



THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY
AT THE COMMONWEALTH CLUB



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Commonwealth Essay Competition



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Opportunity Through Enterprise

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Commonwealth Essay Competition 2013

1. Commonwealth Essay Competition

Every year, the Commonwealth Essay Competition inspires thousands of young writers from all over the world. Run by the Royal Commonwealth Society since 1883, it is the world's oldest and largest schools' international writing competition. Past winners include authors, journalists, politicians and academics, including Mr Lee Hsien Loong, the Prime Minister of Singapore and Elspeth Huxley.

The Competition celebrates and nurtures the creative talents of young people across the Commonwealth, providing a platform for students to compete with their peers in each of the 54 nations which make up this unique association.

Are you a writer? Are you interested in the world around you? Do you want your voice to be heard by others? If so, the Commonwealth Essay Competition is definitely for you. We encourage you to be creative in your response to our topics. You can submit a poem, letter, article, story, essay or even a short play. The choice is yours. Just get writing!

Entrants are judged in two age groups, Junior (under 14 years) and Senior (14-18 years).

Deadline: 1st May 2013



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2. Prizes

- Win a certificate
- Win resources for your school
- Be flown to London
- Be invited to meet famous authors; take part in workshops to learn new skills; and do work experience at international organisations
- See your entry featured in RCS publications and worldwide media

Junior Category (Under 14s)

Junior Prize Winner

Junior Runner Up

Gold Awards

Silver Awards

Bronze Awards

Senior Category (Ages 14-18)

Senior Prize Winner

Senior Runner Up

Gold Awards

Silver Awards

Bronze Awards



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3. Topics

Junior Category

Born after 1st May 1999

1. When has hard work paid off for you?
2. Creative thinking saved the day.
3. Tell us about a moment of opportunity which changed the life of your family, community, country, continent or the entire planet.
4. Is change a good thing?
5. Opportunities galore!

Senior Category

Born between 2nd May 1994
and 1st May 1999

1. A funding agency has asked you to make a pitch for an idea involving schools that would benefit your community.
2. "I knew this was my moment."
3. Discuss one or more examples of social and/or environmental development where enterprise plays, or could play, a key role in changing the way people live.
4. "How enterprising!" a voice said as I closed the door behind me.
5. Are we too risk-conscious these days?

Junior and Senior

A bonus topic open to all entrants

1. “To boldly go ...”



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4. The Modern Commonwealth

The Commonwealth is a unique global family of 54 member countries, encompassing a multitude of cultures, religions and institutions. From Africa to Asia, from the Pacific to the Caribbean, from Europe to North America, the Commonwealth's 2.1 billion people make up a quarter of the world's population. Moreover, half of the population of the Commonwealth is aged 25 or under. Commonwealth countries reflect every stage of economic development from the least developed and highly indebted to wealthy and industrialised, and range in size from a Pacific island like Nauru, with a population of 10,000, to India, which is 1.2 billion strong. Yet members emphasise English as a common working language and share similar systems of law, public administration and education.

The modern Commonwealth evolved out of Britain's imperial past. This process was set in train with India and Pakistan's independence in 1947 and sealed by the London Declaration of 1949, where the word 'British' was dropped from the association's title to reflect the new reality. In the following two decades, the Commonwealth, with its commitment to racial equality and national sovereignty, became a natural association of choice for many newly independent nations. Issues of racial justice became key, as the Commonwealth threw its weight behind the cause of freedom and equality.



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The Commonwealth has thus become a vibrant and growing association of states in tune with the modern world. In 1991, the Harare Commonwealth Declaration set the association firmly on a new course, promoting democracy, good governance, human rights, the rule of law, and sustainable economic and social development. Today, the Commonwealth continues to be an active force in global affairs, helping to build consensus around the world. From a club of former colonies, it has grown into a modern international association proud of its diversity and ready to meet the challenges of the future.

Commonwealth Theme 2013 – Why Opportunity Through Enterprise?

Each year the inter-governmental and the non-governmental organisations of the Commonwealth come together to focus upon a work stream of global importance. In 2013, launched at Commonwealth Day in March, this theme will be Opportunity through Enterprise.

Enterprise education builds transferable skills in young people, which will prepare them for entering into the world of work by converting academic understanding into practical experience. By developing business skills, young people's resilience, flexibility and adaptability is strengthened, preparing them for an unpredictable job market and enabling them to recognise and take advantage of prospects to benefit their families and their communities. For Commonwealth countries, building entrepreneurship skills will also help to address the challenge of the "youth bulge" and the associated need to create jobs and opportunities for the growing youth population; young people will develop the skills to become job creators as well as seekers, and enjoy a sense of personal agency in determining their own futures.



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Resources for Teachers

Antigua to Zambia: Getting to know your Commonwealth is a teaching resource designed to bring the Commonwealth to the classroom. Download free lesson plans from our website: **www.thercs.org/youth/materials**.

Commonwealth Week 2013

Every year, on the second Monday in March, people all over the world celebrate the special partnership of nations, peoples and ideals which is the modern Commonwealth. We encourage your school to mark the week with a celebration! You can hold a lesson on the Commonwealth, run a mini Commonwealth Games in your sports class, or learn about another Commonwealth country's culture. Email us at **info@thercs.org** for more ideas.

If your school is based in the UK and would like to register your interest to be selected to attend the Commonwealth Day Observance at Westminster Abbey on **11th March 2013**, please contact the RCS at **info@thercs.org**.



Commonwealth Essay Competition 2013

5. Rules

- 1) The Competition is open to nationals or residents of all Commonwealth countries and territories.
- 2) Special dispensation applies to entrants from Hong Kong, Fiji and Zimbabwe who are entitled to enter the Competition.
- 3) Entrants must select a Senior or Junior topic depending on how old they are on 1st May 2013.
- 4) Entries must be written in English and be the original work of the writer.
- 5) Entrants must submit an entry form alongside their entries and complete all the mandatory fields.
- 6) The maximum word-counts are 1500 words for Senior entries and 750 words for Junior entries.
- 7) Entries will be disqualified if they fail to meet these requirements.



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6. Notes for Guidance

1. Entries must be the original work of the writer. This does not rule out input or assistance from others. However an entry will be disregarded if there is any suggestion of plagiarism or undue help from the internet or another person.
2. Entrants are encouraged to be creative in their response to a topic. Entries can be submitted in a number of different formats: for example, a poem, letter, article, story, essay or even a short play.
3. Entries must respond to the topic. Each year a number of good entrants let themselves down because they do not fully answer, or reflect on, what the topic has asked them to do.
4. Award-winning entrants are expected to show originality and flair, linked to sound academic standards and competent use of English as a written language. This includes a good standard of spelling and punctuation, neat presentation and clear hand-writing or word-processing.
5. Illustrations are welcomed, particularly in Junior entries, but they must enhance the written text and add to the overall quality of the entry.
6. Entrants should be aware that the care with which they present their work will be taken into account whether writing by hand or using a computer.



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7. How to Enter

Via the internet

Entries can be submitted online in 2013 at
www.thercs.org/youth/competitions.

Please read all the information and follow the instructions carefully. It is essential that entrants fill in the mandatory fields in the online entry form.

By Post

Please complete your entry form in block capitals and attach it to the front of your essay.

Send entries...

DIRECTY TO US: FAO YOUNG COMMONWEALTH COMPETITIONS, THE ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY, 25 NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, LONDON, WC2N 5AP UK

AMERICAS/CARIBBEAN: FAO YOUNG COMMONWEALTH COMEPTITIONS, THE BRITISH COUNCIL, 19 ST. CLAIR AVENUE, ST. CLAIR, PORT OF SPAIN, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

AFRICA: FAO YOUNG COMMONWEALTH COMEPTITIONS, BAOBAB COLLEGE, PO BOX 350099, CHILANGA, ZAMBIA.

OR

FAO YOUNG COMMONWEALTH COMPETITIONS, THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION, PO BOX 296, ACCRA, GHANA



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ASIA: FAO YOUNG COMMONWEALTH COMPETITIONS, THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION, 185 JALAN AMPANG, 50450 KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA

PACIFIC: FAO YOUNG COMMONWEALTH COMPETITIONS, THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION, PO BOX 1812, WELLINGTON 6140, NEW ZEALAND

RCS Contact Details

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7766 9200

Email: competitions@thercs.org

Website: www.thercs.org/youth/competitions



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8. Postal Entry Form

PLEASE FILL OUT IN BLOCK CAPITALS

Fields in red are mandatory

First Name/s _____

Last Name/Family Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Email Address _____

Sex (M or F) _____

Nationality _____

Country of Residence _____

City of Residence _____

Name of School _____

Full School Address _____

Age Category (Junior or Senior) _____

Topic Number (1,2,3,4,5,Bonus) _____

Word Count _____

The Commonwealth Essay Competition 2013 is run by the Royal Commonwealth Society in partnership with Cambridge University Press.





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