



What's behind the door?

Westbury Story Writing Competition

Submissions are invited from children and young people in this exciting creative writing competition.

Westbury and the Armada Door

Westbury Arts Centre is a charity based in a Grade II listed farmhouse building on the western side of Milton Keynes. It is a thriving arts community that provides studios and exhibition spaces for professional artists. There are nineteen studios occupied by artists engaging in a wide range of media. Westbury delivers a high-quality programme of exhibitions and events throughout the year. There are holiday activities for children and their families.

There has been a dwelling on the site of Westbury for many hundreds of years. The date stone on the building is 1670 but records show a settlement on the site as far back as Saxon times and it is even recorded in the Domesday Book. In the older part of the house is an old oak door which a specialist has recently dated to around the end of the 16th century during the late Tudor period which is older than previously believed.

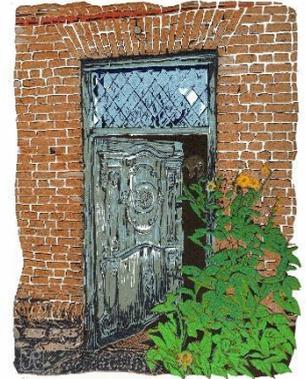
There is local folklore that the door panels came from the Spanish Armada - hence the name "Armada Door". The Armada was a large naval fleet sent from Spain to invade England in 1588. The fleet was defeated and many ships were wrecked in the battle. The Armada was a magnificent fleet. Spain was a wealthy nation at the time and you can imagine how state rooms on the ships would have incorporated magnificent oak panels. It is possible that valuable items were retrieved from the ship wreck as bounty and maybe even used for building. Mysteriously there is a carving of a sunflower on the old door. This is interesting as these flowers were not found in England at the time. Sunflowers were first brought to Spain from the New World across the Atlantic during the 16th Century. Once again this could be evidence of the origins for the door panels having come from Spain.

At over 400 years old the door is in a sorry looking state, we have recently started a programme of fundraising to enable us to remove the door and preserve it for future generations

The task

Readers may be familiar with doors in stories they have read, such as the wardrobe door to Narnia (C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*), the door to Wonderland (Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*) or portals into another world in *His Dark Materials* (Philip Pullman). Doors in stories tempt us to imagine that it's possible to open an ordinary door one day and find ourselves in a real-life adventure. The possibilities are endless.

The challenge for the creative writing competition is to write an original story about a door. This could take inspiration from Westbury's Armada door, or be another door entirely. The





piece could be an adventure story, a mystery or a thriller. It could be set in times past, present or future.

Judging

The first round will be judged by a panel comprised of Westbury representatives, creative writing specialists and young people. Each entry will be judged and a shortlist will be compiled. We are delighted to have Sarah Pinborough as our guest judge who will select a winner and runner up from each age category. Sarah is an author of fiction for young adults and adults including the Sunday Times No. 1 Best Seller 'Behind Her Eyes' which is also a top Netflix series. Sarah lives locally and was previously Head of English at a secondary school.

Guidelines for entry:

Closing date for submissions: 8th November 2021

Shortlist announced: 1st December 2021

Winners announced: January 2022

Awards ceremony: 19th January 2022 4 – 6 pm

Prizes: There will be an award for each age category. Stories will also be published digitally.

Please read the guidelines before submitting entries. Submission of entry is taken to be an acceptance of these rules:

1. The competition is open to children and young people in Milton Keynes and surrounding areas only.
2. Entry is free.
3. Submissions in the Primary school age category (up to 11 years) can be up to 500 words in length.
4. Submissions in the Secondary school age category (up to 16 years) can be up to 1500 words in length.
5. Entries will be judged in four age categories:
 - Group A: Year 3 + 4 (7 – 9 years)
 - Group B: Year 5 + 6 (9 – 11 years)
 - Group C: Years 7 + 8 (11 – 13 years)
 - Group D: Years 9, 10 and 11 (13 – 16 years)
6. Writers should not exceed the word limit.
7. Each writer may only submit one piece.
8. It must be an original piece of work written independently.
9. The content of entries must be suitable for school aged audiences.
10. Stories cannot be written by more than one person.
11. Entries must be submitted with a completed entry form.
12. Entries should be submitted digitally, ideally as a Microsoft Word.doc file.
13. Entries should be formatted in Arial, Calibri or Times New Roman font and 1.5 line spacing.



14. Each entry should have the entrant's name, year group and school at the top of the first page followed by the title of the story.
15. Entries should not contain images (drawings or photographs).
16. It is recognised that some younger pupils may need to submit handwritten entries. It is requested that these are written in black ink on single sided A4 paper. Handwritten entries must be clearly written.
17. Handwritten entries should be submitted as individual pdf files.
18. Please contact armada@westburyartscentre.co.uk if you have any questions about file type.
19. Winning entries will be published in a booklet. This will also be published digitally on Westbury Arts Centre website. The names of winners' and their schools will appear in this unless requested otherwise.
20. A celebration event will be held at Westbury Arts Centre on 19 January 2022 for the winners and runners up plus invited parent/carer and teacher guests.

We reserve the right:

- to disqualify any entry if we have reasonable grounds to believe that the entrant has breached any of these rules. We cannot accept any responsibility for any damage, loss, injury or disappointment suffered by any entrant entering the competition
- to amend these rules where it is deemed necessary to do so or where circumstances are beyond our control

Westbury Arts Centre will act in accordance with current UK data protection legislation in relation to personal data.

WESTBURY ARTS CENTRE

FOXCOVERT ROAD

SHENLEY WOOD

MILTON KEYNES

MK5 6AA

01908 501214

armada@westburyartscentre.co.uk



Westbury Armada Door Creative Writing Competition

Please read guidelines before submitting.

Entrant's name	
Date of birth	
School and year	
Story title	
Parent/carer	
Telephone contact	
Email address	
<p><i>I certify that the entry submitted is the entrant's own original work.</i></p> <p>Parent/carer signature:</p> <p>Relationship:</p> <p>Date</p>	

Please return together with story to armada@westburyartscentre.co.uk or Westbury Arts Centre, Foxcovert Rd, Shenley Wood, Milton Keynes, MK5 6AA