LiteracyActionNet Awards 2014 for innovation by schools

The LiteracyActionNet Awards celebrate excellence and innovation by schools. A total of £2,000 prize money is being offered to the winning projects and initiatives. Entries are invited from all schools in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Entries should demonstrate successful approaches in any one of or combination of the following categories:

1. Supporting children with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties
2. Working with parents and families
3. Supporting children and young people through school transitions
4. Motivation, creativity and love of reading and writing
5. Teacher development and training to enhance literacy outcomes.

Entries will be judged based on criteria including:

1. **Originality** – the distinctiveness and memorability of the project idea
2. **Replicability** – how others could be inspired by and run similar projects themselves
3. **Reach** - the number of pupils involved in the project
4. **Diversity** - of pupils engaged, particularly those who have challenging needs
5. **Impact** – of the project (demonstrated qualitatively or quantitatively)

**Timetable**

- Deadline for entries – **Friday, 1st August 2014**
- Shortlist announced – **Friday, 12th September 2014**
- Winners announced – **October 2014.**

**Rules and procedures**

1. Entries must be completed using the LiteracyActionNet entry form and sent electronically via the ‘Submit entry form’ link on the [Awards page](#).
2. Receipt of all entries submitted online will be automatically acknowledged.
3. Entrants may be asked to provide further information.
4. The judges’ decision is final. Awards will be made at the judges’ discretion and no correspondence will be entered into concerning any decision. Not all the awards advertised may
be awarded if the judges consider the criteria have not been met. Additional commendations may be made at the judges' discretion.

5. The content of any entry may be used for informing other practitioners and also for publicity purposes unless the entrant withholds their consent to this in writing.

6. Entrants are deemed to have accepted these rules and procedures and to have agreed to be bound by them when entering this competition.

Your Entry

Please do not exceed 1500 words in total.

1. Name of the project you are entering for LiteracyActionNet Awards 2014 for innovation by schools

   Acrostic Poem Windmills

2. Award category or categories you are entering

   1. Supporting children with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties
   3. Supporting children and young people through school transitions
   4. Motivation, creativity and love of reading and writing

3. Describe your project in one sentence

   A fun cross curricular project highlighting the feelings of transition and belonging to a community, whilst enhancing the school environment.

4. Tell us about your school community

   Following our newly appointed Academy status under the Inspiration Trust, the school community has seen many changes over the past six months. The rural high school has 710 students and
specialise in STEM. We have good community links and strive to offer the very best both academically and socially to everyone within the school community.

5. **What are the project's objectives?**

The objectives are:

- to introduce the awareness of words being ‘alive’ and the need to move and play with words.
- To include a range of curricular subjects- literacy across the curriculum
- To use a variety of skills that can be adapted to suit SEN requirements
- To promote self-esteem and confidence through sharing thoughts and feelings into poetry

6. **What are the project's activities?**

The library project was for Y7 to write an acrostic poem related to transition which was then made into a seed windmill. A brief overview of poetry had been shown in the previous library lesson which introduced the idea of performance poetry, showing you tube clip of Francesca Beard, breaking down any confidence barriers and misconceptions that poetry is ‘boring’ showing how words need to be ‘fluid’ and ‘alive’. Next lesson we discussed how we felt as we were leaving Y6 coming up to high school last year and how those feelings have changed, this was used to empathise how the new Y6s may be feeling, ideas were displayed on whiteboard for future reference if needed. Students were then asked to choose from either TRANSITION, MOVING UP or HETHERSETT to create an acrostic poem. Each student was given a square of card that was marked into four triangles- on each triangle they were to write two/three of the letters and continue with their word beginning with the letter(higher ability were given option for phrase or sentence) thesauri’s were available and a larger square was made for our visually impaired student. Once the poems were complete we ‘painted’ wildflower seeds mixed in paste to the other side and left to dry. Once these were dry the students had to ‘build’ the windmills using scissors, bamboo skewers a nail and piece of cork. The windmills were now ready to be planted on the mound in our wildflower garden.

As the windmills rotate and the elements work their magic the seeds will be dispersed into the soil and will provide a wonderful display next year. Like the seeds, the students - with the help and
correct conditions – will grow and mature becoming an integral part of the school community with a sense of belonging.

It is hoped that once the Y6 students arrive the project can be redone with them in the spring; thus a constant windmill wheel of growth with the lower key stage 3. The garden will then be used as an outdoor space for creative writing, using the landscape and nature as inspiration.

7. What has been the impact / achievement of the project?

Many staff and students have commented on the windmills which have resulted in a fresh look at literacy throughout the school. The Y7 students are now more confident in class to discuss their thoughts. It has also enabled students of a lower literacy ability to produce a simple but effective piece of poetry that is both pleasant to hear and to see.

The students enjoyed doing something practical with literacy instead of just producing the poem on a sheet of paper to display they were able to use a kinaesthetic approach that appealed to many of the SEN students.

It has also created a pleasant environment for future classes across the curriculum.

8. How is your project evaluated?
It is evaluated by a qualitative measure – if students have fun and are engaged in the learning then the work they produce is of a higher standard. When asked, the students said they preferred learning poetry in this way than from writing on paper or in their books.

9. How would you spend the prize money to develop the project?

In order to develop the project the money would be used to invite poets into school to work with students via workshops and open their eyes further to the joy of playing with words and expressing oneself without fear of ridicule.

The money would also provide a much needed update of poetry books for the school library and also provide funding for the materials needed for the windmills- perhaps broadening the scope so that we could develop the project into the community, brightening an area with poetry and flowers.

Instructions for entry submission

1. Save the entry form to a location of your choice.
2. Once you have completed the form, click on the 'Submit entry form' link at the top of the Awards page. You will then be taken to the 'How to Return your entry form' page. You will be
asked to provide the name of your school and a one sentence summary of your project. To upload your entry form, press the 'Choose file' link in the third field.

3. After the three fields have been filled out, click 'Submit this entry now'. You will then receive an email confirming that we have received your entry.

4. You can send over any supporting materials separately. Please email them to: awards@lemosandcrane.co.uk. Please put the name of your school in the email subject line.

5. Please submit your entry no later than Friday, 1st August 2014.

6. If you have problems uploading your entry or would like to add documents, photos, videos or other media that are relevant to your entry, please email them to awards@lemosandcrane.co.uk quoting ‘LiteracyActionNet Awards’ and your school name in the subject heading.