a hideous glow, my eyes narrow as I spot a slab of rock jutting out from the Earth in the distance. Inside me, a burning coal smolders intensely, filling me with rage. An inner voice caresses my ear with its words as it had done many years ago. Kill it. Kill every last one. Finish them

**Khadija Fombo**  
**Key Stage 3 Short Story**



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## **EXTRACT FROM 'THE CRIMSON VINES'**

By the time the squirrel had slowed to a stop, we were standing amongst a thick, trackless and untouched area- a place I would have never thought to have navigated to. I looked around for a trace of familiarity, but couldn't see anything around me which would indicate as to why the squirrel had brought me here. The inner 'sensible' in me was at the moment seriously questioning as to why I followed a squirrel towards a place that may be almost impossible to get out of, but the squirrel was surely relentless. It was still beckoning me towards a small clearing ahead.

Thinking at this point I had nothing else to lose, I followed it through the thick brambles to the small clearing. I peered around, and nothing caught my eye at first, until the squirrel scampered to an area hidden by the largest of trees. Sticky sap was dripping from the rough tree barks and the dark pigmented leaves looked foreboding as the sun began to cast dancing shadows over the dusty floor. And that was when I spotted something.

A crimson-coloured, tattered piece of silk was fluttering against the breeze, tangled in one of the bushes. It was odd for such an expensive piece of material to be floating around such a sequestered and concealed area, but something in the back of my mind was telling me that there was more to this. This whole place, the crimson silk, the squirrel, it just all seemed too familiar. Too familiar. I just knew there was something else about the silk, yet my mind just wasn't connecting the dots.

**Sumaiyah Hanna Ahmed**  
**Key Stage 3 Short Story**

## EXTRACT FROM 'THE PAINTING'

There was a long, thin figure slumped on the misplaced furniture. It's wispy, auburn hair dropped down across its face. Although the figure had changed, I still managed to recognise her. Recognise the long, brown skirt that skimmed the ground. Recognised the stained apron that covered some of the brown fabric.

Her eyes suddenly darted up, and now she had recognised me.

I awoke covered in sweat, my heart pounding through my chest. My blanket lay scrunched on the floor and my pillows were on the other side of the bed. My breathing became rapid as my unsteady hands swiped away the sweat particles that had formed on my forehead.

*It was just a dream.* I thought to myself, although I was unsure whether I had said it out loud or in my head.

Wearily, I slipped out of my pyjama's, the cold morning air gnawing at my skin. I covered myself with the nearest set of clothes and plodded downstairs to see my mother standing in the middle of the sitting room. Her face was confused, and she was startled when I strode into the room.

My eyes widened as I followed hers.

There it sat, with its own spotlight lit by the sun shining though the slither of the blinds. Its radiant blue colour brighter than before as it casted a shadow across the laminate floor boards.

**Inayah Ahmed**  
**Key Stage 3 Short Story**



## **EXTRACT FROM 'THE SHACK'**

She sat there for fifteen minutes, carefully assessing the reasons for and against. In the end, she decided that it would be best to go there, but Jason would never know that she didn't stay there for the time he asked. She picked up her parents' antique camera and bounded out the door, fearful and frightened.

She trekked through the snowy forest, stepping over twigs so as not to draw the attention of wolves. The crows screeched above her, crying out from their nests of melancholy and foreboding. The pearl-white snow crunched beneath her thick leather boots as frosty breath slithered out of her mouth with each apprehensive breath she took.

She arrived at the shack twenty minutes later, her rosy cheeks the most colourful thing in the swarm of coniferous trees. She gazed upon the debilitated, broken-down structure. She took a deep breath and pushed the door open with a mighty heave. It would not budge. She tried again, and noticed a padlock. She looked around for something to open it with, and was rewarded with a glittering golden key hanging from the branch of a nearby pine. She put it in the lock, turned it and pushed the door open.

**Zakariah Ben Said**  
**Key Stage 3 Short Story**





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# KEY STAGE 3

# JOURNALISM

## HOME BARGAINS HEIST

On the morning of Saturday 30th July, a Home Bargains retail store was found to be robbed by a group of unseen figures. The police Sergeant sent to investigate the scene reported that this was merely the work of greedy criminals however, he warned that they were extremely skilled, and other shop owners should be extremely cautious. Sergeant James Pickens stated "These are talented thieves, but the law will be able to apprehend them soon enough. However, we implore any who saw anything suspicious on the night in question to contact the local police station immediately." We would like to remind readers that to reach emergency services, all you need do is dial 999. Mr James Jackson, the manager of the store stated that he would "send way more money to the security department and catch those burglars if it's the last thing I do." He has made a donation of considerable amount to the Metropolitan Police Department in order to help track down the enigmatic bandits. The thieves are still at large, and as over £1.2 million were stolen in products and stock, we remind readers to be cautious.

Zakariah Ben Said  
Key Stage 3 Journalism



## **EXTRACT FROM 'SIT STILL, LOOK PRETTY'**

Even though there has been progress made very slowly over the past few decades, Hollywood still has an inaccurate and unfair representation of women which instils sexist stereotypes into the viewers of such movies. For example, children. If from a young age girls are taught that they should stay home and cook and clean and take on their responsibility as mothers whereas boys should grow up to have good careers and go out to make a living, there will be an increased belief of such stereotypes setting the progress made back.

Unfortunately, the lack of opportunities and representation for women is not the only issue. The gender pay gap, where a man is payed almost double to what a woman is payed for doing the exact same job or maybe even more. Research has shown male actors earn \$1.1 million more than their female co-stars with similar experience and screen time. Many actresses and even some actors have spoken up about this issue, but have we seen change? No. One actress that spoke up about the unfair gaps in pay checks was Natalie Portman who informed "Compared to men, in most professions, women make 80 cents to the dollar. In Hollywood we are making 30 cents to the dollar." Again, you may ask why. Again, I reply simply because they are women.

**Azwa Khan**  
**Key Stage 3 Journalism**

## **EXTRACT FROM 'SPORTS WORLD'**

Welcome back to Sports World. Today's article is about England's defeat to South Africa in cricket. England had won the toss and had elected to bowl first at one of their home grounds, Rose Bowl, also home to the Oval Invincibles and known as the Ageas Bowl. They had been doing so well and got their wicketkeeper-Quinton De Cock-out on 3 balls. However, South Africa fought back and scored 191/5 of 20 overs, with Reeza Hendricks starring 70 runs of 59 balls and David Willey taking 3 wickets. This meant that England would need a run rate of 9.5, so they had to score at least 19 runs in every 2 overs.

The openers had been doing well until Maharaj got the first wicket for South Africa on Jos Buttler, their wicketkeeper and captain. With their captain down England toppled down and only scored 102/10 of 16.4 overs. That was the player of the series and SA took lead as 2-1 to take the cup home. Player of the series was Hendricks. Player of the match was Tabraiz Shamsi, who had an astounding figure of 5/24.

After this match, England also had to say their farewells to one of their best all-rounders and the best all-rounder in odi and test cricket yet, Ben Stokes. At the post-match press conference, Ben Stokes had broken up in tears, and said, "It has been a great journey, and I will miss ODI as it was one of my best types of cricket, especially after winning the world cup 2019. But you may expect to see me in future tour dates, and I have a 20% chance that I will play in odi or the world cup, but now I am the captain of the England Test cricket team, so I need to put my brain more to that side now."

**Muhammad Usman Hussain**

**Key Stage 3 Journalism**

## **EXTRACT FROM 'THE END OF THE WORLD'**

At 12.05pm on Wednesday, the WHO (World Health Organisation) announced "There has been an outbreak of a mysterious disease in New Delhi, India; the second most populous country in the world. We currently have no information about the disease but are trying to find out more as quickly as we can. Until then we advise you not to panic." However, within a few days, there were news reports on BBC news, The daily news, The sun, The Mirror and on televisions, of this disease having spread all throughout India and now there were more cases appearing around the globe.

What happened around the globe after that?

Akhtar, forty from New Delhi, India said "There have been a total of around 10000 infections and 8720 deaths caused by this unknown disease here in India so far, from what we've been told." Hannah-twenty from Spain- reported "Panic and fear have struck the people of earth like lightning." India went into full military lockdown. Noah -seventy-one from Australia- told us "Some people have begun stealing food and other essential supplies from all the shops; violence and chaos is everywhere! As someone with no family or help, it is becoming increasingly difficult for me to survive with how things are going. Everywhere you go there are zombie-like vicious, violent and disfigured people." In places such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, France and New Zealand, Hospitals were filling up faster than the speed of sound; They had fallen short of hospital staff and equipment.

How did the Government respond?

After all this chaos and death, the rulers of each country placed a full lockdown, which lasted a whole year. They introduced new rules of social distancing, wearing masks, not travelling anywhere and staying at home, etc to stop feeding this hungry infection. They also then began trying to create vaccines and cures everywhere possible.

**Zainab Riaz**  
**Key Stage 3 Journalism**

## **EXTRACT FROM 'THE PROBLEM WITH WESTERN FEMINISM'**

Western feminism is a movement that strives to achieve gender equality and improve the lives of women generally. However, Western feminism has neglected and falsely represented Muslim women. Western feminism invalidates the needs of Muslim women and portrays them as victims desperately in need of saving. Surely, a movement made to help women shouldn't exclude women, right? Yes, that's why in this article I hope to divulge the problems with Western feminism and inspire you to take a stand and educate yourselves and others.

Firstly, lets talk about the hijab. Western feminist groups have created this idea that whilst a woman is wearing a hijab or a niqab they can't be liberated, instead they are all monolithically oppressed and in the shackled of their patriarchal, misogynistic religion.

...

In an ideal world women's' rights would be advocated for in a less narrow, isolating way. Muslim women want the same as all women! We want equal rights. We want to be respected. We want the law to protect us. We want equal pay. We don't want to be viewed as victims. We don't want to be pushed aside. Women should not be instead of subjecting ourselves to labels and divided into groups. We are all beautifully different and we should embrace that

**Faatimah Lambat**  
**Key Stage 3 Journalism**

# KEY STAGE 3

# PLAYSCRIPT

## **JAVID BOND AND SHARUKH HOLMES: THE ADVENTURE THAT NEVER ENDS**

Narrator: At the Abandoned Hilton hotel parking lot our characters are about to face something that will change everything

Sharukh Holmes: Seriously! This stupid car can't even reverse, if this mysterious man decided to offer me a mission, he better give me a new car.

Javid Bond: Need a little assistance Holmes.

(Sharukh Holmes sighs)

Sharukh Holmes: What on earth are you doing here Bond.

Amjid Khan: Well if you must know were here on very important business.

Sharukh Holmes: I never knew Javid needed his assistant to answer for him.

Javid Bond: At least Amjid is not like your sidekick Wahid. And if you're here to play heroic detective I advise you to go; after your last mission it is unlikely anyone would like to hire you again.

Wakeel: My names Wakeel not Wahid, Bond- sir I have checked the perimeter there seems to be nothing fishy yet.

(An immense smirk appears on Javid Bond's face)

Javid bond: Oh well I must be off unlike you I have places to go and important people to see.

**Ameera Ebrahim and Zoya Vindhani**  
**Key Stage 3 Playscript**

# KEY STAGE 3

# SCREENPLAY

## EXTRACT FROM 'CALAMATI, TI HO DETTO'

(At that moment the entire room becomes white and seemingly endless. The ceiling stretches extremely high, and the ground stretches around as well. PROTAGONIST drops the chair and runs to her desk, hiding underneath it. As she hides, she looks at the goo underneath the desk; there are dark outlines on the other side of it. Remembering what happened with her knee, she tries to stick her hand through the goo, but it is ice-cold and she is forced to withdraw her hand. It seems to be getting colder every time it is touched. She can see the insect-like legs of TEACHER approaching her desk; she appears to be skipping.)

TEACHER: (laughing maniacally) Playing these games is so fun! I could do this for ever and ever!

(Now the ground shifts again, but it drops around thirty metres, meaning PROTAGONIST is dropped as well. However, the desk is not dropped and remains thirty metres in the air. TEACHER is on the same level as the desk.)

PROTAGONIST: (quietly, to herself) It's fine. I'm fine. I need to... get out.

(She surveys her surroundings and sees that the only possible exit is through the goo on the underside of her desk, which is far above her in the air.)

PROTAGONIST: (quietly, to herself) How am I supposed to get up there? Oh my- (she lets out a frustrated cry) It's fine. I have to get up there. I can't... die.

TEACHER: Are you going to play or what? (giggles)

PROTAGONIST: (hesitantly, but trying to appear brave) Yes, I'll play your... (taking a deep breath) game.

**Neda Aryan**  
**Key Stage 3 Screenplay**

# KEY STAGE 4

## POETRY

### EXTRACT FROM 'AN ODE TO MY MOTHER'

When I was younger  
I remember my sister  
Would come home and study  
Her cheeks all bright and ruddy.  
My sister - she loved to learn.  
I'd ask her why  
And she'd tell me with a sigh,  
'Because it's the only thing I've got.'  
I never knew then  
That my sister was studying  
To escape from  
My father.  
And when she earned herself  
A scholarship,  
I was left alone  
Trying to piece together  
A life I'd given up on altogether.

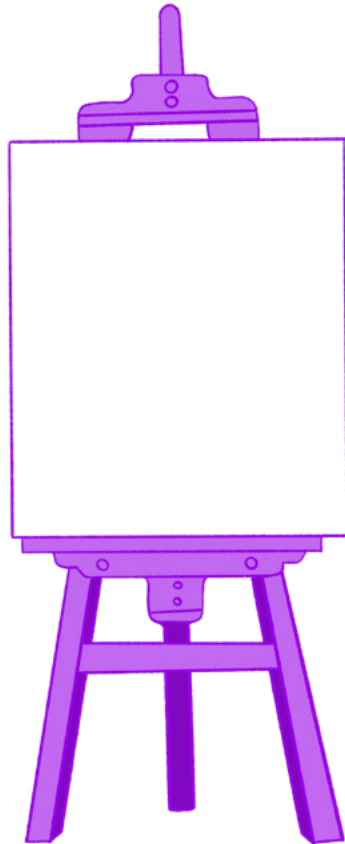
When I was younger,  
I remember my brother  
Would tell me about his dreams  
Of joining a football team.  
He'd train seven days a week -  
Even when he was weak.  
He'd say, 'Sister, it's the only way  
'Of leaving this place one day.'  
I told him he was insane.  
I laughed and called him names.  
And when my brother  
Was sent to America,  
We would watch him on the TV.  
I would point at the screen and I'd  
shout,  
'There's my brother, see!'  
He was everything I wanted to be.

Deborah Afolayan  
Key Stage 4 Poetry

## **BROKEN**

Voices. Visions. Havoc.  
I am lost.  
These screams are silenced echoes  
Their directions astray  
On a boat they travel  
Their sailors disobey.  
I am trapped.  
Enrobed in luscious silk,  
I remain internally poor  
This blanket is only a deception  
Concealing my only flaw.  
A fault. A defect. A blemish,  
That darkens every jewel's shine  
My only imperfection  
I desire to confine.  
I am drained.  
Those colours that once danced  
Now dried with distraught  
I am now an empty canvas  
With no painter nor thought.

**Amelia Tazarab Khan**  
**Key Stage 4 Poetry**





## **EXTRACT FROM 'CHATBOT'**

Instagram left us bare  
Vulnerable, we fall into devil's lair.  
That traps, judges, feeds the fire with likes and fuel  
Just ask twitter, the best place to host an online duel  
With indifferent strangers who probably don't care  
Who you really are, what you represent  
The world orbits around followers  
The desire to steal the stage  
Fake faces, beauty, wealth, fame

By nature we are proud  
We mask our feelings behind lol  
Abbreviations a misconception  
As tiktok took its toll  
Attention spans are just an inception  
Trending is the way to follow  
It's approved by everyone else, who cares  
What's righteous or wrong, moral or fair

There's nothing social about social media  
Because all I gain from this interaction  
Is insecurities fever.

**Sumayyah Qureshi**  
**Key Stage 4 Poetry**

## EXTRACT FROM 'IN YOUR HANDS'

In your hands,  
a maze of carvings,  
with borders that cross,  
with no startings,

In your hands,  
the Azure River,  
masked by your dermis,  
that lightly shimmers,

In your hands,  
the engraved lines,  
roads that flow  
for you to find,  
it's in your hands for you to see,  
the million lines that are meant to be,

**Humna Shahzad**  
**Key Stage 4 Poetry**



## EXTRACT FROM 'WEBS UNTANGLED'

the spiders crept in  
the jungle of her heart  
veins and arteries  
spreading apart

itching her skin  
leaving their mark  
never out of reach  
but always too far

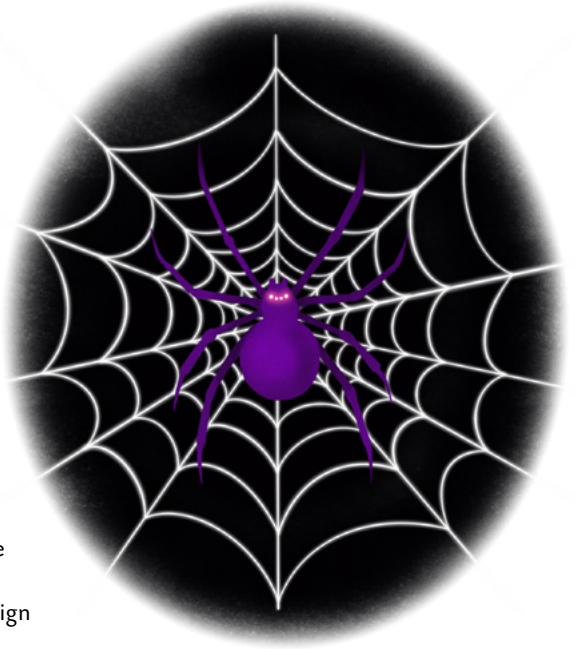
macabre and morbid  
majestic but malevolent  
malignant and malicious  
their viciousness repetitious

they call her by her name  
say she's submissive and tame  
their voices dripping in vain  
her body has become their reign

they call on her again  
their mouths, with blood, stained  
torpid in their own domain  
her soul to shreds slain

back she is in her cage  
wondering if it was her fate  
to die alone, a forgotten name  
with invisible ink on an empty page

**Habiba Mohammad Khattab**  
**Key Stage 4 Poetry**



# KEY STAGE 4

# SHORT STORIES

## EXTRACT FROM 'DEFENCELESS'

However, I knew inside it wouldn't happen. My thoughts and future life story were just a meaningless dream. A thought I had developed, trying to break away from the cruel reality. A wish every son would have, but only mine was unheard. Fate decided to play with me, to take the biggest part of my life and leave it empty. Lifeless. I still didn't understand why destiny chose me, but don't know who to blame. Fate, my mum or myself? Myself, for not treasuring every moment in my life, returning the love she gave to me daily. Showering her with care like she did to me. All I wished now was to live in the past. To be trapped in the past, with just me and her and relive every moment. I possessed an empty yearning of clasping, seizing and treasuring every second, so that it wouldn't escape.

Beeeeeeep! The deafening silence had shattered, and my mesmerism of desperation fragmented, as the white boxed machine spoke again. Yet it was not a reminder or warning this time, it was an announcement. Just that one last beep and that was it. It had all ended.

**Amelia Tazarab Khan**  
**Key Stage 4 Short Story**

## EXTRACT FROM 'DRAGON FIRE'

I stood at the edge of the cave, the gnarled forest whispering in pain of its injuries behind me, the gaping cavern waiting hungrily before me. My sweaty hands gripping the notepad and pencil tightly, as the wind rushed past me. I wanted to draw my trench coat closer round me but I was too petrified to move. My tote bag felt like an anvil on my shoulder, even though it hadn't a lot in it. I must be mad, I thought. Madder than a march hare. I procrastinated, thinking about how it all started.

The first I'd heard was from my father's newspaper strewn over the kitchen table, along with all the other breakfast things. It would have been impossible not to have seen it-the headline was so absurd and abnormal it would have caught the eye of a myopic mole.

'VILLAGES AND FORESTS HEATING UP  
TOP SCIENTIST SAYS DRAGONS ARE THE CULPRITS,' it screamed.  
I was gobsmacked, to say the least. The fact that it was from the newspaper my parents worked at instantly confirmed this was not the ramblings of a bored tabloid journalist. This was real. Just then, my father burst into the room.

"Dragon right near us!" he exclaimed as he began to frantically stuff some papers and books into his already bulging backpack.

Maryam Abdalla  
Key Stage 4 Short Story



## **EXTRACT FROM 'I SWEAR'**

I just came in. I didn't do anything. It wasn't me... I swear. It was a completely normal day, nothing unusual, nothing out of the ordinary.

I was sat at the back of our English classroom, the seat by the window. And I'm warning you, don't start feeling sorry for me, I like sitting alone, I can do whatever I like, and the teacher will hardly pay any attention. "Hey, Frankie! Can I just say, I love your eyes, so many different colours!" Great, Thomas had arrived, just what I needed.

"Shut up you... you..." Even better, I couldn't even think of a good comeback, way to go me!

"Aww, you lost for words, am I too kind, is that it? It's okay, I heard Frankenstein could never really talk either, I guess it's just a genetic thing." My fists clenched and my teeth gritted against each other like saws. 'Keep calm, keep calm' I told myself.

For those of you who haven't clicked on yet, I have heterochromia, and my name is not 'Frankie' it's Michael. 'Frankie' is supposed to be short for Frankenstein; some sort of joke that- to Thomas- is absolutely hilarious.

**Ummay-Habeeba Mushtaq**  
**Key Stage 4 Short Story**

## **EXTRACT FROM 'MYSLICA'**

Morning came to hug the world again, causing ribbons of pastel blush, amber and coral to create a swirling masterpiece for the living to see. But the birds didn't chirp, the green grass didn't dance, nor did the naked trees. Even a gentle breeze didn't bring them to life. But Yasmin was alive, and so was the world. She surprisingly had eager butterflies fluttering in her stomach, why was school exciting her today? It never had before. "Maybe today would be a good day?" she pondered. "You never know"

On the same, continual cobbled path, she made sure to glance at the next door house. Just a glance to ensure what she had seen yesterday was her exhausted mind tricking her. She glanced. She wasn't mistaken. There they were- a pair of lifeless eyes as wide as a baseball that gazed eerily at her, causing Yasmin's feet to be glued to the ground. Her heart raced dangerously, as the eyes that stared creating a burning sensation in her chest. She noticed more than the pair of eyes now; a ghostly pale outline the same colour as the curtains surrounded, with thin wrinkled lips as straight as a ruler, dry and ghastly. No movement. Just spine-chilling staring. A deep carmine scar under the delicate left eye, ran through to the middle of the creased cheeks, like a child drew a line with the bloodiest red they could find on a thin piece of chalk white paper. It drew attention to those blank, soulless, peculiar eyes.

**Humna Shahzad**  
**Key Stage 4 Short Story**

## EXTRACT FROM 'STRUCK BY GIANTS'

"Suhaimah! Where were you?" a shrill voice piped up, and another maid joined her at bed. "The duke and his daughter accused me of stealing a royal heirloom- "

"WHAT! No, what happened then?" she implored, shaking Suhaimah's arm. "I said I didn't, then he said it wasn't over and needs resolved immediately," Suhaimah related dishearteningly. "Oh, I hope everything will be okay..." she mumbled.

Another maid walked in, then motioned to the door. "Suhaimah, there are two guards outside requesting to see you, it's about the king!". The two left the safety of the maids quarters and saw two palace guards standing forebodingly at the entrance. "The king summons you to his throne room regarding the theft of a royal heirloom".

One of the guards held her arm in a vice like grip, which she shrugged off, feeling disparaged. She was frogmarched with a sharp spear gilded with red stones pointed to her back, Tadhia watching on forlornly.

**Numa Tasneem Nayeem Karnachi**  
**Key Stage 4 Short Story**





# KEY STAGE 4

# JOURNALISM

## **EXTRACT FROM 'CORRUPTION WITHIN GOVERNMENTS'**

Corruption within governments is the use of public authority, resources or positions for personal gain by elected officials, including extortion, bribery or other corrupt practises. It is any dishonest or immoral behaviour that benefits powerful organisations or individuals. Therefore, corruption frequently causes loss to the weaker section within society or organisations. Dishonesty within superior groups of society is an important topic as if it is continued, we would all be surrounded by lies.

The government has a responsibility of caring and looking after their citizens and country. However, they do not meet these responsibilities and are just there to gain money and power. Often people who speak up against the government are killed or imprisoned because they do not like those who speak up and are dismissive towards the reality.

It does not matter if you are male, female, black or white, or even the social status you have. You will inevitably suffer the consequences of the out spoken truth. The truth the public deserve yet do not receive.

**Hafsah Malik**  
**Key Stage 4 Journalism**

## **EXTRACT FROM 'DRAGON DISCOVERY'**

Just a few hours ago, the first confirmed sighting of a dragon since the 1400s, prompted global frenzy, as researchers and scientists scrambled to have their say on the event. The 40 foot tall creature, who naturalist David Attenborough claims belongs to the scientific class Reptilia, (according to the Linnaeus system) was found in the worlds biggest cave, Hang Son Doong, in hibernation.

“This suggests the metabolism of such a gargantuan reptile is quite slow, allowing them to enter hibernation every year to conserve energy, just like the Grizzly bear” says Mr Attenborough. How can such a large animal have remained undetected for so long? In fact, reports of unusual activity from local residents living near the cave were being made months before this event. “One morning we woke up to our entire crop destroyed,” farmer Bao Dai tells me over a bowl of Chicken Pho. He was a dedicated rice field farmer and had just put the finishing touches to his new experiment of introducing fish into the rice fields, to increase his crop yield, before retiring to his bed, fatigued but motivated. It all changed in the morning. “I smelt smoke, lots of smoke” he tells me, distressed even months after the incident. “I ran to my family, told them to get up, then I ran to the fields. It was too late, much too late” he sighs, shaking his head sadly. Thanh Nguyen, a shepherd from the local villager told me his whole herd of sheep simply disappeared one night. “It had to be the dragon” he tells me, vigorously nodding “Without a doubt, it must have been”.

**Maryam Abdalla**

**Key Stage 4 Journalism**

## **EXTRACT FROM 'STORM EUNICE HITS THE UK'**

Just as the devastating pandemic, COVID-19, had decidedly finished its furious wrath, and had begun to subside, another destructing event slammed the recovering England and Northern Ireland, with little before-hand warning - STORM EUNICE.

England and Northern Ireland, being situated geographically as an island on the Northern Hemisphere, has a light record of 'wild weather' including the 'Beaast from the East' of 2018 and the socrching heatwaves that followed after. However, none were as catastrophic as the most recent natural disaster that befell the region on February 18th, 2022.

SSstorm Eunice was declared quickly as the worst storm to hit the UK in 30 years and meteorological experts say that the severity hasn't been witnessed since Jnauary 1990, when dozens of UK citizens were killed. Sotrm Eunice also hit another record of 122 mph winds that first battered the Isle of Wight, the highest winds ever recorded.

Within a short time of arriving in the UK, Storm Eunice has set debris and garden furniture pelting down the streetsw on the ground and planes wobbling in the air. Eunice's destruction was covering top to bottom and when strong gusts slammed on Friday, he British Meteorology Centre issues a rare red weather warning for London. Belgium and the Netherlands, who were also being severely affected, followed suit, issuing warnings and advising citizens to stay safe inside.

**Zubaidha Maryam Mohamed Rifath**  
**Key Stage 4 Journalism**

## **EXTRACT FROM 'VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE'**

*The National Health Service is one of our most important institutions. It is certainly the most popular and is recognised as exemplary all over the world. Young people make up nearly a quarter of our population and are some of the heaviest users of the NHS. This article explores the extent to which young people can be involved in and influence the strategic management of the NHS. It reviews young people's involvement in the NHS Youth Forum and NHSConfed Expo, one of the foremost NHS Conferences held on 15th June 2022 at the ACC in Liverpool.*

As I sat on the train to Liverpool I reflected on the past year. It was my first time on the NHS Youth Forum and it had been a bit of a rollercoaster. There was so much to learn and understand and covid meant that everything was done remotely. I was travelling to the NHSConfed Expo and this was in many ways the pinnacle of everything we had done. I had taken part in masterclasses with some amazing senior leaders from the NHS during the year, some of whom would be speaking today. Our project work would be shared with an audience of NHS staff who would hopefully find the findings helpful and useful in improving care for children and young people. This was going to be the first time I would meet my team in person so I was quite excited.

**Muhammed Amin**  
**Key Stage 4 Journalism**

# KEY STAGE 4 PLAYSCRIPT

## EXTRACT FROM 'THE NADARI FAMILY'

ACT ONE SCENE TWO

ROSEWOOD PRIMARY, YEAR SIX

Twenty-nine students are talking animatedly in a colourful classroom, while a kind eyed lady, MISS DARWISH, walks on stage. Silence slowly settles across the class as she stands assuredly in front of the class.

MISS DARWISH

Hello everyone! My name is Miss Darwish and I will be your year six teacher! Most of you have already met me last year and got to see the classroom and your new seats. Does anyone want to tell the class about their holidays? A series of hands shoot into the air, while MISS DARWISH nods towards one student.

HANNAH

I went to Portugal! We went to the beach and my brother got stung by a jellyfish! He doesn't even want to hear about them anymore!

HARRY (cutting across angrily)

Hey! Don't tell the whole class about that!

HANNAH

Wait till you hear what we had to do to treat it!

MISS DARWISH

Oof! That must have hurt Harry! How's it now?

HARRY

It's alright...

Zara zones out, the class chatter becoming disorientated, until she hears a distasteful voice.

CLAIRE (arms folded)

Yeah, hi. Just asking, what's up with the scarf?

**Numa Tasneem Nayeem Karnachi**  
**Key Stage 4 Playscript**

# MESSAGES OF CONGRATULATIONS



Wow, the quality of writing this year was exemplary. I enjoyed reading your entries and was SO impressed. Your use of dialogue and description of settings was excellent for such young writers. You all have huge potential and I hope you'll continue to write with such great imagination and flair. A huge well done to all of you and CONGRATULATIONS for making the shortlist. A great achievement!

**A. M. Dassu, Children's author**



A huge congratulations to every single young writer who has the courage to enter this year's YMWA! It can be so intimidating to put your work out there and all of your stories are incredibly powerful and important. I would also like to congratulate all the shortlisted and winning authors. You should all be immensely proud of your success. I hope you all continue with creative writing - the world needs your voices!

**Ameerah Kola-Olukotun, Seven-time Young Muslim Writers Awards winner**



A huge congratulations to all young writers, this is an incredible achievement to take part in and to be published. Ten years ago I published my first poem in a young writers anthology and if there is anything I learnt from my experience, celebrate your everyday and don't stop writing. The world needs you and your creative interpretations of the world. I am looking forward to reading your written work in many anthologies and publications to come.

**Amina Atiq, Poet, performance artist, creative practitioner, and community activist**

Photo credit: Robin Clewley



Dear writers, I can't stress the importance of telling your own stories. Your words are important and getting them out in the world is something brave to do. Keep writing and never give up!

**Aya Khalil, Author and freelance journalist**



I cannot wait to read what you will bring back from the Labyrinth of Whispering Words. Don't get lost in it. Don't let your story trick you or send you down the wrong path. They like to do that to hide their secrets. Don't get frustrated when you run into a hedge for that only means you get closer to the truth. Go back and find the thread you lost. Feed the story with time and patience and passion.

**Cornelia Funke, Children's author**



Based on my time as a children's author, I feel that writing is a very personal experience. You are sharing a little piece of your heart with the rest of the world. This requires you to be brave, to write what you would love to read and to send your words into the big wide world. If one person reads and enjoys your story, then you can rest safe in the knowledge that your efforts were worthwhile and valued. Good luck and go for it!

**Dan Worsley, Children's author and performance storyteller**



Writing is an amazing thing. From the top of your head to the end of your toes, it makes you more alive, more awake and more noticing of everything around you. You can do anything when you write. You can be anyone. You can go anywhere. You can go anywhen. And from reading your poems this year, I can see you doing precisely that. And it's exciting, isn't it? It's exciting to write and it's exciting to read you. Now you've started, you'll never be able to stop. You'll never want to stop. So, grab your pens, your pencils, your keyboards, your ideas – and get going. And never ever EVER give up!

**Helena Nelson, Poet, and founder editor of HappenStance Press**



Photo credit: Sophie Davidson

In these extraordinarily difficult times, creative writing could not be more important. It feels like all over the world, the channels of communication are down – that so many people have their eyes and their ears closed to other people’s struggles and pain. Poetry is never more crucial than in such times. There is the tremendous emotional release that the music of poetry gives us – both to write it and to read it – and then there is the force and the nuance of expression that poetry allows, in a world where nuance seems to be struggling to be heard more and more. Poetry is a vital instrument in discovering and speaking the truth. I have been so impressed by the weight and urgency of the poems I read for the KS3 poetry award. These are serious times, and these poems were passionate, intense and unafraid to square up to the big questions and the big themes. I urge everyone who entered to keep on writing – write to be heard and write with all your heart.

**Kate Wakeling, Writer and musicologist**



Being invited to act as a judge for Young Muslim Writers Awards 2022 was such an honour, and it has been an absolute privilege to read the entries. I’ve judged many writing and book awards in several parts of the world over the past twenty-five years—and can recall few in which the spectrum of work submitted is so broad and so colourful. Young writers bring fresh eyes to everything that matters. Their words capture people and scenes with better definition and more depth than any camera lens – and, in so doing, they captivate us!

**Ken Spillman, Author**



Congratulations to the winner, to all the shortlistees, and to each child who entered this category – it is so very brave to share your work with any audience, to be vulnerable in this way, for that courage alone you are beyond your years and deserve such praise and support – the competition was fierce, and I hope you continue to write and cultivate your thinking and writing alike. You should all be incredibly, stupendously proud! Thank you again, for sharing your work with us, and for allowing me the honour of being a part of your journey towards what I’m confident will be great success and bright futures, in many forms and across many spheres.

**Maryam Hessavi, Poet, Ledbury Critic, and Reviews Editor for The Poetry School**





Thank you so much for the opportunity to read these excellent stories. This is my second year as a judge and I find myself deeply impressed by the range of quality of the writing. There was a real sense, throughout all of the contributors, of young writers who enjoyed playing with and exploring the impact of writing on themselves and the imagined reader. The stories were gripping and I was hooked into each one within the first sentence - an impressive feat in its own right. Thank you so much again - each of you can easily go on to be the best and brightest of our future writers.

**Mat Tobin, Lecturer, Oxford Brookes University**



We experience the world through storytelling. We learn about each other through characters and worlds and even through the everyday stories we tell each other about our lives. Which is why it is so important for everyone to have an equal presence in the world of storytelling. You have all taken the steps to do that, to be part of that world, and to have a say in how your community is represented. The quality of your writing, the originality of your ideas and the boldness of your words, they all add up to help the world experience life in your shoes in the most authentic way. A huge congratulations to you all for writing and for sharing that work with us. I can't wait to see what you all do next and the stories you fill the world with.

**Raisah Ahmed, Screenwriter and director**



A huge and heartfelt congratulations to all of the shortlisted young poets. I'm so lucky to have spent time with your work! It takes courage to share your poems with the world - you should be incredibly proud of yourselves. I hope you never stop putting yourself out there. Keep reading, keep writing, and more good things are bound to come.

**Sarah Ali, Poet, and poetry editor for West Branch**



A huge congratulations to the participants of the Young Muslim Writers Awards. I was honoured to be involved and thoroughly enjoyed reading the work. What a wonderful opportunity for young, diverse writers to showcase their scripts and receive support and feedback. We need diverse voices, and young writers should have the confidence and platform to tell the stories they want to. It's great to witness continued change within the industry and promising to see such bright talent come through. Keep writing and make your voices heard!

**Shazia Rashid, Screenwriter**



First of all, I want to congratulate you all. It warms my heart to see young writers writing such wonderful stories and creating such wonderful worlds. And I know that you all will go places. But also, I would like you not to forget that good things come to those who dare to begin and trust the process. There might be a time when you will be faced with fear and doubt so real you can almost taste it. Remember this: it gets easier once you start; the fear is not real. Read widely, gather perspectives from people, but do not let anybody think for you. Again, congratulations writers. You all are amazing!

**Timi Sanni, Writer, editor, and literature advocate**



It's always daunting to read writing by children and young people, because their ideas are so good, so full of life and just so original. In the world of screen everyone – producers, directors, actors, commissioners – are on a quest, seeking the next elusive original idea that can be captured and crafted into an experience for viewers to enjoy. Writers are not only at the heart of that process but are the seed from which it grows. Writers are important. Writers are needed. And most of all young writers are needed. Partly, of course, because one day soon you will be the writers whose words are being made into pictures, but more so because your minds are brimming over with fantastically unfettered original thoughts. Try to hold onto those thoughts, don't ever think that, because you are young, they are unimportant or of little consequence. Your thoughts and your imaginations are your power and we all need to hear them.

**Xana Marwick, Stage and screen writer**



Dear writers, I'm so incredibly proud of everyone of you - should take away this anthology as a memory and accomplishment for being a part of this ceremony. I can't wait to see what's ahead for all of you - keep at it and keep pushing forward, your creative ideas, thoughts, words and stories - serve as the fuel that's keeps us all a flow.

**Yasmin Khatun Dewan, Journalist and broadcaster**



Chicken House is delighted to support the Young Muslim Writers Awards and we wish every shortlisted writer huge congratulations on their success. We urge you to nurture, explore and keep practising your writing talent – you never know where it may lead you! Writing is fun but it's important, too; it's through our creativity that we inspire, transport and offer fresh possibilities to ourselves and others.

**Chicken House**



David Fickling Books want to congratulate everybody involved in the 2022 Young Muslim Writers Awards. It's an honour and delight for us to be involved and to hear about the wonderful work so many young creators are doing. We hope you continue to feel inspired to find your voice – your stories can change people's minds, hearts, and the whole world, so keep on writing and storytelling! Congratulations on your brilliant work.

**David Fickling Books**



The Child's Play team would like to congratulate everyone who entered their work for this year's Young Muslim Writers Award. We hope that the sense of pride you feel from participating will inspire you to keep practising your skill, and that you will continue to share your unique ideas with the world through your writing. We look forward to seeing your names on bookshelves one day!

**Child's Play**



All of us here at Faber Children's HQ would like to wholeheartedly congratulate all the writers who entered this year's Young Muslim Writer Awards. What a fantastic representation of imagination and keen talent! We are absolutely thrilled to be part of this initiative, supporting new voices from different communities. We wish the very best to all of you future young authors, poets, screenwriters and playwrights and we hope you all continue to shine!

**Faber Children's**



Flame Tree Publishing would like to congratulate all participants of the 2022 Young Muslim Writers Award. What a terrific achievement of craft and imagination in writing! We are delighted to be part of such an incredible initiative as we strive to work with different communities, encourage new voices and emerging talents to express their love of language, knowledge and ideas – so keep making your voices heard!

**Flame Tree Publishing**



Raintree would like to congratulate all the writers that have participated in this year's Young Muslim Writers Awards. Here at Raintree, we really value the chance to celebrate and champion diversity across the industry and are honoured to be able to encourage the next generation of young readers and writers to explore their creativity. We hope you keep writing more fascinating stories and poems and we can't wait to read them!

**Raintree**



Sweet Cherry would like to congratulate all the young writers who have made their voices heard in this anthology. We are a Muslim-owned publisher, and we champion diverse and inclusive stories. It is an honour to support initiatives like the Young Muslim Writers Award and get behind the next generation of readers. We hope you continue writing great stories and compelling poems, and we look forward to seeing your work published in the future!

**Sweet Cherry**



Sweetzone would like to congratulate all the shortlisted writers on their remarkable achievements. We pray that you have a very bright future ahead and that we can continue to enjoy your writing. Enjoy the sweets – may they fuel your writing sessions!

**Sweetzone**



What on Earth Publishing would like to congratulate all the writers shortlisted for the Young Muslim Writers Awards this year. We are so proud to be involved in helping celebrate this amazing achievement. We look forward to hearing about all your fabulous work in the future!

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The Prophet (saw) said,  
**'I and the one who  
cares for an orphan  
will be together in  
Paradise like this'**

*and he (saw) held his two fingers  
together to illustrate.*

[Bukhari]

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2023

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