

SCOTTISH YOUTH POETRY SLAM

Background

Rachel Jury and Anita Govan are published, established and accomplished writers. They earn their living writing, in a variety of different genres and mediums, running creative writing workshops with people of all ages and all backgrounds as well as developing and delivering projects that support the development of and engagement with literature across Scotland. They are also both dyslexic. Both had extremely negative experiences of education and schooling. Because of this both found their talent, passion and creativity for writing later in life through good fortune but mostly through their own personal perseverance. A process that presented barriers that not everyone would have the opportunity to negotiate and overcome. Rachel, Anita and the highly supportive, project partners wish to provide an opportunity for young people, who are struggling to engage with literature due to a range of barriers - dyslexia, deprived economic and social backgrounds, poor literacy skills and attitudinal barriers - that will challenge their negative experiences so far and offer them a route to connect with their own creativity, providing them with skills not only in literature and literacy but also essential life skills that will improve their experience and chances in life.

I started to become less shy and more open. Today made me come out and talk a lot more which is great.

Participant, Schools Poetry Slam

AIMS

To increase literacy skills; to remove perceived barriers to poetry and literature; to provide a high quality arts experience.

I learned to put my feelings into words and poems.

Participant, Schools Poetry Slam

WHAT

Poetry Slam: event in which 12 or more poets perform their work and are judged by a panel and audience reaction through heats.

To Slam: the competitive art of performance poetry. Putting a dual emphasis on writing and performance – the 'what' and the 'how'.

Workshops: x4 2hr poetry workshops. The first three workshops concentrating on writing and creating a group poem and an individual poem, the fourth focusing on performance skills.

Every child deserves a poetry workshop.
Participant Schools Poetry Slam

Regional Scottish Youth Poetry Slams: young people, selected by their peers with work developed through the workshops, compete in a Local Regional Slam. Winners of the Slam will go forward to compete in the Scottish Youth Poetry Slam Final. The Slam is an exciting event that is hosted with a guest band and three judges who score the poems. Scoring is based on audience reaction, performance and content.

Scottish Youth Poetry Slam Final: winning teams from the regional slams will compete against each other for the title of Scottish Youth Poetry Slam Master 2016. The slam is a fast passed competition and with audience participation the whole region is involved in representing their area and young people. This event will be live streamed to an international audience.

I benefited most from the freedom of writing just what I want.
Participant, Schools Poetry Slam

WHEN: Sep/Oct 2016 workshops, Sep/Oct 2016, Regional and Slam Final.

WHERE

Workshops: x4 local base.

Regional Slams: x1 @ macrobert, Stirling, x1 @ Queens Hall, Edinburgh

Slam Final: The Beacon, Inverclyde

I'm more confident to speak now.
Participant, Schools Poetry Slam

confab art as a conversation

WHO

Young People: up to thirty young people between 12-14yrs

Principle Facilitators: Anita Govan, Viv Gee and Rally and Board.

Production: Rachel Jury

Lead Strategic Partners: National Library of Scotland, Dyslexia Scotland, Beacon Arts Centre, macrobert Centre, Inverclyde Council, Stirling Council, Glasgow Life

Delivery Partners: Scottish Poetry Library, Scottish Book Trust, Rally and Board, Loud Poets

WHY

A Poetry Slam is an accessible, fun, meaningful way for young people to interact with poetry, literature and each other. The Slam is a social experience that supports and encourages increased, essential, life skills such as literacy, communication, confidence, presentation skills and sociability.

We wish to break down barriers to literature so young people can find the power of words to transform their lives as it has have transformed ours.

So when people say that poetry is a luxury, or an option, or for the educated middle classes, or that it shouldn't be read at school because it is irrelevant, or any of the strange and stupid things that are said about poetry and its place in our lives, I suspect that the people doing the saying have had things pretty easy. A tough life needs a tough language – and that's what poetry is. That's what literature offers – a language powerful enough to say how it is.

It isn't a hiding place. It is a finding place.
Jeanette Winterson: Why Be Happy When You Could Be Normal?

For further information:

Rachel Jury: adminconfab.org.uk, 07811 394 058

www.facebook.com/sypslam

