

Years 9-10 Category Winner

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Stories Matter

The rare freedom of a story.
Whether it begins with Once Upon a Time,
And has pages that smell like a comforting kind of old,
Or the furiously typed words written of the world, and fed to us from paragraphs of hopelessness.
Or maybe the letter which you received this very morning, in your mailbox
Or even the chatter you heard from passers by
But which is more real?
All, or maybe none.
A story can be born from your imagination,
Or it can grow from the truth you hold so tightly
A story can be spoken
Or written
Or drawn
Or signed
Or grown
It can be anything you want it to be,
It's a story, it can be as real as you care to believe.

Over a hundred million books have been written,
Hundreds of those, I believe, have swirled and shaped the person I am today.
These strangers' stories mould and influence everyone.
We learn from their mistakes,
And cry for their heartbreak.
We travel with them through fearsome jungles,
And slay dragons with our shiny swords.
We meet eccentric friends,
And lose more than we can count.
We climb the height of a princess' tower,
And diminish evil from the kingdom that surrounds her.
And now I make my own mistakes,
And learn from them.
I cry my own tears,
And travel through lively cities.
And although I've never truly slayed a dragon,
It's a story I'm prepared to tell.

These stories matter.

The first ever handwritten letter was said to be sent in 500BC,
I wonder what story was told in the secrets of those words?
Over time, letters began to flourish,
They became signed, sealed and stamped,
Little envelopes of stories and feelings,
Awaiting their arrival to be torn open and fawned over for days.
Stories would grow like roots from an apple tree,
'Have you heard?' They would say
And parade the stories they had read earlier that morning,
New ones would grow, and change,
Working their way through the hands of many,
And then, they would be found years later
Maybe in a dusty draw in the attic of a very old house
The discoverer would sing the stories here and there
Of the one small letter that had made it so very far.

These stories matter.

History is a rather marvelous thing,
That one small word, contains so many exceptional stories.
Stories of war
Stories of protest
Stories of discrimination
Of poverty
Of Kings and Queens
Of pyramids
Of sailors
Of violence
Of leaders.
Stories that have been the very foundation for the world we live in,
Whether we have learnt from them or not.
The stories of history have left a mark, not just the events, or places, or actions.
But the people, and the stories they wrote for themselves.

These stories matter.

This is my story, of what matters to me.
You too have a story
It is strong
It is wanted
It is rich and beautiful
But what makes a story even more powerful?

Everyone has one to tell.