Storylines tom fitzgibbon award
Guidelines

The Storylines Tom Fitzgibbon Award is for a manuscript (recommended word length of between 10,000 and 60,000 words) which must not be a picture book, and is a work of fiction appropriate for children aged 7-13 years. The award is for a previously unpublished author.

What are the judges looking for?

- A freshness of idea, a good sense of narrative structure, clever use of dialogue, strong characterisation, and appropriateness to the age group (between 7 and 13 years).
- The opening passages of the book are very important. They must capture the reader early and keep them moving through the story.
- The emphasis should be on engaging the reader as first priority – we are looking for that certain indefinable something that lifts a story out of the usual.
- Avoid too many issues and too much description of landscape and characters. It is important that the author knows and understands the characters well and shows through the storyline what a character is like rather than telling the reader.
- However, the reader must be considered in the stage-managing of the story, ensuring that they always know where they are in place and time. And even more importantly that the reader is delivered safely to the end of the story.
- It isn't essential that the reader totally understands the world of the character from the beginning of the story, and it isn't essential that they identify with the plight of the main character from the start, since the idea is that they will by the end of the story.
- Where appropriate make sure that there is a difference in voice between the character and the storyteller.
- Is the plot believable with climax and resolution?
- The winning manuscript must be commercially viable.

Please note: proof read your work, or have someone else do so and don't rely on spell checker. Read it aloud to hear how the story and words flow.

Entries must be postmarked in NZ no later than 31 October.

Storylines Tom Fitzgibbon Award
is proudly administered by
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