

Young Islanders unleash their imaginations

The Planet Prose Short Story competition, organised by the **Government of Jersey's Climate Change Engagement Team**, invited young people aged between six and 18 to unleash their imagination and write a story about climate change, sustainability and nature.

THE competition received over 130 entries, with the winning stories selected by local children's author Jennie Jewell. Jennie was extremely impressed with the exceptionally high standard of stories submitted, stating that: "Picking the winners was much harder than I could have ever anticipated."

The winning stories have been printed here. All submissions will be reproduced in a book that will be stored permanently in the Library. Thank you to all the young people who got involved and submitted their fantastic stories.

Age 6 to 10

WINNER | Gabriela Kochan

The Day We Lost Our Home

In the middle of the afternoon on a hot summer day, me and my mum were laying in a tree, high up in the canopy. We were peacefully having our second nap of the day, as sloths tend to do! Everything was great, our six metre tall tree was still as green as the soft grass below. I personally loved looking up at the sky but my mum loved sleeping a lot more. I never understood why us sloths sleep so much, much more than the other animals. There was so much to see in our world. Suddenly, I heard a strange noise coming from the ground below. I looked down and I couldn't believe my eyes! Humans were invading our land of freedom! But they were no ordinary people, like tourists or visitors, they were... I can't even say it. They had come for our trees, our home. **THEY WERE OUR ENEMIES!** I shut my eyes as tight as I could. I said to myself over and over again "It's just a dream, it's just a dream." Quickly, I woke up my mum and said "Mum, they are trying to chop our home down!" I felt a sudden movement and before I knew it, we were falling down, as quick as lightening. Quicker than lightening! Before I knew it, everything went black ...

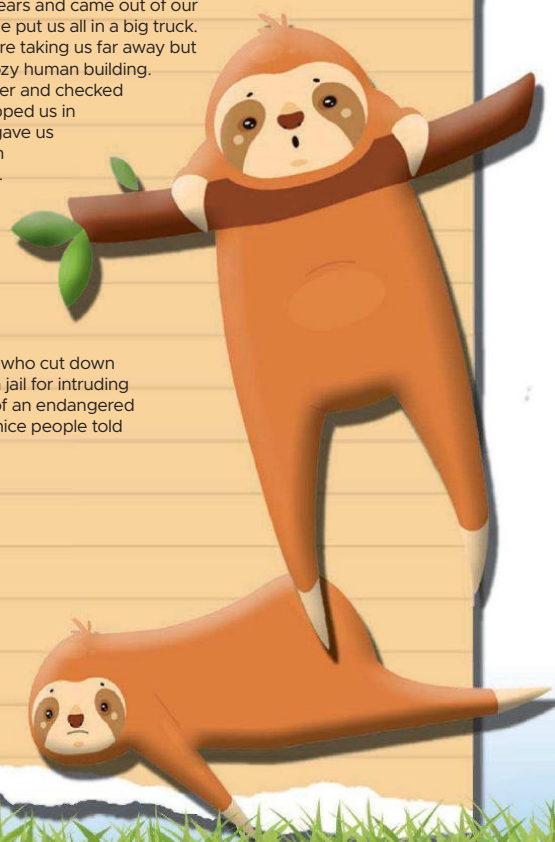
After I finally work up, my mum told me I had passed out. I believed her, my head felt funny. I looked around and froze in fear. I was so shocked, there were no trees as far as I could see with my little eyes. But what was most scary was that my family and friends were all on the ground.

We had been walking for hours and hours until we nearly lost hope. I had started crying. I thought we had lost our homes forever and that this was our life now! I cuddled into my mum still crying my eyes out. But we kept going, we needed to find shelter.

We woke up early in the morning and I got scared because I had never been this far away from home. But then I realised I didn't have a home anymore. Suddenly, I saw a group of people marching towards us. Everyone tried to hide but the oldest sloth of the group was too slow to hide. To our surprise, they gently picked him up. We were too scared to lose the oldest of the group, so we faced our fears and came out of our hiding spaces. The people put us all in a big truck. At first I thought they were taking us far away but they took us to a safe, cozy human building. They fed us, gave us water and checked our fur gently. They wrapped us in nice, cozy blankets and gave us a new place to live, which was close to the building. When we saw them, we made sure to reach out to them, to show that we were thankful. Me and my mum once again had a beautiful, peaceful home! And if you want to know what happened to the people who cut down our home, they landed in jail for intruding on the beautiful habitat of an endangered species. That's what the nice people told us anyway.

The End.

This story is based on something that happens everyday. Not only do these animals lose their homes, it also affects the amount of carbon dioxide that we have in our air. Cutting down trees hurts EVERYONE that lives in this world.



Age 11 to 14

WINNER | João Vieira

Once upon a time in the town of Maplewood there was a curious and adventurous boy named Jay, he loved the ocean, plants and everything nature! Every single day he would go down by the clear stream that led through the heart of the forest.

One sunlit afternoon, Jay decided to go visit his favourite spot by the stream. As he approached the water's edge, he noticed the once-plentiful flowers that lined the banks were withered and dry. Puzzled, he dipped his hand into the water and was surprised to find it warmer than usual.

Jay's curiosity led him to his town library as he was immensely confused. He researched for hours trying to find out what caused this not being able to find any answers, until he stumbled upon a book titled "Climate change and its causes" and learned about how human activities were causing the Earth's temperature to rise at tremendous speeds. Jays heart sank as he read about the disastrous effects it could have on the planet.

Determined to make a difference, Jay rallied his friends and classmates to form the Maplewood Eco Club. Together, they brainstormed ideas to raise awareness about climate change and its impact on their community. They decided to organize a town-wide clean-up to collect plastic waste and educate people about the importance of reducing their carbon footprint.

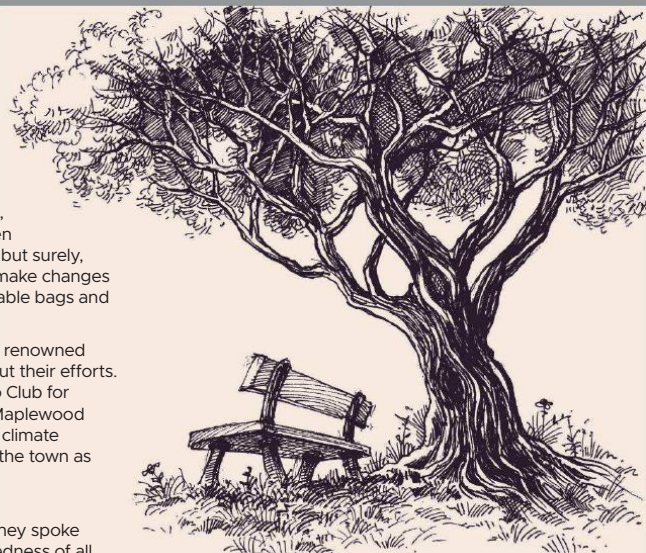
As the Eco Club worked tirelessly to spread their message, the townspeople began to take notice.

Jay and his friends created colourful posters, held presentations at school, and even started a community garden to promote sustainable living. Slowly but surely, the people of Maplewood began to make changes in their daily lives, such as using reusable bags and reducing water consumption.

One day, Jay received a letter from a renowned environmentalist who had heard about their efforts. The environmentalist praised the Eco Club for their dedication and offered to visit Maplewood to share more insights on combating climate change. Excitement buzzed through the town as everyone prepared for the special guest's arrival.

When the environmentalist arrived, they spoke passionately about the interconnectedness of all living beings and the importance of taking collective action to preserve the planet as if it is not looked well after the planet could become uninhabitable for life. Inspired by the wise words, Jay and his friends expanded their efforts, collaborating with neighbouring towns to create a regional movement.

Over time, Maplewood transformed into a beacon of environmental responsibility. The once-dying stream flourished again with plants more extraordinary than before, and the flowers returned to the banks. The townspeople celebrated their successes with a grand Eco Festival, showcasing the positive changes they had made to combat climate change worldwide.



Jay, now 16, looked back on the journey that had started with a strange discovery by the stream. He realized the power that a group of determined individuals, no matter their age, could have in making a positive impact on the world. The story of Maplewood became a source of inspiration for other communities around the globe, reminding everyone that even small actions could contribute to a brighter and more sustainable future!

Age 15 to 18

WINNER | Lucia May

"She is the earth. Her heart aches with the pain caused by generations of human mistakes. She is neither invincible nor eternal. Yet her cries for help fall on deaf ears and the multitude of her gifts go unappreciated. Just as her fellow planets were lost to the dust, their beauty erased by the mistakes of those who trod upon them long ago, she too is facing a looming darkness. Our pride, greed and thirst for more is killing the creatures who also call this planet home. As temperatures rise and glaciers weep, our world groans under the strain of a rapidly changing climate. Those oceans are becoming turbulent with the anguish of imbalance. Animal populations dwindle and microplastics spread inexorably like a plague. Yet with this decline comes a chance for redemption. The wounds that we have etched deep into her flesh can still be healed. But we must stop this path of self-destruction for man cannot survive the growing evolution of their creations."

Luka stared at the chainsaw the man across the park was using. Eight trees had been cut in the week and three remained. Probably going tomorrow. He knew deforestation was bad, but how would he, or anyone else his age be heard if they decided to speak up for what they thought was right. "No one likes leaves,

they're a pain to move," one of the builders had told him. Luka had given up on the thought of intervening. And so, the town had gone from a total of three hundred fully grown oak trees in the last decade to three. Luka shook his head, put on his headphones and walked off.

Asha had been out all day with her red 'STOP DESTROYING OUR PLANET' t-shirt. The pile of hand-written pamphlets and 'Save trees' badges had done little to motivate anyone to do anything about the increasing carbon footprint and worryingly low number of trees still upright. She remembered desperately the words of her idol, Penelope Green, an activist who, in her prime, had led a world movement about the warnings of climate change. The echoes of her speech engrained deep within Asha's mind.

Five o'clock, dinner would be ready and Asha knew she couldn't be late. She gathered up her things and headed back down the street.

"Ouch!" a voice came as Asha looked up at a person. She had been careless and bumped into someone in her haste. "Sorry!" she replied, picking up the badges from the ground. Her eyes fell upon the boy glaring at her, his green eyes narrowed. She could see he was her age. Perhaps a year older. The more the better she reasoned to herself. "Are you free tonight?" she asked innocently, knowing full well how much of a weirdo she sounded like. The boy took one look at her, stepped to the side and walked off. "I'm running a movement, there are so many trees gone and I thought more people are age should join it!" she called back as he strolled

away. "She is Earth," Asha began, reciting the words of Penelope, "Her heart aches with the pain caused by generations of human mistakes." The boy stopped.

"She is neither invincible nor eternal."

"You know Penelope Green's speech?" Asha said suddenly excited.

"Yes, she's my mother. I never really thought of it that way. How could we do anything to stop this mess. We're powerless among the politicians who run the countries."

"No, we're not. This is our planet. It's our future and if we want to make a difference, we have to start somewhere."

