



WESTMINSTER ADULT EDUCATION SERVICE



City of Westminster

# Sustainable Short Stories Competition 2025

Winning and Highly Commended Entries

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Our Values | **Respect** | **Aspiration** | **Innovation** | **Sustainability** | **Excellence**

*GCSE English - Winning Entry by Anais Davies*

### **Report About the Little Blue Planet in the Third Position Around its Star**

We had a very good landing. The place is astonishing with an amazing variety of geological structures, landscapes and climates. There is a lot of liquid water (mainly salted). In addition, the life is abundant (plant, animals and microorganisms).

On the other hand, we did not find the intelligent beings, which have sent the radio signal through space and ages, because they became extinct millennia ago. However, we have found many vestiges of them.

Firstly, they lived in big ensembles made of a mix of sand and gravel with a binder. They were pretty good builders but did not respect the nature, due to the fact that they dug and destroyed the environment all around their habitations.

Surprisingly, they used a polymer from organic matter to make almost everything. Unfortunately, we have discovered that this material was everlasting and extremely pollutant. It is everywhere on the planet: in the water, the soil and in all live organisms. They made a considerable quantity of objects with this polymer, even their clothes. We do not know how this planet will be able to digest the enormous amount of this undesirable product.

As for their food, we think that they really liked the flying animals, as we have found a huge number of their bones. In fact, they certainly bred them for their flesh. Those poor animals were too big to fly or walk with a skeleton too fragile. It seems that they did not know that they could also find protein in plants.

To finish, it is beyond understanding why they were killing their environment and why they created and stocked a massive amount of radioactive substance in capacity to wipe out all the life, including themselves, from their own planet. We have found the spots where they did their tests to develop technologies linked with radioactivity. We have found where they put their radioactive waste. It is not sealed anymore, and vast places are deeply contaminated.

To conclude, although these beings have disappeared, they have severely marked the planet. They have produced too much rubbish. In short, we hope that the next dominant civilisation will solve those problems and will not repeat the same mistakes.

After a full star revolution of investigations and observations, we have seen animals using tools and languages. A part of them live in well-structured societies. We are expecting and watching the new intelligent beings capable to create same kind of arts diversity again to come back to communicate.

*Sergeant Clunx, for the crew of the Advanced Contact Organisation (Spaceship VI)*

*English Functional Skills – Winning Entry by Hilary Gabriel Hernandez*

### **A Mum who tried a Green Easter**

Sara was working on her desk, 20 minutes more and she will have a break, it means she will have time to organise and plan the Easter break for the family and her.

The 20 minutes pass, so Sara takes her belongings and walks to the cafe near her building. She ordered food and opened the laptop, she start to search ideas for this Easter of families of three with a toddler of three years old.

How difficult could this be? Sarah thinks.

Well, it was more complicated than she thought. The flights are so expensive on the train tickets are no exception. Sarah took a moment to think about the people travelling in Easter and the pollution which this generates. She starts to think about all the shopping that people do before, and during, this break. Clothes, chocolates, craft for the kids, gifts to other people, etc. and just for a week. Is all of this good for our planet? What legacy are we leaving for our children? Sarah closed her laptop and decided to change this, maybe she couldn't change the world but probably she would teach her daughter to make the difference.

That day in the night, she focused on searching for a good quote "Green Easter". Firstly no flight tickets and no train, the family have invested money to have a good, electric car so they will use it. Sarah decided on camping break, nature, no phones, fresh air, maybe a BBQ, she was super excited while planning the break.

Second, not buy a lot of chocolate, she will make chocolate with her daughter, not new clothes just for a few days.

That night Sarah fell asleep happy and with a lot of peace in her heart, maybe she will not change the world, but she will make a difference.

*GCSE English – Highly Recommended Entry by Doaa About Dallah*

### **The Girl Who Stood for the Forest**

Deep in the middle of a green, bright, and mostly quiet forest lived a young girl, 9 years old, called Layla. She stayed in a small, cozy wooden house, surrounded by colourful flowers and tall trees. The forest felt safe and full of life, and Layla believed that nothing bad could ever happen in her happy little world.

Around her house, the forest was full of friendly animals. Colourful birds sang from the treetops, small rabbits, as white as snow, hopped through the grass, and cheeky squirrels raced up and down the trees. Sometimes a shy deer would come to drink from the clear river. Layla felt as if they were all her friends, adding more life to her happy little world.

One morning, Layla woke up to strange, harsh, and annoying sounds that were nothing like the birds' songs she was used to. She woke up to a roar of engines and shouting that made her heart race with fear. She ran to her window and glanced outside to see a horrific scene before her eyes. Chainsaws were roaring, heavy machinery was rumbling, and trees were crashing to the ground. The birds flew away in panic, the rabbits and deer ran for their lives. Layla saw her animal friends hiding among the trees, terrified and confused. She ran outside, curious to know what was going on. She heard some workers talking about building a new shopping centre or a group of houses. She exclaimed loudly without thinking: "The animals' home is being destroyed for money!" She felt helpless, small, and scared. She tried so hard to shout at the workers to stop, but they didn't hear her—or they didn't care.

Layla dashed through the trees, not stopping as the fear pushed her faster than ever, toward her house to call for help. She called the town council, the mayor, and the local news, telling them people were destroying the forest without permission. But the response she received was a complete shock. The man over the phone said, "It is a council-approved project," and he continued with a very cold voice, "The land is being cleared for development." Layla's heart sank as those who were supposed to care for the forest and the animals were destroying them.

Layla, in her rage, realized that she couldn't do anything to prevent them. She was heartbroken. This event affected her deeply, and she kept the whole moment in her memory. Years passed since the destruction of the forest, and the green wood's felt like a distant dream, replaced by cold, heartless buildings and endless streets. But Layla didn't forget. She couldn't. That pain fuelled her determination. When she grew up, she became a leader, organizing protests, speaking at town meetings, and gathering people from nearby villages who were angry about the council's decisions. Her movement grew, and more and more people began to listen. She was the symbol of hope and a reminder that there was always room for change. She knew that she had the strength to lead the fight, even though the fight was far from over for the forests, for the animals, and for the generations to come.

*English Functional Skills – Highly Recommended Entry by Faezeh Honorkarhamdana*

### **The Green Garden**

Once upon a time in a quaint town was a girl, that her name was Lily. One night she had a nightmare, that she was lost in the dirty city and wandered through the crowded marketplace. When she woke up in the morning, she decided to create a beautiful garden in the yard, so she went downstairs and found her mother in the kitchen.

As she was having breakfast, she spoke with her mother about her decision and asked her, may I plant some flowers in the garden?

Her mother said: “Of course you can, gardening is one of the ways to care for the Earth and make it beautiful. Then she explained to Lily, how she can help and take care of the Earth more by recycling, using the reusable bags when shopping, or using reusable cups for drinking, and also planting trees and herbs could help to protect our Earth.

From that day, Lily did her best to improve the Earth by planting more flowers and trees and also she tried to keep the Earth clean by reducing her use of plastics. In addition, she researched about sustainability, and she asked her parents to use the bicycle more to reduce carbon and pollution.

Now, she knows everything about sustainability, and she speaks with her friends about it and encourages them to be concerned about the Earth and environment and try their best to protect it. They organised a small team of children to clean up their local park twice a week.

*English Functional Skills – Highly Recommended Entry by Charmaine White*

### **Yorkshire Village**

Simon, an old man who has been living in the Yorkshire area for over 50 years has had to deal with and survived the many floods of Yorkshire.

Many people have often asked Simon why he still continues to live in the area with so much flooding risks. But Simon likes the peace and quiet. The village is small but that's the way like Simon likes it.

There is a local church, a few shops, lovely scenery which is perfect for him. Simon attends the church every Sunday where he enjoys a great service and also has time at the end of the service to catch up with old friends and any new neighbours that may have moved into the village.

On one particular Sunday, while at church, Simon got introduced to a new couple called Mike and Sally, they had moved in five doors down from Simon. "Hi there, very nice to meet you both. I live at number 212A, my name is Simon. If you ever need anything just knock, I am always in, well most days." Simon laughed.

Mike was eager to stop Simon before he walked away. Simon, Mike said worriedly, "I wonder if you could shed some light on how bad the flooding could get in this area?"

Come on, let's grab some coffees, sit down and I will explain. Simon began his story of the last flooding, which was about 7.9 feet high, this was a really bad one, Simon said. But the best thing to do is not to panic, as there is only so much you can do. First, make sure you have enough sandbags they are great! Make sure you can get to your correct clothing at all times; this will depend on where you are in the house. Oh, and this one is just a must, if you haven't already, please get yourselves an inflatable Raft set (Boat) that can fit you both.

Mike looked at Sally, "well looks like we have a lot of shopping to do." Sally smiled "I am sure we will be just fine, I'm not worried at all."

"Thank you so much for that Simon, we will make sure we are ready!"

"You are welcome. Oh, and not forgetting, the local rescue service are always on hand to help us to and get us to a more secure place until we can get back to our properties to then see the amount of damage. But that's another story for another time."

*English Functional Skills – Highly Recommended Entry by Fabiola Lincoln*

### **Environmental Story**

Lila comes home from her environmental studies job in the UCL. "Hi mum." Hope: "Hi dear." – "Since the retrofit done by the Council by insulating the house, my joint and socket pains are gone and tomorrow I can go to the beach to collect more plastic bags to be recycled?"

Lila: "Yes mum well done!" Hope: "but the most I suffer is for the ones who cannot speak my beloved animal and vegetation." "The other day there was a dead whale on the beach! It seems that it commits suicide!" "how terrible!" "why Lila?" Lila: "Mum we think that they are fatally ill of plastic waste, also chemicals e.g. bleach, detergents, mercury etc, radiation from nuclear tests since 1946 in the Pacific Marshall Islands! And the the sewages from the cities in the world." "but amazingly whales and sharks' mission is to eat the waste human or not that they found in it"

Hope: "Oh! wow!", "but they die a terrible death" "and this is why I don't use bleach, detergents or any hazards but instead I use vinegar, salt or lemon 10% in 2 Ltr water. And I wash my cloths with a bar-soap"

Lila: "Mum now I am going to have a shower with the warm water of our solar power system and the use of electricity generated by the wind turbines that both bills are now 85% cheaper" "but of course a 5' shower", "it's fantastic for all the world's environment of our unique lonely planet mother earth that is quite in coma after being tormented for the extremely abuse since the Industrial Revolution in 1751 in Britain followed by other nations with the burn of fossils of oil, gas & coal that are now 1.5 trillion tonnes in the atmosphere!".

"But the most catastrophic one is the 24/7 cutting of the trees in the Amazon jungle to be cut in pellets to feed the nuclear plants to produce electricity! and creating the climate change that fatally produced floodings, killing people, livestock, destroy houses, bridges, farms, contaminating with the sewages in the areas.

My soul is in desperate anguish, and I dismay and get angry to see how irresponsible uneducated people doesn't switch off the light when they leave a room or a building", and I pass the message: **"Please switch off the lights when you leave, your children will be grateful and live longer"**.  
(Sometimes I write it on the notices in the toilets).