

# ISA Essay Competition



Pupils at ISA Members' schools are invited to showcase their writing skills. This competition is an opportunity to express their thoughts and ideas, and practice reasoning, analysis and persuasion through writing.

Open to students in Years 5-13

Full details and entry form  
on the ISA website

**DEADLINE**  
**Tuesday 23 April**  
**2024**

- Eligibility

This competition is open to ISA Members' schools only. Competition open to pupils from Year 5 to Year 13. Schools may submit a maximum of two entries for each of the three competition levels. Sixth formers may enter up to six essays in total.

At ISA, we are committed to making our opportunities accessible, we welcome applications to all pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities.

*Alternative formats of these guidelines are available on request. Please notify us at the earliest opportunity so we can provide the document accordingly, if required.*

- Age group categories

- Year 5-6
- Year 7-8
- Year 9-11
- Year 12-13

- How to enter

- Entries must be submitted via the entry form on the ISA website by **Tuesday 23 April 2024** at the latest.
- Please name your file with the school name followed by the pupil name e.g. SchoolName\_JohnSmith
- Entries can be handwritten or typed.
- Entries should be unaided work. They should not have been heavily edited/re-drafted following teacher comments or feedback.
- Entries can be written in any language, provided an English translation is given.
- For the sixth form competition, students can choose to write about any topic or genre. For the other three age groups there are a range of titles to choose from.
- Please see titles and guidelines per category below.
- Entries must mention final word count at the end of each essay.
- Please note: All the copyrights belong to the participant. However, ISA reserves the right to showcase the essay on the ISA website and social media and to use them for marketing purposes. Please note that the name of the student might also be displayed.

- Judging criteria

- Originality and creativity
- Style and presentation
- Use of language
- Form and structure

- Year 5-6

For this Category, candidates will turn/have turned 10 or 11 years old in the 2023–24 academic year (equivalent to Years 5 and 6). Schools can submit a maximum of two entries in this category.

Candidates should submit an original piece of writing in response to the following titles: (Word limit of 500-800)

1 Imaginative

After a long sea voyage, the Vikings arrived on British shores for the very first time. Describe their journey.

2 Fantasy

I've owned my great grandfather's watch for some time but was surprised when its date suddenly changed to October 1824!

3 Science fiction

NASA has just collected dust from an asteroid. Scientists were amazed by what they saw when the dust was examined under a microscope.

4 Biography

Research your family tree and describe its most interesting person.

5 A News article

Write a report about how your school could reduce your carbon footprint next year.

- Year 7-8

For this category, candidates will turn/have turned 12 or 13 years old in the 2023–24 academic year (equivalent to Years 7 and 8). Schools can submit a maximum of two entries for this category.

Candidates should submit an original piece of writing in response to the following titles: (Word limit of 500-800)

1. Through the gap in the curtains
2. The power of music
3. If you had the power to make changes to the school curriculum, what would they be, and why?
4. The writing on the mirror
5. A young cousin tells you he/she is nervous about going to a new school and having to make a new set of friends. Write a letter or email offering some advice.

- Year 9-11

For this category, candidates will turn/have turned 14, 15 or 16 years old in the 2023–24 academic year (equivalent to Years 9-11). Schools can submit a maximum of two entries for this category.

Candidates should submit an original piece of writing in response to the following titles: (Word limit of 500-800)

1. Comic Potential
2. The Point of No Return
3. Out of the Ordinary
4. A Natural Choice
5. Live and Learn

- Year 12-13

Entrants must be still in full-time education at an ISA School at the time of entering.

Schools may submit a maximum of six entries for this category.

An original piece of writing (1,000 words maximum) is required on any topic and in any genre. Submissions will be judged in the following categories:

1. Fiction writing
2. Arts, English, and Humanities
3. Science and Technology
4. History, Politics, and Economics

Submissions can be pieces of work that have already been completed during sixth form studies, however they should not have been heavily edited/re-drafted following teacher comments or feedback.

If you have any questions, please contact [isaarts@isaschools.org.uk](mailto:isaarts@isaschools.org.uk)  
We look forward to receiving your entries.