

# Coventry Building Society's Young Writer of the Year competition 2025

## Competition information for schools



**We're committed to supporting basic education skills and raising aspirations of young people in the city.**

That's why we're delighted to tell you more about 'Coventry Building Society's Young Writer of the Year 2025' competition, which we're running again this year.

With the support of two local authors, Ann Evans and Aaron Ashmore, along with a former English teacher, and experts in creative writing from our partners at Explore Learning Coventry, we're launching our next competition at 9am on Monday 14 October 2024.

There's no topic this year as we want to allow the children's imaginations to run wild. And with prizes to be won, we want them to go big with their ideas and to get as creative as possible, starting with this simple sentence:

**'I came home from school and there was a mystery box at the end of my bed. I couldn't believe what was inside...'**

We're really excited as creative writing is not only a tool to help pupils unleash their creativity, but it can also help them feel more comfortable writing about everyday life. We're hoping that the competition will motivate your pupils and encourage them to express themselves artistically, use their imagination and discover their writing style - allowing their personality and voice to shine through.

We appreciate that putting pen to paper is harder for some children than others, but we know that they still have fabulous ideas, and we want to see those too. So, for any children who'd like to get involved but have difficulties writing, they can start their story using the same sentence, 'I came home from school and there was a mystery box at the end of my bed. I couldn't believe what was inside...', and then either type their piece or show it in pictures instead (with a few words to explain them).

We're pleased that our English as an additional language (**EAL**) category will remain this year. This is for children who have been living in the UK and have been learning English for three years or less.

**The competition runs from 9am on Monday 14 October 2024 to 5pm on Friday 29 November 2024.**

It's open to all key stage 2 pupils across the city, and we'd like your help to find the winning stories. You have until 5pm on Monday 9 December 2024 to send us your top three entries, per class, per year group. You can also submit one entry per year group in the EAL category. Hopefully we're giving you plenty of notice for your timetables to enable your school to take part.

**We'll let you know by Wednesday 5 February 2025 if there is a shortlisted entry from your school.**

The author of each shortlisted story, alongside their parents or guardians, will be invited to the Coventry Building Society Arena on Tuesday 4 March 2025, during the week of World Book Day. After a tour of the arena, we'll celebrate all the entries and announce the category winners.

**We can't wait to see your entries!**

## What are the judges looking for?

The stories must start with the given sentence, but beyond that, the children can write about whatever comes to mind! They can be as creative as they like. Every child will interpret the sentence in a different way, and we want this. It should create an emotion – perhaps amazed, happy, frightened, surprised – and the rest will follow.

We want to see the children using their best handwriting using black pen (if it is handwritten), taking up no more than the space provided on the entry form (two sheets of A4 paper), which should also include their name, their school and year group. We only need the first name of the child who is entering on the entry form and submission form.

If there are two children entering with the same name, please include the first initial of their surname too.

## Writing competition tips you might want to give your pupils

**TITLE:** Give your story a title that fits with what you have written about, and that will grab the reader's attention. It's fine to add this at the start of your work, or when you've finished.

**OPENING:** Use the opening sentence you have been given to start your story and follow on from that 'I came home from school and there was a mystery box at the end of my bed. I couldn't believe what was inside...'. This is a first person (I) story, so remember to write the whole story from this point of view.

**BEGINNING, MIDDLE AND END:** When planning your story, make sure you set the scene and introduce the characters at the beginning, have some sort of problem or adventure in the middle, and finish your story off well. In this story you can let your imagination fly – be as creative as possible!

**DETAIL AND DESCRIPTION:** Help your reader to picture the scene and get to know your characters by adding detail and description – not just about what can be seen and heard, but also about thoughts and feelings. You might use dialogue to help with this and to move the action on.

**CHECK AND EDIT:** Make sure you read through your work carefully to check that it makes sense and that your spelling, punctuation, and grammar are correct. Does it have a beginning, middle and end? Is it interesting and engaging? Is there anything you could do to make it even better?

## Entry criteria: What will the judges ask themselves?

We'd like the school to judge each story using the stages below, before you submit your entries. These are the same criteria we'll be using to choose the winners and runners up.

### Stage one:

- Is the entry form correctly filled in with their name, year, class, school?
- Is their story within the two-page limit?
- Is it legible?

### Stage two:

- Does it have a title?
- Does the story continue on from the set opening sentence?
- Have they thought of something surprising and original?
- Have they hooked the reader right from the start?
- Have they described the scenes well?
- Have they shown how they are feeling emotionally?
- Does it look as if they have edited and re-worked their story?
- Have they written a satisfactory ending?
- Did you enjoy the story?

## Stage three:

- Did their story engage you?
- Has their own style and voice shone through?
- Would you say it's a good piece of writing?

The top **three** entries for each class in each year group (3-6) and an additional **one** entry per year group for the **EAL** category must be sent to us in an envelope and received by us no later than 5pm on Monday 9 December 2024 to be considered. The entry form and entry submission form are attached.

# Coventry Building Society's Young Writer of the Year competition 2025 terms and conditions

## Introduction

1. **About us.** Hi! We're Coventry Building Society with offices at Coventry House, Harry Weston Road, Binley, Coventry, West Midlands CV3 2TQ. We are authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority, with reference number 150892. We are the promoter of the Promotion and will be referred to as **we, us** and **our** under these Terms.
2. **About these Terms.** These terms and conditions (the **Terms**) govern Coventry Building Society's Young Writer of the Year 2025 competition (the **Promotion**). By entering this Promotion, you agree to be bound by these Terms and any applicable rules and guidelines.
3. **Updates.** We may update these Terms from time to time, however we'll aim to make you aware of any significant changes in advance. If you continue with an entry under this Promotion, you agree to any updated Terms.
4. **Contact.** If you have any questions, please contact the event organiser Becky Welch at [community@thecoventry.co.uk](mailto:community@thecoventry.co.uk).

## The Promotion

5. **The Prizes.** Throughout these terms and conditions, these prizes detailed in this section will be known as the Prize. There will be two runners up and one winner per year group. There will be one runner up and one winner per year group for the English as an additional language (**EAL**) category. There will also be one overall competition winner for each category who is chosen out of the year group winners. The year group winners in both categories will receive a certificate and trophy, have their work published on the Coventry Building Society website, a Kindle Kids, access to English and Maths mentoring services provided by Explore Learning for up to six months, and vouchers for books or stationery to the value of £50. Each runner-up will receive a certificate, a Kindle Kids and vouchers for books or stationery to the value of £25. The overall competition winner for both categories will also receive an additional certificate, a creative writing workshop at their school, an engraved pen and hold the title for the year ahead. They will also win £250 for their school to spend on resources/books. If the overall winners for both categories are from the same school, then the school will win just £250 to spend on books/resources. Prizes are non-transferable and non-exchangeable. There is no cash or product alternative for the Prize.
6. **Eligibility.** This Promotion is open to all pupils in year groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 who attend a Coventry based primary school. Children or parents are not required to hold an account with us. Children of our employees are eligible to enter but they may not enter if there are any direct links to the competition. All entries must be the children's own work and completed in school.

**7. Promotion Period.** The competition begins at 9am on Monday 14 October 2024 and closes at 5pm on Friday 29 November 2024 (the **Promotion Period**), which is also set out in the table below, along with other key dates:

Launch date	Closing date in school	The Society to have received the top three entries per class, per year group and one entry per year group for EAL category	Shortlist notice given by Coventry Building Society to schools of shortlist entries	Winners announced
9am on Monday 14 October 2024	5pm on Friday 29 November 2024	By 5pm on Monday 9 December 2024	By 5pm on Tuesday 5 February 2025	Tuesday 4 March 2025

**8. How to enter.** Pupils must write or type their story and start it with this sentence - ‘I came home from school and there was a mystery box at the end of my bed. I couldn’t believe what was inside...’ Pupils must hand their entry in to their school by 5pm on Friday 29 November 2024. Schools need to submit their top **three** entries for each class in each year group (3-6) and the additional **one entry** per year group for the **EAL** category. They must be sent to us in an envelope to Becky Welch – post room, Oakfield House, Binley Business Park, Harry Weston Road, Coventry CV3 2TQ and received no later than 5pm on Monday 9 December 2024 to be considered. The entry form and entry submission form are attached. Only entries made correctly and during the Promotion Period will be eligible to win the Prize.

**9. Our rights.** We have the right at any time and for any reason to:

- Change the Prize or offer an alternative prize of equal or higher value, and/or
- Refuse or disqualify any entries.

**10. Selecting winners.** Runners up and winners will be selected from the school’s shortlists by our panel of judges using the following criteria:

**Stage one:**

- Is the entry form correctly filled in with their name, year, class, school?
- Is their story within the two-page limit?
- Is it legible?

**Stage two:**

- Does it have a title?
- Does the story continue on from the set opening sentence?
- Have they thought of something surprising and original?
- Have they hooked the reader right from the start?
- Have they described the scenes well?
- Have they shown how they are feeling emotionally?
- Does it look as if they have edited and re-worked their story?
- Have they written a satisfactory ending?
- Did you enjoy the story?

**Stage three:**

- Did their story engage you?
- Has their own style and voice shone through?
- Would you say it’s a good piece of writing?

**11. Accepting the Prize.** Runners up and winners will receive their Prize at an event at the Coventry Building Society Arena, due to be held on Tuesday 4 March 2025. If they cannot attend this event, the Prize will be delivered to their school within one week. We will inform schools, runners up and

winners if the event needs to be rescheduled for any reason. For winners to claim their access to mentoring services with Explore Learning Coventry, there'll be a page in their goody bag which will give more information and an email address to contact Explore Learning Coventry to arrange it.

- 12. What's excluded from Prizes.** Other expenses you may incur in collecting the Prize are not included as part of the Prize. Winners will need to make their own arrangements, such as for travel or accommodation (if required), at their own cost.
- 13. Announcing winners.** After the runners up and winners are chosen, we may ask for photo or video content (consent will be requested from the pupil's guardian in advance using a separate form). We may share these photos/videos internally or externally in line with the conditions laid out in the consent form. We may also publicly announce the runners up and winners details internally and externally and may share them with the public if requested. We will request the pupil's guardian's consent to share this kind of content in the consent form, however if they do not want us to disclose their details, email us at [community@thecoventry.co.uk](mailto:community@thecoventry.co.uk) to let us know. For more information on the winners, please contact us at Coventry Building Society, Coventry House, Harry Weston Road, Binley, Coventry, West Midlands CV3 2TQ.
- 14. Restrictions for winners.** Winners and runners up cannot pass on or donate the Prize to anyone else under any circumstances.

## Other important terms

- 15. Decisions are final.** Our decision on any aspect of the Promotion is final and binding.
- 16. How we use personal data.** We use personal data of participants and winners in order to provide this Promotion. Additionally, we may use personal data of winners to feature them as a winner in our marketing activities. Appropriate consent will be obtained from the pupil's guardian before as detailed in Section 12 'Announcing winners'. We'll keep this data for up to three years and it will then be deleted. For more information on how we use personal data under this Promotion, please see our [Privacy Notice](#) and our [Privacy Notice for ages 7-11](#).
- 17. Disclaimer.** We are not responsible for any network, computer or software failures of any kind, or any lost, delayed or misdirected participant entries. You must take your own precautions (such as guarding against software viruses) to protect against loss or damage and you are responsible for ensuring that data protection processes of your school have been followed before sharing the entries. We will also not be responsible for any infringement of a third party's intellectual property rights caused by your entry into this Promotion.
- 18. Invalidity.** If any of part of these Terms are held to be invalid or unenforceable, the rest of the Terms will continue to apply.
- 19. Governing law and jurisdiction.** These Terms are governed by the laws of England and Wales and the courts of England and Wales will have exclusive jurisdiction to hear any disputes, contractual or non-contractual, relating to these Terms.

If you have any questions, please contact the event organiser, Becky Welch at [community@thecoventry.co.uk](mailto:community@thecoventry.co.uk)

## Kindness changes lives

We're passionate about making a real difference to the lives of young people in and around Coventry. That's why we work with local schools to help support children's education.