
YEAR 3-4 CATEGORY

Year 3-4 Winner: Emily Elske [The Scots School Albury]

Title: *The Painting*

There was once a girl named Frankie. She always wanted to see famous art works, but she never knew where to go because there were so many famous galleries around the world.

One day Frankie saw an article about a really famous painting in a really great gallery called the Louvre (which is in Paris). Then Frankie realised she just had enough money to fly to Paris and visit the gallery.

The next day she flew to Paris. She saw the painting as soon as she walked into the gallery. It was the most beautiful thing she had ever seen. It was an artwork with a little girl in it and she had a divine dress on with wonderful flowers on it.

Frankie was so excited to see the painting because it was so beautiful. So she jumped up and down, then she jumped so high she jumped right into the painting!

Frankie heard a faint voice saying, "Oh look, a visitor."

"Who are you?" asked Frankie.

"Well, people call me the girl in the painting."

"How about I call you Sophie", said Frankie.

"Sure, Sophie sounds good", called out Sophie.

"Where are you and where am I?" Frankie asked.

"You are in the painting. Oh and I am behind you", Sophie said.

Frankie turned around then screamed, "Ahhh!"

"Sorry, I did not mean to scare you but I am so excited that someone has come to see me. You should probably know by now what that scoundrel did to me."

"Sophie, I have no idea what you are talking about."

"Oh," Sophie looked sad when she said that so Frankie said,

"But you could tell me about that scoundrel you just mentioned," and they set up a picnic blanket.

Then they sat down on the picnic blanket and Sophie said, "I was a pretty cheeky girl, so I played pranks on my math teacher. His name was Mr.Q. He was the worst person in the history of people. Then one day after Mr.Q got promoted to principal, I decided to plan an epic prank on him. The prank was, I glued the furniture to the roof and made the floor gooey slime. Then once the prank was done, then Mr.Q called me to the school lab where there was wonderful painting like the one we are in now, but without a girl. Then Mr. Q trapped me in this painting and sold it to this gallery and I have been trapped in it for nine years now." Sophie explained.

"Well I am going to get us out of here!" commanded Frankie.

"There's a door, look!" said Frankie.

They both ran to the door, there was a sign saying, 'This is the change you need'.

"Look there is a code lock", they heard a speaker saying.

"To get out you must solve this problem. Jerry had 4 apples Sara took 3 how many does Jerry have?"

"One! The answer is one."

"Correct" the door slid open.

They were free.

Year 3-4 First Runner-Up: Iris Johanson [The Scots School Albury]**Title:** *The Humble Bumble Bee*

I was in this mystical foggy garden looking for pollen to take to the hive. I was collecting pollen in the sacks on my legs. I saw one little girl in the fog, it was very hard to see. She looked lost when I came over to her, she seemed hurt.

The next day I went to the same garden but this time it was not as foggy! But the girl was still there crying, the tears were so loud, you could hear them from a mile away. This time I was brave, I went over there... I was thinking to myself, is she going to try to hurt me? When I reached her the loud tears dropping from her eyes suddenly stopped!

It was very early in the morning, so I wondered why she was here. I felt a small soft finger carefully touch my fuzzy little back. I suddenly realized that she was leading me somewhere, it seemed like I was up in a tree. I tried to ask her where her parents are, but she did not understand me because I was a bee. I only asked that because she was only young, four or five and I was worried about her.

We stayed there for the night. The next morning, she was gone. Then I went out of the tree and saw her next to a big lady. Her hair was long and glossy, she said to the little girl, come on let's go! I thought it was her mum, but it was not it was an orphanage worker, I figured that out because she had a badge on, and the little girl was saying help very loudly. It was a big change because at first, I thought she was her mum!

I had to follow her; I made a buzz sound when I was trying to keep up flapping my little wings. I followed her so far, I that had I no clue where I was. I stopped at a park and I was very tired, my wings felt like heavy bricks. I realized that I had lost her. At the start, I thought the little girl was scary, but my feelings changed. The longer I spent with her the more I realized she was caring and nice. I felt that she was the only human I had ever loved. That made me want to find her even more.

I wanted to be there with her. Then I saw the women in the car with the girl in the back. All of a sudden, I stopped feeling tired and I quickly flew towards the car following it. The car stopped at a big building. I saw the word Orphanage on the wall. I could barely see, but very slowly I saw the little girl awkwardly hugging the orphanage worker. She did not seem happy because she was frowning, I went over to her, she seemed like she was happy to see me. When I came over I buzzed "follow me" and she did. We went back through the park and arrived at the tree house. We stayed there forever and ever.

Year 3-4 Second Runner-Up: Charlie Cook [Trinity Anglican College]**Title:** *Seasons Summer to Autumn*

Clover the bunny loved to play in the field when the sun shone and there was not a cloud in the sky. She loved to smell the flowers and chase the butterflies. When Clover went to bed that night her mother whispered, "Tomorrow is autumn!" But Clover was already fast asleep.

When Clover woke up the next morning, she raced outside to smell the flowers and chase the butterflies but there were no flowers or butterflies. The green leaves had disappeared, the sun was hidden behind the clouds and it was chilly.

“Where are the leaves? Who has stolen them?” asked Clover.

She stormed into the burrow, pulled on her fluffy coat and hopped to her favourite tree. The tree only had three leaves left, and these were not green, but orange, yellow and red. Clover thought about who could have stolen the green leaves. She suspected Mrs Honeysuckle, the Honeysuckle bird who nests in the wattle by the borrow, or Mr Roo, the famous Kangaroo boxer who lived next door, or even Riz, Clover’s best Koala friend.

Clover decided to ask them all. First, she went to visit Mrs Honeysuckle. But it couldn’t have been her, because she had been out visiting her grandmother. Next Clover went to see Mr Roo. No luck with him, he had been at the gym training. Clover then went to see Riz. She found Riz snoozing on an apple tree branch near the pond. Clover called and called, but could not wake the snoring Koala, so Clover threw an apple at him. The apple hit Riz, and he fell into a large pile of brown, crunchy leaves. Clover rushed to him to make sure he was alright. Riz’s head rose from the crunchy pile.

“Oi” said Riz, dazed.

“Sorry Riz” said Clover.

Riz pulled himself out of the leaves. “What is wrong?” asked Riz.

“Someone has stolen all the green leaves” said Clover, “was it you?”

Riz giggled. “No one stole them, silly. It is Autumn.”

“Oh, how could I possibly forget about what happens to leaves in Autumn” said Clover.

“Come on Clover” said Riz, “lets go play with the leaves.”

YEAR 5-6 CATEGORY

Year 5-6 Winner: Ebony McGee [Trinity Anglican College]

Title: *Skeleton Tree*

I remember when my favourite season Autumn came and I would wear my red, radiant ribbons, my vibrant orange dresses and my dazzling yellow shoes! I remember when the birds would sit on my shoulder and sing their happy little songs. I remember being the shade for family picnics and I remember the hot summer day when I lost my happiness. Dark grey clouds covered the sky, mistakenly I thought it was a storm, I desperately needed the rain. But as it got closer, it got louder and hotter. I could see a red monster getting closer and closer, bigger and bigger. The monster swallowed my friends and it was coming for me! I wanted to run but as I have no legs, I couldn’t.

My heart was beating 1000 times per minute. The strong wind blew away the flowers in my hair. And Boom. My green garb lit up at once. I soon realized I was inside the red roaring heart of the powerful monster! It hurt. My breath was sucked out of me. Everywhere was orange. A deafening roar bellowed. The heat was unbearable. I could hear the aching cry for help from suffering animals. In a flinch my arm snapped off. The feeling was worse than anger, sadness and fear combined. The feeling was indescribable. A saviour soared from above and a rain of orange and red stopped the ferocious monster from burning the town. It burnt for the most painful hours of my life!

I thought I was gone. Torn bare my eyes fluttered open. The powerful flames were gone and had taken all the colour in the bush with it. There was no living life left. The forest floor was barren. All hope was lost. There were burnt logs and ash scattered everywhere. It smelt like a million candles had just been blown out. There were no reasons left to live. I took my last look at the ground still sizzling with smoke. Just as I was about to close my eyes, I heard the sound of a magpie's Dulcet voice singing it's beautiful song.

A fairywren came and sat on my parched shoulder and joined in the sweet melody. Then another and another singing together in perfect harmony. This gave me hope and joy! With all my strength, I tried to create new roots but there was no life left in me. The forest had changed, and it will fight back stronger and braver. I wished I could stay and watch it regrow, but I couldn't. The sweet melodic tune of the birds sung in my ear for the last time, I closed my eyes. And now I am a skeleton Tree.

Year 5-6 First Runner-Up: Max Royal [St Patricks Parish School Albury]

Title: *Humans Are Their Own Worst Enemy*

BAM! Lightning struck the water, dad moved to protect me. But waves came pummelling into our boat. I look around, all I can see is a horrific tidal wave coming in and devouring our little boat. Now spinning in the water like a ragdoll in the washing. I stretch up, fighting for air, hoping to make it to the surface before my lungs give out. I reach the surface and get just enough time to take a breath before another wave crashes over me, throwing me into a rock. My head thuds before falling unconscious. I hear my name. Dad? But I fall back.

I wake up, I see colours then shapes.

I hear a familiar voice, "He's awake."

Heaps of nurses rushed into the room and surrounded me, asking questions. I try to talk but I can't. It's like someone taped my mouth shut.

The main nurse said, "You've been in a coma for twenty years, do you remember what happened?"

My mouth becomes free to speak, "No."

"You hit your head, your dad saved you, you nearly died."

I was shocked, I couldn't believe, twenty years? What has happened? While I was in the hospital they did millions of tests on me to see how much longer I needed to recover. Two days have passed and the tests came back, the Doctor said, "You will need to spend roughly ten weeks in a wheelchair."

Dad rolls me out of the hospital, I can see enormous amounts of rubbish piled up on the sidewalks and roads and then I look up and see the sky full of smoke, "I ask what happened?" All my parents had to say was that humans ruined it. As I looked up to the sky I started to cry, it was night time and I couldn't even see the stars. When I look around me all I can see is lots of cars. They just couldn't, could they. They couldn't pick up their rubbish, They just couldn't get out of their cars. I bet they are sorry now that they ruined earth and that they destroyed living for other creatures, everything has changed not for the better but for the worse.

When we were driving home all I could see were kangaroos, rabbits, wombats and birds dead on the side of the road. Some were wrapped in rubbish, some ran over. Even died of lack of oxygen and too much pollution in their lungs. When we went past a service station it was packed with cars and when we went past a fast food place it was packed with obese people.

I knew this time would come since I was ten years old. I knew most people would be obese and earth would be ruined, I knew that I was going to do something when I was older but now that I'm older and I'm too late I can't do anything except watch our world get ruined. My dad always said humans are their own worst enemies. By this time I knew I had to become an environmental scientist to fix what we have done. I knew it would nearly be impossible, but I had to try.

Year 5-6 Second Runner-Up: Sienna Lawler [Bandiana Primary School]

Title: *From the Ashes*

I could smell the smoke for miles. The heat was growing more intense by the minute. If I could have run I would have but I was rooted to the ground. I watched on as the fire got closer. It reached the bottom of the hill.

That's it, I thought, I'm done for.

The fire danced up the hill, spreading from tree to tree, before finally, it reached me. The flames licked at my skin. My bark caught alight and I slowly turned black. My leaves shrivelled up and fell into the bright orange flames, burning. The fire moved on and I stood there, blackened and destroyed. My previously rich, brown bark was now no more than a black, ashy mess. I no longer possessed my vibrant green leaves. If I could have done something I would have. But alas, I'm a tree, I had no power over the terrifying strength of the bushfire. The only thing left to do now was stand there and stare at the devastating scenes that were laid out before me.

Two months later, I was beginning to recover. My black bark was still there but growing in between the burnt wood was new foliage. My leaves were beginning to grow back and I was beginning to feel just a little more like myself. As for the land around me it too was recovering. The ash on the ground was clearing away, taking the smoky smell with it. All around me was new sprouts of green grass and ferns. Not much had happened but it was all important if I was going to recover to full strength again.

Another four months passed and the land was looking great. Grass was growing and leaves were sprouting. My black bark had not yet disappeared but it was making way for even more leaves. The ferns were fully recovered. The green was returning to the area and all the plants seemed a little perkier. The rest of the trees had stopped drooping and instead were reaching up to the sky, just as they had been when the fire first hit.

That brings us to now. The bushfires were exactly a year ago today and everything is looking amazing. All the grass is back and the small plants, bushes and ferns are healthy and well. We trees take a little longer to recover than everything else but even we're looking pretty great. Leaves are wrapped around us now, snaking up our trunks. Some would say we look like we're wearing woolly jumpers. I mentioned before that I was beginning to feel like myself again but that was nothing compared to now. Finally I feel like a tree again. I will always have scars from the bushfires but life is now returning to normal. I may not be as pretty or as elegant as I was before the fire but I'm still standing and I'm proud of who I am.

