

How we judge Mother Tongue Other Tongue entries

We do not pick an overall winner for the Leeds City of Languages competition. Entries are judged, within their age categories and according to competition criteria, with a view to selecting the best to be published. So this is more of an editorial selection process, than a competition.

Selection takes place according to the following criteria:

MOTHER TONGUE

- How well the commentary communicates an understanding of the poem, lullaby or song shared
- The individual story: how well the commentary explains the pupils' reason for wanting to share (or write) the piece that has been submitted
- Passion: for the language, the idea behind the poem or song or the personal story being shared
- Quality of writing

OTHER TONGUE

- Creative use of language in the poem (rhyme scheme, use of imagery, form, etc.)
- Accuracy of the language used
- The poem's X-factor -sophistication of the idea, charm or originality of the idea

In scoring against the criteria, judges will take into account the age of the author(s) and make allowances for English as a second language. We are not looking for perfection, the process is about encouraging and celebrating the young writers and their languages and cultures.

Entries are usually judged on written content, though we welcome recorded entries (audio or visual) of the poem or song shared in either category, providing an accessible link can be shared. Any recorded entries need to be accompanied by a written commentary, taking into account the word count as laid out in the criteria. If these are selected for publication we would need to link via a QR code, so the quality of the film or audio submission may influence what can be included.

Sometimes, entries are beautifully illustrated and presented and, if scanned versions of these are submitted and the pieces are selected, we will try to feature original artwork in celebrating the work. This can work well for group entries. For Mother Tongue entries, a typed commentary must accompany the hand-written or illustrated piece. Please also include a typed version of any text.