

Remembrance Poetry and Short Story Competition

We had a *huge response* from all year groups in terms of written entries. The quality of written submissions was again exceptionally high. Many entries were contemplative, reflective and poignant.

The winners and winners-up were as follows:

Key Stage 3

Student	Class	Poem	Award
Ella	9S	<i>Remember</i>	<u>Winner</u>
Jessica	9S	<i>Til This Day</i>	Head Teacher's Commendation
Chanhyeok	7C	<i>He Closes His Weary Eyes</i>	Head Teacher's Commendation

Key Stage 4

Student	Class	Poem	Award
Tu Tu	11N	<i>Honour</i>	<u>Winner</u>
Nina	11H	<i>11-11</i>	Head Teacher's Commendation
Zachary	11C	<i>Of All War</i>	Head Teacher's Commendation

Key Stage 5

Student	Class	Poem	Award
Ha Trang	12B	Of Lunar New Year and Orange Children	Winner
Bella	12N	Men of Bones	Head Teacher's Commendation
Lo Lo	12I	The Final Letter	Head Teacher's Commendation

Remember - by Ella (9S)

On this very day, 11th of November,
they exchanged their life for peace and freedom.
For the one and only, gift that we cannot repay,
lies scarlet poppies, swaying in the wind.

Did he walk on the wedding aisle,
With his bride, their child left unborn?
Did he come back from the trenches,
Greeted by his precious, dear children?
Does he play football,
Like they did once, one Christmas long ago?
But yes, he reached his first and final,
milestone in his life.

Knowing his battlefield,
is yet to be his grave,
He lays his life on the line.
Where he falls, blooms a poppy,
yielding his life for the start of another new life.

We shall remember them,
when the sun rises from the east.
We shall remember them,
when the leaves turn red and orange.
We shall remember them,
when the first snowflakes fall.
And we shall remember them,
on the 11th of November.

Honour - by Nhat Tu (Tu Tu) (11N)

Surrounding me were my comrades in arms,
Whose youthful glow could never predict
The dangers we would face
Or the anguish and despair we would soon feel.

The first time we were thrust upon the battlefield
There was a moment of calm.
The air was surprisingly crisp and cold,
It seemed as though the clouds—
Or perhaps smoke—
would swallow me whole.
Then we started falling.

I could feel my eyes shivering in their sockets
There was so much red so much white so much dark
I couldn't breathe couldn't keep a steady hand
But still I put my finger on the trigger
Looked at the opponent
Saw their face just as dazed as mine
And pulled the trigger, breathing out.

He fell immediately, blood already dulling the tag around his neck.

I lived.
But I didn't feel alive. Somewhere between living and dead.
I felt like the smoke was eating at my lungs,
That it was clawing me into the dirt, the stench of blood
Flooding my conscious and thoughts. Blood on my hands.

That night I sat in a bunk; around me,
Empty beds.
Songs and laughter replaced with screams and dread.
But there was still a presence
Something sinister: choking, scratching, cutting
And the room was filled with a deep, dark, red
My dreams were filled with a deep, dark, red
My arms etched by my own hand
with a deep, dark, red.

Forget not the young boys who so soon were
Taken, turned into men, killed:
"Nobly died for the Honour of their country!"
When they hadn't the mind
To die at all.

Of Lunar New Year and Orange Children - by Ha Trang (12B)

Tết Tết Tết Tết đến rồi.

Hums from the bruised radio drowned out by dawn-tinted rain.
We slept between four blotched walls on the edge of Vĩnh Phúc
a rust-coated shack, reeking of dirt and cigarette buttss and decay.

Rupturing ambered memories; found -
flushed cheeks, luminesced in red lantern light.
Echoes of harmonized laughter swirling in wispy air
morphed into fathomless croaks.
They used to dance, heads haloed with wild daisies

now contorted, muscles pulsating in erratic fragments, leaking tangerine fumes.

I handed the children red packets
(at least one hundred and fifty thousand)
little bomb craters with 5,000 dong inside.

Outside the olive window, fireworks dashed across the sky like a burning B-52.
Expired bodies murmuring
Tết Tết Tết Tết đến rồi
Tết đến trong tim mọi người.