

there is
place like

NO HOME

young writers essay/story
competition 2004

Many people in Australia have been driven or torn from their homes, often because of war, prejudice or injustice. In the last 50 years, more than 600,000 new Australians were welcomed here to rebuild their lives after they fled extreme danger, imprisonment, even torture in their original countries. In the past 200+ years Indigenous Australians have faced various forms of dispossession, including being forced from their homelands or being taken from their parents.

Your challenge is to narrate a good story that is true. You will have to find a subject who is a displaced person and interview him or her. You will then have to retell this story in your own words, possibly using quotes from your subject and other writing techniques to bring the story to life.

Your challenge is:

Find and interview someone who has been forced to begin a new life and make a new home among strangers. You could find and speak to someone who is a refugee from one of the many countries around the world—from recent times or from the near or distant past—or you could listen to the story of an Indigenous Australian. You might have one of these stories to be found in your own family, in yourself, in your community, or in the communities of your friends.

You could ask your subject:

- Where did you come from?
 - Why and how were you forced to leave?
 - What were your most unusual experiences?
 - What was your journey like to get to your new home?
 - What hardships did you face in your new home at first?
 - And what was your story once your new life began?
 - What were your best experiences?
- and any other questions that seem relevant.

An entry will be judged on how well it brings the subject's story to life and on the impact it has on the reader. Previous prizewinners included ESL students, so incomplete English skills are not necessarily a disadvantage. You can use techniques of journalism or techniques of fiction to bring your work to life. Works can be essays or stories, or a mixture. Your essay or story can tell the whole story or concentrate on a part of the story. You could get your teacher's help with techniques for interviewing and the techniques of writing that best bring a retold story to life.

This is an Australia-wide competition. Many schools and individuals will take part. You are invited to submit your essay to us for judging, and for possible publication. The date for submissions is June 30 2004. The outstanding story over all categories will be awarded a grand prize of \$2500. The nationwide winners in each other category will receive \$1000. There will be a second prize in each category of \$500 and runner up prizes of \$100, with 20 prizes in each category of \$50 for the shortlisted entries.

This is an **Australians Against Racism Initiative**
www.australiansagainstracism.org

Getting started

You can find inspiration for your story on the Australians Against Racism website (www.australiansagainstracism.org), where winning stories from the 2002 competition are published. You could also look at the book *Dark Dreams* (Wakefield Press, \$19.95), in which 37 stories from 2002 are published, available in bookstores around Australia.

Finding a subject should be quite easy but will involve some investigation. You could ask your friends whether their parents were displaced persons (refugee or Indigenous). Ask your parents whether they know someone. You could ask your neighbours and the older people on your street. You could ask community papers and organisations on the internet. You could ask refugee associations. You could contact Aboriginal Community Colleges, Indigenous Studies Centres in Universities or TAFE, or Aboriginal Education in your state.

Maybe YOU are a displaced person and can write your own or your parents' story.

Age categories

Prizes will be given in three categories: under 12 years, 12-15 years, and 16-20 years (this group includes school leavers and school, TAFE or university students). Use your age as at June 30 2004 to determine your category.

Length

Your essay should be no more than 2000 words long (or 1000 words if you are under 12), typed or hand written neatly on A4 paper, double-spaced, using a clear font. Keep a copy of your essay, as it will not be returned.

Send your entry to:

'There is No Place Like Home'
PO Box 107 Enfield Plaza, SA 5085

by June 30 2004. You must submit your work with a signed entry form (from this flier or available from our website).

Judges will include famous Australian authors Geraldine Brooks and Nicholas Jose. Judging will be finalised in August.

You or your teachers can contact the project co-ordinator, on schools@australiansagainstracism.org if you need more information.



Entry Form

Your name (in full) _____ Your age _____ Your date of birth _____

Your address _____

Your school + its address (if applicable) _____

Your phone no _____ Fax no _____ Mobile no _____

Your email address _____ Title of your story _____

Your name as you would wish it to appear in any publication _____

Your subject's real name _____

Your subject's name as he or she wishes it to appear in any publication (even if the name is as given in the story)

Your subject's address + phone number _____

I, [name] _____ of [address] _____
acknowledge that by submitting my entry to There's No Place Like Home 2004 I am giving AAR permission to consider my entry for publication, and if it is selected, to edit my entry and to publish/broadcast it, in full or part, in any media associated with the competition or in any book published from the competition, at the discretion of Australians Against Racism and its nominated editors.

I have informed the person who is the subject of my entry of the possibility of publication and have given their preferred name for publication purposes above. I confirm that my subject has given me permission to submit my entry for the competition and for possible publication.

I accept that Australians Against Racism will give me a free copy of any book arising out of the project if it has all or part of my entry published in it and I agree that all royalties or publication payment will be donated to Australians Against Racism.

Entrant's signature _____ Date _____

Parent's/guardian's signature (if entrant under 18 years) _____ Date _____