



**The Rotary Club of Richmond  
presents**

**The Slade Literary Award**

Sponsored by Mark Slade  
in memory of his uncle, Rotarian Henry Slade

**Winning Entries 2013**

Winning Entry: **"The Clock Stopped at 9 O'clock"**

by Astyn Trecate, Kew High School

Runner-up: **"Henry the Obsessive"**

by Anna Mangan-Georgiou, Melbourne Girls' College

ESL Winning Entry: **"When You Believe"**

by Joanna Chen Yik Tsun, Balwyn High School

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Certificate of Merit: Ella Walsh, Melbourne Girls' College  
**"The Last Rose"**

Certificate of Merit: Asher McGlone, Collingwood College  
**"The Right Place at the Right Time"**

Certificate of Merit: Hannah Mitchell, Melbourne Girls' College  
**"Puzzle"**

Certificate of Merit: Jubilee Hwang, Balwyn High School  
**"Thievery"**

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Certificate of Encouragement: Sarina Barkho, Brunswick Secondary College  
**"Perfection"**

Certificate of Encouragement: Isabella Mackay, Camberwell High School  
**"Benjamin Bunny"**

# Welcome to the Slade Literary Awards 2013

The Slade Awards are named in honour of the late Henry Slade who founded the competition in 1993 and sponsored it until his death in 2005. These awards aim to encourage the literary skills and offer the opportunity to showcase the creative talents of students in Years 9 and 10 within the City of Yarra and neighbouring municipalities.

All participants are required to submit a piece of original prose or poetry up to 1000 words on a topic of their choice. This work is then read and evaluated by a panel of judges who are looking for creativity, originality, fluency, enthusiasm and appeal.

## Award Prizes

**Winner:** *Cash prize of \$200 & books up to a retail value of \$60*

**Runner-Up:** *Cash prize of \$150 & books up to a retail value of \$60*

**ESL Winner:** *Cash prize of \$150 & books up to a retail value of \$60*

[Awarded to the best entry (other than the winner and runner-up) from a student who qualifies as an 'English as a Second Language' (ESL) student:]

## The Slade Criteria

We use five main criteria to reach our conclusions. These are:

**Creativity** - the treatment of the subject in a fresh, lively and interesting way. The subject itself does not need to be novel.

**Originality** - the novelty of the subject. Is the work about an unusual subject or new idea?

**Fluency** - how well was the English language handled? How well was the piece structured? A good writer has to have a grasp of grammar and vocabulary that raises the text above the tedious, jumbled and mundane. The author must also have a good grasp of the importance of structure and variety of style.

**Conviction** - did it sound convincing? Did the author make the reader believe in them? If the author is talking about their emotions, the reader needs to be convinced the emotion is genuine to be swept along.

**Appeal** - more than an enjoyable experience: did it hook the judges? Did we want to keep reading? We don't mean just a feel-good experience: the writer had to keep us wanting to know what is coming next. This is the most difficult criterion to deal with as it is so subjective for the individual reader

## **The Clock Stopped at 9 O'clock**

By Astyn Trecate

Kew High School

Winner

Tic Toc. He didn't love like other dads. It wasn't in his nature nor ideals, he had different morals to the other fathers. While children and friends would play in the cobbled streets during the bright of day, my father would chain leg to post within the secluded recesses of my room insisting I did not yet know the value of joy, the true worth of happiness, that which I never experienced. The countless hours spent in the dark, damp room ruined much of my childhood, I could remember every detail of it: The musty smell, the result of age long cheese and bread, the most our family could afford. The wood that lined the floor, scratched and scared from age and wear, the paint that covered the walls in a pitiful state peeling from the floorboards; it was evident where the damp had settled. The seemingly ancient red velvet drapes waved eerily in the cool summer wind, tattered and torn beyond worth, a feast for moths. The despair that that room bestowed upon me matched none that I would ever have to experience for the rest of my bleak monotonous life. Within that room I learned not the value of joy or happiness but the meaning of irrational hate. Hatred beyond words. And with the coming of dusk came my father, he would look at me as he entered the room, push his spectacles up the bridge of his nose and stare me down with bitter contempt. It was not meant to be, and the night my mother left heralded new resentment from my father.

Tic Toc. I can remember it clearly, the grandiose aura that father's shop once emanated, now masked by the fowl stench of lies and deceit. Upon entrance of the small estate you could hear the jarring Tic of every clock. Monotony, not a moment would pass without the tedious grinding of every cog and gear. The rare chime of the bronze-rusted aluminium bell heralding the entrance of another customer. The broken doorframe that encompassed the pathetic excuse for a door, the windows shattered, glass dispersed, boarded with rotting wood. Yet, the store denied itself from becoming a completely abysmal hole, for upon the frail, crumbling foundations hung clocks. Rows upon rows of clocks. Clocks of every age, from every age, made from the finest oak and brass. From the fragile china plate clocks stashed away within the confines of glass cabinets to the hulking masses that were grandfather clocks. Father would often remind me that every clock had had an adventure of its own, and every hand a story, pathetic advice from a senile man. And even stilt with shattered windows and broken doors the shop seemed to attract no light, leaving it in darkness at the earliest of hours, father as fickle and stingy as he was would light a single candle within the middle of the room.

Imprinted in my memories, ominous shadows that loomed across the sides of the room, dancing on the walls, I feared that shop. I feared my father.

Tic, Toc. He was a despicable man, and even though he owned a box full of chronological wonders

he still knew not the meaning of compassion nor humanity. He would never love me as I loved him, for he was more clock than man, without feeling, without flaw, without heart. As far as E knew, as a child I was the problem and my father the victim, he condemned me for my naivety, my inadequate knowledge of life and the toils it required, he condemned me for being bestowed with life without appreciating it. Because she died. Father said he had no feelings for her but I knew otherwise. One night, I found him passed out on his office desk bottle in one hand, quill in the other. He reeked of cheap alcohol and the potent perfume from the women behind the tavern, and within the folds of his jacket tucked away was a pocket watch, small and beautiful. It was golden with intricate carvings of cloves and feathers, as I tested the age old hinges on the magnificent artwork it hummed to life and started to sing. A faint tune emanated from its autonomous insides singing of love and happiness and acceptance, emotions father could never, would never convey. And opposite the small clock within was a sepia coloured picture, a beautiful woman kissing a less than lovable man.

And in that moment my father woke in a drunken rage, I remember it all too clearly the dragging the choking the belt. That night he hit me harder than ever before leaving gashes across my back, I now bore the unmistakable mark of my father. A shame to my existence. And as I sat there in my room brooding over newfound hatred and pain, I watched him stumble through the hallway through the crack of my door, I watched him fail and I watched him cry himself to sleep. I held no sympathy for him.

And so time went on and life was lived.

I stood up and walked to the end of the room, the store was darker than usual, the streets quieter it was roughly 9pm according to all the clocks. No one was around, no one to watch me, no one to hear him. I walked to the sink and started to wash the grime from my hands and watched as the water slithered down the drain. The water red as the rose. I made sure none was left to stain the clean porcelain basin, and looked into my father's eyes. He seemed peaceful, almost happy. I plucked the pocket watch from his outstretched hand and opened it. There lay not a picture of a beautiful woman like I had once seen but an innocent child unknowing of the world around him. I let a tear run down my hardened cheek and stepped over the man to lock up shop for the last time.

**Henry the Obsessive**  
By Anna Mangan-Georgiou

Kew High School  
Runner-up

For midday, the train carriage was rather dim. The clouds were obscuring the sun, not letting it show and cheer up this gloomy day. The interior was decorated with graffiti, not the artistic type, and it was hiding in the shadowed corners of this carriage, seeming embarrassed at what it was. The seats had faded and there were a few that had been ripped, the sponge padding spilling out onto the floor, relieved to finally be able to breathe. As it was the middle of the day, not many people were using this transport. There were a few people dotted around, all involved in their own things, not taking in their surroundings.

Except for one man, sitting on the aisle seat, facing the direction the train was going. Henry was sitting up straight, not letting his back lean on the back of the seat. He pulled his plaid suit jacket down hard, to remove the creases that weren't there. In the seat diagonally opposite him, there was a woman, around 20 years old. She rested her head against the window, her eyes were closed, and her music was loud.

Henry looked at the woman in front; he began absorbing all the small details about her. Henry was an observer. He picked up all details in his environment. Everything from the sounds that were going on over 100 metres away to the shades of colour that filled the walls. He picked up many details that were missed by most, even great detectives that are trained to find the intricate details of a scene. He could also recall them many years later, remembering everything down to the finest feature. He would have made a brilliant detective but he did not get the education. He was also exceptionally smart, but he had no challenge to put his mind to. He got bored very easily.

Henry began to become agitated. He flattened down hair that was already as flat as it could go; he readjusted his jacket again and wiped his pants with his hands. He began shuffling around in his seat, but still remained sitting up right. He could no longer concentrate on what he found to be most enjoyable, observing. All he could think about was the woman's foot, and the sound that it made as she constantly tapped it lightly against the wall. Her music had such a good beat that it forced her to tap along to it. Henry hated repetitive noises; they began to take control of him. Picking up small details had its down fall as the sound that her foot was producing was extremely light, most wouldn't have realised, but to him it was like a hammer hitting his head. He slowly would lose his concentration and that would be the only thing that would fill his mind.

Once, when Henry was on a bus, a man sitting in the back corner was chewing gum really loudly. He was like a cow, his mouth was opened and it moved from right to left with each chew. Henry was sitting at the front of the bus, and the chewing sound took over him. He missed his stop, and didn't get off until the chewer got off, which was the end of the line. He had to wait for two hours for another bus to take him home.

Henry tried to take control of himself, he didn't want this public transport experience to be like the last. He focused on the poster peeling off the walls, slowly escaping, then the number of screws in the wall, but his mind couldn't be taken off the tapping.

“Could you please stop tapping your foot?” Henry politely asked the woman, his voice just above a whisper. She didn’t move at all, not noticing somebody was talking to her. Henry didn’t realise that her music was blocking her from his question. “Would you mind not tapping your foot, please? I find it rather irritating!” Henry raised his voice a little louder, but with no result. Henry thought that she just didn’t want to respond, as he wasn’t very good with the advances in technology. “Please! Could you not tap your foot, you’re annoying me!” Henry had now got the attention of the woman, but it was only because he yelled at her. The other passengers looked up, interested to see what was disturbing them from their individual activities.

“Huh? What? Why are you telling me what to do?” Her nose had scrunched in frustration. She was a reasonable person, but didn’t respond well to being yelled at by a stranger when she was just trying to enjoy her music.

“Why not? You’re tapping is infuriating to me and it is making me lose my concentration”. Henry didn’t understand why she wasn’t cooperating with him.

“I’m not even tapping that loudly, so it shouldn’t bother you that much”. She rested her head back on the window, dismissing him by closing her eyes. In this time she had not taken her headphones out, her foot still controlled by the music, making Henry more infuriated with each tap. For him, each tap wound him up a little bit more. Henry couldn’t get control of himself; it had completely taken over him and there was no going back. The train was pulling in to a station, which wasn’t Henry’s station. He still had eight stops to go.

“Fine, I’ll get off here and walk.” Henry got up, straightened out his jacket and stormed out of the carriage. Henry was really annoyed as he hated exercise. The day was cold and the walk was far, but he was glad that the sound was gone and he could now concentrate on something else, observing.

But back in the carriage, the other users were very confused. They didn’t understand how an empty chair could be so annoying. They couldn’t hear the tapping, and not because it was too faint.

**When You Believe**  
By Joanna Chen Yik Tsun

Balwyn High School  
ESL Winner

The city is a whirlpool, sucking people's dreams and hopes. The world is a black-hole, if you are not careful, you will fall into darkness, and disappear.

I am a fifteen year-old girl and I think miracles will never be going to happen. I don't have a dream. For me, the world is full of darkness, once you fell down, you would never stand up. I don't know why I am still alive, I don't even know what the significance of living is. Why do we have to live in this world? It's tired and painful...everyday, there are disasters happening, you can't even know what is going to happen next, you don't even know what your life will be going to look like after ten seconds. Or maybe twenty seconds later, your heart will suddenly stop beating. We can never control our lives, we are too vulnerable to face lives.

I am lost. I don't know what my life is going to be after I graduate. I am scared of thinking about it. I don't want to have any expectation, there will be more disappointments if you found things that are not actually what you have expected.

When I look at the photos, I miss the smile of a little girl, that naïve smile in me. I can't believe there are so many changes in these years. When I was five, I always believed in tales and I knew that miracles would happen one day. On that day, everyone would set free, they would be full of joy and smiling...just like the naïve smile on that little girl's face. Now when I see people smiling mindlessly, I feel disgusted. People would only do that if they are going to harm you. People get what they want by hook. People are like zombies, killing others to keep themselves survive.

I don't know why I become so pessimistic. I want to be happy but I can't. I want to be naïve but I can't. I don't because I have been hurt too much. When I try to believe in someone, the next second, I found they lied. When I treat someone as a friend, the next minute, I found that they betrayed me. When I am trying to believe life is full of grace and happiness, the next hour, disasters keep happening all around the world.

One day, when I was walking on the street, that's what I normally do to not feel bored and lonely. A guy who was jogging and his phone rang and the ringtone attracted me. I couldn't hear the song clearly but I could hear "There can be miracles..." The rhythm surrounded in my head while I was walking back home. I tried to search it on YouTube to see what the result

would be. The results came up and I realized the name of the song is “When you believe”. I clicked into it and the song started playing, the melody was the same that I had heard before. The singer started singing and the lyrics just flied straight into my head. When she sang “Now we are not afraid. Although we know there’s much to fear.” My body trembled, I fell like something was coming out from my body but I didn’t know how to describe it...it’s like a desire, a passion...or a hope. When she sang the chorus part, my eyes couldn’t see things clearly, all the images were blurred, tears dropped from my eyes and hit the table, just like how the song hit my heart.

At the last part of the chorus, I couldn’t stop crying. The words in the lyrics kept striking my heart. “Though hope is frail, it’s hard to kill.” Everything that hides in the deepest part of my heart came out, just like a Pandora box.

I know, I still believe in miracles, I still believe in hopes. I am just afraid of losing them so I made a large shell to cover my whole body. It’s protecting me, but also avoiding me to accept love and the brightness of the world. I finally understand, people who give up when they fall down, would never reach the goal.

Don’t be afraid. The world still has lots of hopes, there will be darkness but there will also be brightness that gives you warmth. Life is actually a miracle, to let you learn what love is and how to love others, to let us know how to make our dreams come true. We still have a long time to learn and that’s why we are still living. Don’t be afraid to get hurt, it is just a part of learning, part of success. Miracles will always happen! Who know what miracles you can achieve? When you believe, somehow you will, **YOU WILL WHEN YOU BELIEVE.**